The Relationship between Forgiveness and Resilience in Parents of Down syndrome Children

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Abstract
The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between Forgiveness and resilience in mothers who have children with Down syndrome. This research is important given the emotional and psychological challenges that mothers often face in this situation. The condition of Down syndrome in children can cause significant psychological stress in the mother, where Forgiveness and resilience are key factors in overcoming these challenges. The research was conducted on 100 mothers who have children with Down syndrome, using a purposive sampling method. Data were collected through questionnaires, using the Forgiveness scale from McCullough and the resilience scale from Reivich and Shatte. The research results show that the empirical average (mean) value for Forgiveness is 73.33 and for resilience is 169.15, indicating that these two variables are in the high category. With a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.459 and a significance level of 0.000 (p<0.01), these results indicate a very significant positive relationship between Forgiveness and resilience. This means that the higher the level of Forgiveness in the mother, the higher the level of resilience. These findings have important implications for the development of support and intervention programs for mothers of children with Down syndrome, emphasizing the importance of emotional and psychological aspects in child care. This research also opens up opportunities for further study regarding other factors that influence maternal emotional well-being in this context.

Keywords: down syndrome, forgiveness, resilience

INTRODUCTION
Down syndrome is a genetic disorder characterized by the presence of an additional copy of chromosome 21, leading to a total of 47 chromosomes instead of the usual 46. The excess can manifest as either a complete addition or a partial duplication of chromosome 21, depending on the specific variation. This disorder disrupts the regular operation of multiple bodily systems. (Wajuihian, 2016).

According to data from the Indonesia Center for Biodiversity and Biotechnology (ICBB) in Bogor, there is a recorded prevalence of approximately 300 thousand children with Down syndrome in Indonesia. On a global scale, approximately 8 million people are thought to be afflicted by this illness. Down syndrome is ranked sixth in UNICEF’s priority treatment due to its substantial prevalence. This suggests that the incidence of Down syndrome is on the rise, necessitating a more rigorous approach and more efficient methods of dealing with it. (Lestari, 2015).

In the context of the family, moms are often the number one persons active in physical and emotional relationships with their children (Andayani & Koentjoro, 2007). The role of the mother is highly crucial, especially when facing a diagnosis of Down syndrome in her child. Initially, moms often feel saddened, unsuccessful, and experience great emotional anguish owing to the anticipation of giving birth to a ‘normal’ child. However, throughout time and the process of child care, the mother begins to acquire feelings of forgiveness. For mothers with Down syndrome children, confronting these challenges needs considerable perseverance. Their initial reactions vary, from shock to rejection, suffering stress and serious parenting issues. However, some women are able to cope with this predicament with amazing resilience, generally starting with forgiving of themselves. (Desmita, 2017).

According to Desmita (2017), resilience is the capacity, aptitude, or ability that
people, groups, or communities possess to overcome, prevent, lessen, or even eradicate the negative effects of adverse circumstances, or transform difficult living conditions into something that can be dealt with on a regular basis.

When it comes to caring for their children with Down syndrome, parents who are resilient are those who can control their emotions. This means that they can be patient with their children. Furthermore, parents also feel optimistic about their child's ability to develop well and have advantages that can be explored. They also have empathy, which is the ability to understand or feel what the child wants, so that during the parenting process, there is a positive and healthy relationship between the child and parents that supports the child's positive growth and development process.

As stated by Nashori (2014), on the other hand, forgiveness is the ability to move past painful experiences that come from interacting with other people and instead cultivate good thoughts, sentiments, and connections with those who have wronged you unfairly. Forgiveness is putting aside feelings of pain, resentment, wrath, unfavorable judgments, harsh words or deeds, a desire for vengeance, avoidance behavior, and apathy toward the one who has wronged someone.

A woman with the initials MN, whose child has Down syndrome, disclosed that she finds it difficult to accept the fact that her child has the disease based on observations made in the field. She was deeply troubled by the circumstances and found it difficult to come to terms with the reality that her son was not born "normally," as seen by the sorrow and sympathy she felt for her child. For this mother, disappointment was the toughest obstacle. Her mental load increased when she learned her son had Down syndrome and that she had to deal with challenging personal circumstances after giving birth. Another challenge is being unclear when responding to inquiries from those closest to her on her child's issues and frequently shifting behavior. But eventually, with her family's help and encouragement, this mother was able to accept her child's illness and provide her kids with the care they required.

Resilience and forgiveness go hand in hand because as parents deal with different challenges or issues over time, resilience develops on its own. Resilience and forgiveness are intimately correlated because parents who possess forgiveness are able to bounce back from setbacks fast. This is because parents who possess forgiveness are typically optimistic, emotionally stable, and empathetic.

Because forgiveness and resilience are related (directly proportional), meaning that a high level of forgiveness also results in a high level of resilience, research done in 2019 by Salsabila, Karmiyati, and Hijrianti found a significant positive correlation between forgiveness and resilience in people who survived the conflict in Aceh.

According to research done by Maharani in 2020, forgiveness and resilience are related in prisoner populations. According to the study's findings, inmates who experience greater forgiveness also exhibit greater resilience.

Based on the findings of some of the previously described research studies, it is evident that mothers of Down syndrome children who possess resilience are able to overcome obstacles and problems with ease. This is because they already possess the feeling of forgiveness, which is a factor that can enhance feelings of resilience. Mothers with strong emotional control, an optimistic outlook, and a high degree of empathy are factors that promote forgiveness. Researchers are curious to find out if forgiveness and resilience are related in parents of children with Down syndrome, based on the description provided above.

Researchers plan to investigate the relationship between forgiveness and resilience in parents of children with Down syndrome empirically, based on how the problem has been formulated. With the use of empirical data that has undergone scientific testing, this study is anticipated to further the fields of clinical psychology and positive psychology. Specifically, it will address the relationship between forgiveness and resilience in parents of children with Down syndrome.
METHOD

The method of collecting data that was employed was a quantitative one. A questionnaire or questionnaires are the kind of measurement device that is utilized. According to Sugiyono (2013), questionnaires are a type of data gathering where participants are required to provide written responses to a series of questions. A survey or questionnaire is a type of research methodology used to gather data from samples of a community, whether it be small or vast. The findings include details regarding occurrences, dispersion, and connections between several social and psychological variables. (Cahyati et al., 2023)

Identity, forgiveness, and resilience scales are all included in the questionnaire. The Likert scale is the format of the scale that is utilized. Participants are prompted to complete the scale by entering a checklist in the designated column. The response format for the forgiveness and resilience scales is a five-choice response to a statement item. Response options stand for TS (Disagree), STS (Strongly Disagree), N (Neutral), S (Agree), and SS (Strongly Agree). According to behavioral indicators or the height of the measured attribute, each item will be categorized as positive or unfavorable (contrary to the content of the behavioral indicator or indicating the low of the measured attribute).

This study uses Pearson correlation analysis with the assistance of the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 22.0 for Windows program to investigate the association between forgiveness and resilience in parents of children with Down syndrome.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to investigate the connection between resilience and forgiveness in moms of children with Down syndrome. Between the two variables, the results revealed a highly significant positive connection with a correlation value of 0.459 and a significance level of 0.000. These results support the hypothesis, which holds that a mother's resilience increases with her level of forgiving herself. This is seen in the process mothers go through to care for, educate, and raise their children who have Down syndrome; this leads to the gradual development of forgiveness and resilience in the children. In addition to helping with the alteration of cognitive processes, forgiveness is essential for trauma rehabilitation and the discharge of unpleasant experiences. Mothers who forgive themselves can experience good changes in their conduct, affection, and cognitive abilities that help them rise above difficult situations and deal with life's challenges. (Johnson & Wiechelt, 2004).

The results of this investigation support the conclusions of McNulty & Fincham's (2012) study, which shows a strong correlation between resilience and forgiveness. They demonstrate how a mother can heal from trauma, distance herself from upsetting events, and change the way her mind functions by learning to forgive. Mothers are able to grow resilient in the face of adversity because of this forgiveness. Furthermore, the study supports the findings of Johnson & Wiechelt (2004), who discovered that forgiveness results in constructive and beneficial changes in behavior, thought patterns, and affection, supporting a mother's recovery and ability to cope with life's challenges.

According to the outcomes of a descriptive analysis based on the domicile category, respondents residing in Bogor had an empirical value of 81.80, which is greater than respondents residing in Jakarta, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi.

Based on the age of the children in the Forgiveness variable, the study's description revealed that the age groups with the highest values, 77.88 and 78.15, were 7–12 years old and 12–17 years old. Since a mother becomes more accepting of her family's circumstances, life, and her own child by accepting everything God gives, it can be assumed that the age of the child has an impact on the level of forgiveness. A mother also becomes free from pressure because she accepts anything freely. Darling's (1982) study on stunted or Down syndrome children indicated that moms of younger children experience more depression.
and suffering than mothers of older Down syndrome children. This is consistent with the evidence. Because mothers of children with Down syndrome between the ages of 7 and 12 and 12 and 17 can accept their children's condition and stop feeling like having children is a burden in life.

According to the study's analysis of the mothers' status on the forgiveness variable, mothers who were single or still single fell into a high category with an empirical mean value of 78.79, while mothers who were married or still complete fell into a medium category with a mean value of 77.41. It is reasonable to assume that a mother's status has an impact on her capacity for forgiveness. In cases where parents are still together, one of them may not be concerned about the state of their children, whereas single parents are more forgiving because they are solely concerned with their children's well-being and always want the best for them. Contrary to Witt's research from 2005, single mothers who manage their households without the support of their partners do not care about the welfare of their children, and divorce causes family functions to function improperly because the mother bears all responsibility. Furthermore, financial difficulties are not the only burden that mothers face; they are also compounded by other issues, such as those pertaining to children with Down syndrome, for example, in raising children.

The mother's status is represented by the resilience variable, where the empirical mean value for a mother with a family is 163.00 and the empirical value for a mother with a single parent is 170.15. One can presume that a woman's resilience is influenced by her status as a mother. Parents only want the best for their children, so whether they are a single parent or a family mother, divorced or dead, one partner has strong resilience since they can make it through challenging circumstances. This is consistent with research studies by Arsani (2009), who highlighted that single mothers of children with Down syndrome who are able to build and strengthen their resilience will heal more quickly and adjust to the challenges they encounter on a daily basis. Mothers who possess these resilience abilities are able to utilize their inner strengths to fulfill many responsibilities and take care of their children.

With an empirical value of 79.97, the study's description of the mother's job on the forgiveness variable for working mothers falls into a very high category. Mothers of children with Down syndrome are likely to be less forgiving of their spouses because they find it easier to balance their time between employment and childcare when they are employed. This is consistent with American study, Dagun (2002), which found that working mothers have a closer bond with their kids than do non-working mothers. However, the findings also showed that a deficiency in communication and connection with children has somewhat disrupted the pattern of type roles. This is in contrast to research by Barnett and Gareis (2006), which demonstrates that mothers who frequently feel stressed out after work and disturbed by their children do so because they are exhausted from their jobs and have to take care of them when they get home. This harms the psychological health of the kids because the kids do not receive adequate care from working mothers.

The study's description of the mothers' categories based on the number of children in the Forgiveness variable revealed that mothers with one child had an empirical value of 81.38, mothers with two children had an empirical value of 77.50, and mothers with more than two children had an empirical value of 75.64. These mothers fell into the medium category. It is reasonable to assume that a mother's ability to forgive her children with Down syndrome is significantly impacted by the number of children she has. Mothers who have one child with Down syndrome tend to focus entirely on the child's growth and development, whereas mothers who have multiple children find that their attention is divided because of the other children. This contradicts Lestari and Apsaryhant's (2017) research, which found that the number of children a woman owns with Down syndrome has no bearing on her level of forgiveness and does not influence it.

With an empirical mean value of 177.75 for mothers with one child, 170.32 for women with two children, and 161.89 for mothers with more than two children, the
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The findings of this study's description are predicated on the presence of domestic assistants in the Forgiveness variable among mothers who use them; these mothers' empirical mean values for this variable are 79.90 for medium-category domestic assistants and 77.60 for low-category domestic assistants. Given that they have more time and can devote more of their attention to raising their children, it stands to reason that women without domestic helper have higher forgiveness scores.

This study demonstrates a correlation between forgiveness and resilience among moms of children with Down syndrome, based on the mentioned discussion.

CONCLUSIONS

The study, which looked at the connection between resilience and forgiveness in moms of children with Down syndrome, discovered a strong positive correlation between the two. Mothers who are more forgiving also tend to be stronger, which emphasizes the value of both practical and emotional support in their circumstances. High levels of forgiveness and resilience were found in the samples, indicating their adaptive strengths in the face of adversity, according to the findings. The results of this study present prospects for enhanced psychological assistance and intervention initiatives, along with more investigation into additional important elements including social and communal support. The study makes a substantial contribution to our understanding of the dynamics these moms encounter, emphasizing the need to provide them with comprehensive care.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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