

COPING STRESS FOR OVERCOMING ANXIETY IN PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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ABSTRACT

Every parent has positive expectations for their children, but sometimes not all children have optimal growth and development, causing children to experience developmental disorders and become special needs. Developmental disorders experienced by children make parents become prolonged stress can continue to be anxiety for parents. Anxiety if not treated it will become severe and have an impact on the whole family, especially children. To avoid worsening anxiety, parents of children with special needs need to have a coping stress strategy. The problem examined in this study is the role of coping stress in overcoming anxiety in parents of Children with Special Needs. The research method used is qualitative using interview and observation techniques, with the aim to determine the role of coping stress parents of children with special needs in dealing with anxiety. Respondents in this study are: Parents with Children with Special Needs aged 2-7 years. The results showed that the Parents of Children with Special Needs use coping stress in overcoming emotional-focused anxiety such as, positive thinking by accepting the situation with sincerity and grace, sharing concerns with others, accepting conditions as part of life's journey. Meanwhile, coping with stress that focuses on the problem

Keywords: Parents, Children with Special Needs, Coping With Stress, Anxiety

INTRODUCTION

Every parent who has children must have positive expectations for their child's development. Parents expect optimal child growth and development according to their age, but not all parents are fortunate to have normal children with optimal growth and development so that children will be labeled as having special needs in all aspects of their development. The existence of children with special needs in the family, of course not an easy thing for parents. Parents who have children with special needs have different interactions with parents who have normal children. The presence of children with special needs gives its own color and excessive burden for parents, because they will directly carry out special and intensive handling of various aspects (language, behavior, physical, and sensory) since the child is diagnosed as experiencing developmental retardation. The treatment of children with special needs also requires no small cost. Parents will also handle various obstructed behaviors from children with special needs such as hyperactivity, aggressiveness, difficulty concentrating, independence, tantrums to like to hurt themselves, including difficulty communicating so that it makes it difficult for parents to explain to children about their daily needs.

Developmental disorders experienced by a child during their growth and development can be psychological stress felt by parents. Strees felt by parents will continue to be anxious and if left untreated will have an impact on parents and all family members. Therefore, parents need to learn to manage negative emotions by using certain coping strategies. Depressed circumstances will certainly require parents in overcoming the problems encountered. All problems faced by having children with special needs must get a solution. The problems encountered require solving as an effort to adapt to the problems and pressures that befall them. The concept of solving problems is mentioned by coping stress.

According to Moerdiani, it is undeniable that parents with children with special needs at first will not easily accept the fact that their children have developmental retardation [1]. Doctors and mental health professionals observe that when parents find out their children are experiencing developmental retardation, the reactions that emerge are feelings of shock and confusion, from these reactions emerge feelings of guilt, disappointment, shame and cannot accept reality.

Anxiety is a state of apprehension or state of worry that complains that something bad can happen [2]. As experienced by parents of children with special needs are often anxious about the future of children because of their limitations will make it difficult for children with special needs to get a bright future [3].

Coping stress is a person's behavior or behavior when facing pressure, therefore coping stress is a response and strategy that is carried out on stress to tolerate and reduce the negative effects of pressure. The way to do this is to set the distance with the demands in life both from within the individual and from outside the individual, with the ability and resources to meet existing demands. According to Takeichi, et.al., when a person experiences stress, external psychology, individuals will give a subjective meaning to the stress experienced and anxiety ensues [4]. Anxiety occurs when there is uncertainty and instability in the elements of human life.

When responding to problems people can do with problem focused coping (PFC) and emotion focus coping (EFC) [5]. The way someone in dealing with problems can affect the anxiety experienced. There are four basic causes of someone experiencing anxiety, among others, confusion about the situation, the uncertainty about a thing, the uncertainty of a situation, the state of being unable and helpless as well as feelings of revenge and sentiment. The stress coping aspects of problem focused coping are confrontative, seeking social support, planful problem solving [5]. While the emotional focused coping aspects are self control, distancing, positive reappraisal, accepting responsibility and escape or avoidance.

Carson said that the term stress generally refers to two things, namely the adjustment demands placed on the organism and the organism's biological and psychological internal responses to various demands [4]. Behavior in dealing with problems, pressures and challenges is called coping stress. Manage the distance between the demands that come from within and from outside themselves with the ability or resources possessed to overcome the demands.

METHODS

This type of research is to determine the type of coping stress used by parents and children with special needs in dealing with anxiety. Qualitative data collection methods include interviews and observations.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

W respondent experienced symptoms of anxiety in the form of tension, not calm, insomnia, to cry and wake up in the middle of the night. The future of the child becomes a burden of thought for W. Anxiety arises when the child is exploited because of his shortcomings and thinks about who will take care of the child when he is old. As a result of anxiety experienced by W, his physical impact becomes easily tense, difficult to sleep, until his chest feels tight when listening to other people talk about his child's development. W coping stress to cope with the stress experienced by moving the child away from his friends and try to think calmly so that he can accept the current situation by being patient positive thinking about the circumstances experienced by children.

Respondent K, the prominent symptoms of anxiety are anxiety, bad thinking, sadness which causes physical tension such as dizziness, headache, feeling lethargic, unable to rest calmly and insomnia. The underlying factor for the occurrence of anxiety is a sense of worry about the development of a child that is different from other children.

K is also worried about the future of children when they grow up. Anxiety has an impact on the physical like sleeplessness because of thinking about children, dizziness and headaches. K overcome anxiety by coping with stress by changing mindsets such as realizing that a different child is different from a normal child. K also thinks calmly accepting the condition of the child sincerely as a destiny from God. When you are tired, K does fun activities like walking around town, watching TV, exercising and caring for pets.

Respondent U was worried about the child's future development because it was different from other normal children. As a result of anxiety symptoms that stand out are tension, difficulty sleeping and lost focus when doing activities so that making unnecessary mistakes to lose interest in doing activities. U overcome anxiety by using coping stress by changing the mindset to be more positive that there are other people who have a worse life than their lives. Trying to think relax by not worrying about negative things that don't necessarily happen, and accepting the child's condition gracefully. When you feel tired U will tell her burden to her husband Children continue to undergo therapy in the hope of positive development.

Respondent N was worried about the child's condition especially with his future because he would depend on others and not be independent either. Hope N is a child can develop with other normal children. The prominent symptoms are tension, difficulty sleeping and easy to feel tired when thinking about the child's condition. N overcome anxiety by using stress coping to change your mindset by not worrying about negative things that are not certain to happen. Thinking that what happens to children is a destiny from God and trying to accept gracefully as part of life that must be lived.

Respondents S feel anxious about the future conditions of the child including the school fees needed for children's schooling, as well as the anxiety of the child experiencing bullying. S experiencing tension with physical symptoms of difficulty falling asleep, often waking up in the middle of the night, sleeping soundly and not eager to carry out activities. S coping stress that is done to overcome his anxiety is to change the mindset to be more positive, such as trying to think that there are still people who want to be friends with children, strengthen themselves to be patient and accept the child's condition gracefully and sincerely. When S feels the excessive burden being carried out is telling a husband. Aside from doing this business, S continued to include his child in a therapy center for children with special needs.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of interviews conducted, respondents obtained stress coping by using Emotional Focus Coping, which is coping which focuses on all efforts to reduce various negative emotional reactions to anxiety experienced by parents with Children with Special Needs. Lazarus and Folkman said that coping that focuses on problems would actually be more effective if solved by coping that focuses on problems (Problem Focused Coping) [5]. Whereas coping that focuses on emotions (Emotional Focus Coping) is used in difficult situations that are impossible to change. Parents with children with Special Needs realize that the condition of Children with Special Needs cannot be changed like normal children in general. Parents are more focused on overcoming anxiety by controlling themselves and feelings, re-evaluating positively such as accepting conditions with a field and sincerity as part of life's journey, and telling all the burden to the closest person. When the respondent, in this case, is a parent with a child with special needs, experiences stress and an uncomfortable feeling arises which results in anxiety, then try to overcome it by coping stress which leads to neutralize negative emotions.

From the results of interviews with respondents, it is recommended for parents of children with special needs to keep trying to use stress coping strategies that focus on problems (Emotional Focus Coping) to continue to help the child's development to be more optimal in his capacity as a child with special needs. Additionally, for the environment it is recommended to continue to provide physical and psychological

support to parents with children with special needs, because parents with children with special needs are vulnerable to psychological stress, especially anxiety. Lastly, for further researchers, can add the number of respondents and use different research methods, for example by quantitative, experimental and using different variables

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