

# DIFFERENCES IN PARENTING STRESS LEVELS IN PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES BASED ON DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

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**Abstract.** Having a child with an intellectual disability is a challenge for parents, especially in terms of parenting which is different from parenting a typical child. Children with intellectual disabilities have limitations in intellectual and adaptive functions which cause children to need assistance from their parents. This condition can be a stressor that triggers parenting stress in parents. There are several factors that influence the parenting stress experienced by parents of children with intellectual disabilities, both in terms of the characteristics of the child and the parents. This study aims to determine differences in levels of parenting stress among parents of children with intellectual disabilities based on demographics. This research is a quantitative study involving 208 parents using a simple random sampling technique. The results of the comparative test analysis show that there are differences in the level of parenting stress based on gender and parental occupation (Sig. 2-tailed 0.000;  $p < 0.05$ ) with the majority of parents having a moderate level of parenting stress (33.2%).

**Keywords:** children with intellectual disabilities; demographic factors; parents; parenting stress

## I. INTRODUCTION

Children are a gift that most couples hope for. The presence of children is a joy for the family, especially for parents (Pertiwi et al., 2022). Every parent certainly has hope for their child's success in the future (Desriyani et al., 2019). In this case, every parent will prepare everything as early as possible so that every child's growth and development process can be optimized (Insani et al., 2021). However, in reality, not every child is born with the same conditions (Desriyani et al., 2019; Edyta & Damayanti, 2016). The presence of children with certain needs or in conditions that are different from children in general can be called children with disabilities (Dinie, 2016). There are various types of disabilities in children, one of which is intellectual disability (Jolaekha et al., 2022; Widinarsih, 2019).

Children with intellectual disabilities experience limited intellectual functions such as reasoning, problem solving, planning, abstract thinking, assessment, academic learning, and learning from experience (Asiyadi & Jannah, 2021). The decline in adaptive functioning experienced by children with intellectual disabilities, such as failure to fulfill social development standards in terms of independence and a sense of social responsibility as well as skills in communication and socialization, has an impact on the child's development and social life (Allizaputri et al., 2022; Asiyadi & Jannah, 2021). In this case, children will have difficulty adapting and behaving in accordance with the demands of their social environment, especially in terms of independence and social responsibility that children have (Bellaputri et al., 2022).

Limitations in capturing and understanding the information possessed by children with intellectual disabilities tend to be a stressor for children which results in maladaptive coping behavior (Ramadhani & Rahmandani, 2019).

Based on their characteristics, children with intellectual disabilities need help and assistance from caregivers to be able to adapt and carry out daily activities (Bellaputri et al., 2022). The main caregiver for children with intellectual disabilities is usually the family, especially the parents. This is done as a form of fulfilling one of the family's functions for family members who are sick. Parents who have children with intellectual disabilities spend the longest time as caregivers for their children (Allizaputri et al., 2022).

For parents, acting as caregivers for children with intellectual disabilities is not an easy thing. This causes parents who have children with intellectual disabilities to have their own challenges in caring for and nurturing children. Parents with children with intellectual disabilities have more stressors than parents with typical children and are vulnerable to psychological disorders, one of which is parenting stress. Parenting stress is a condition where there is excessive tension and anxiety related to the role as a parent and the relationship between children and parents. Uncomfortable conditions arise as a result of the demands one has in carrying out one's duties as a caregiver (Asiyadi & Jannah, 2021). The large demands and challenges experienced by parents of children with intellectual disabilities are a triggering factor for the parenting stress experienced by parents. Asiyadi and Jannah (2021) found that 26% of parents experienced high parenting stress.

The level of parenting stress experienced by parents is influenced by internal factors of parents and children. In addition, parental demographic factors have an influence on the level of parenting stress experienced by parents (Shabahati et al., 2022). In minimizing the parenting stress experienced, parents must know the factors that influence the parenting stress they experience. Hidangmayum and Khadi (2012) stated that the factors that influence parenting stress are the characteristics of parents and children as well as family income. Based on this explanation, researchers conducted a study on demographic factors regarding the level of parenting stress experienced by parents of children with intellectual disabilities.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is quantitative research with a sampling technique using probability sampling with a simple random sampling technique. Simple random sampling or simple random sampling is sample selection with each individual having the same opportunity to be selected as a sample from the population (Noor et al., 2022). A simple random sampling technique was carried out using a lottery, namely drawing the names of private and state Special Schools (SLB) in Bali Province. The characteristics of the research sample are as follows:

1. Parents aged 24-60 years as the child's primary caregiver.
2. Have a child who has been diagnosed with an intellectual disability by a psychologist or psychiatrist with the child's age range being 7-13 years.
3. Domiciled in Bali Province.

This research uses a research instrument in the form of a questionnaire using a Likert scale of five answer choices (very unsuitable – very suitable). The questionnaire used was a parenting stress scale adapted by Kumalasari et al. (2022) from the parental stress scale (PSS) developed by Berry and Jones (1995). This scale consists of 15 items and is unidimensional.

This research was conducted at SLB Negeri 1 Bangli, SLB Negeri 2 Buleleng, and SLB Negeri 1 Badung involving 208 parents of students with intellectual disabilities. Researchers used data analysis techniques of normality tests and comparison tests on two sample groups (Independent sample t-test and Mann-Whitney U test) and more than two sample groups (Kruskal-Wallis). The research results were obtained using SPSS version 25 for Windows.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Research Subjects

Category	Sub Category	N	Percentage
Gender	Father	104	50%
	Mother	104	50%
Parents' Age	29-35	30	14,4%
	36-41	62	29,8%
	42-47	69	33,2%
	48-54	36	17,3%
	55-60	11	5,35
	Not Attending School	1	0,5%

Category	Sub Category	N	Percentage
Education Level	Elementary School	24	11,5%
	Junior High School	37	17,8%
	Senior High School	120	57%
	Diploma 1 (D1)	8	3,8%
	Diploma 2 (D2)	1	0,5%
	Diploma 3 (D3)	8	3,8%
Parents' Job	Bachelor (S1)	9	4,3%
	Laborer	4	1,9%
	Freelance	1	0,5%
	Teacher	2	1,0%
	Housewife	63	30,3%
	Trader	17	8,2%
	Farmer	12	5,8%
	Private Employees	66	31,7%
	Civil Servants	4	1,9%
	Driver	4	1,9%
	Self-Employed	34	16,3%
Kid's Gender	Businessman	1	0,5%
	Male	136	65,4%
Kid's Age	Female	72	34,6%
	7	18	8,7%
Conditions of Child Intellectual Disability	8	24	11,5%
	9	36	17,3%
	10	30	14,4%
	11	34	16,3%
	12	32	15,4%
	13	34	16,3%
Conditions of Child Intellectual Disability	Mild (Light)	104	50%
	Moderate (Medium)	90	43,3%
	Severe (Heavy)	14	6,7%

Participants in this study were 208 parents (fathers and mothers) with the same number of male and female subjects in this study. Based on age, the results of the subject description show that the youngest subject is 29 years old and the oldest is 60 years old with the majority of subjects in the age range of 42-47 years. The subject's educational level, the majority of them had a high school/vocational school education with a total of 120 people. Based on the work of the research subjects, it was found that the majority of the research subjects worked as private employees with a total of 66 people and as housewives (housewives) with a total of 63 people. Subject descriptive data shows that the majority of the subject's children are boys with a difference between boys and girls of 30.8%. The majority of children with intellectual disability experienced by research subjects were mild with a percentage of 50%.

Table 2. Categorization of Parenting Stress

Category	N (%)
Very Low	18 (8,7%)
Low	48 (23,1)
Medium	69 (33,2%)
High	59 (28,4%)
Very High	14 (6,7%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>

Based on the results of calculating the total parenting stress score which was then categorized into a tiered continuum, namely very low, low, medium, high and very high, it was found that the majority of subjects had a moderate level of parenting stress with a total of 69 people. Meanwhile, the research subjects with the least amount of parenting stress were in the very high category.

Based on demographic data tests carried out to determine the differences between demographics including the gender of parents and children, the ages of parents and children, the level of education of parents, the occupation of parents, as well as the condition of intellectual disabilities experienced by children on the level of parenting stress of parents, the results were obtained. as follows.

Table 3. Results of Comparative Analysis between Demographics and Parenting Stress

Analysis	Demographic	Sig. (2-tailed)
Independent Sample T Test	Parents' Gender	0,000
Mann-Whitney U Test	Kid's Gender	0,066
Kruskal-Wallis	Parents' Age	0,182
Kruskal-Wallis	Kid's Age	0,941
Kruskal-Wallis	Parents' Education Level	0,486
Kruskal-Wallis	Parents' Job	0,000
Kruskal-Wallis	Conditions of Child Intellectual Disability	0,659

Table 3 shows the results of comparative tests to determine differences in levels of parenting stress in parents based on demographic data. Based on the test results, it was found that there was no difference between the gender of the child, the age of the parents and the child, the level of education of the parents, and the condition of the child's intellectual disability on the level of parental parenting stress and there was a difference between the gender of the parents and the job of the parents on the level of parenting stress.

Raising children is a big responsibility for parents. Parents are responsible for providing protection and care for children which will support the child's growth and development until adulthood (Amalia et al., 2022). Different conditions of children certainly provide different challenges for parents in raising children. The challenges faced by parents in raising children can become a burden for parents which can cause parenting stress in parents (Nurmalia et al., 2021). The care given to typical children and children with disabilities is of course different and has different challenges for parents.

Children with intellectual disabilities experience limitations in intellectual function and a decrease in adaptive function which causes children to experience difficulties in carrying out daily activities, adapting, communicating and socializing (Allizaputri et al., 2022; Asiyadi & Jannah, 2021). Limitations in capturing and understanding the information possessed by children with intellectual disabilities tend to be

a stressor for children which results in maladaptive coping behavior (Ramadhani & Rahmandani, 2019). The characteristics of children with intellectual disabilities mean that children need help and assistance from parents to be able to adapt and carry out daily activities (Bellaputri et al., 2022). This will have an impact on the parenting stress experienced by parents.

Acting as a caregiver for a child with intellectual disabilities is not an easy thing. Children with intellectual disabilities have limitations in intellectual and adaptive functioning which causes the child to need accompaniment and care assistance from parents for a long period of time so that the child can complete their daily activities (Bellaputri et al., 2022; García-Morán et al., 2022). Apart from that, children with disabilities also experience difficulties in undergoing education like typical children as well as difficulties in taking care of themselves and socializing with their surrounding environment, which causes children to need help and supervision from their parents. This is why children with intellectual disabilities tend to have quite high dependence on their parents (Rofatina et al., 2016)..

The large demands and challenges experienced by parents of children with intellectual disabilities are a triggering factor for the parenting stress experienced by parents. Deater-Deckard and Panneton (2017) stated that the stress experienced by parents is the effect of general stressors experienced which include financial shortages, job changes, death, and conflict in the household as well as the effects of specific stressors related to childcare. The stress experienced by parents in raising children is related to children's behavior and developmental discrepancies in children (Deater-Deckard & Panneton, 2017; Louie et al., 2017). Deater-Deckard and Panneton (2017) revealed that parents' personality characteristics, cognitive resources and social support are factors that influence how parents respond to the stress they experience.

Parenting stress is a series of processes that cause negative psychological and physiological reactions caused by parents' efforts to adapt to their demands (Deater-Deckard, 2004). Parenting stress experienced by parents originates from interactions that occur between parents and children which are the result of a two-way dynamic process that occurs (Berry & Jones, 1995). Parenting stress experienced by parents is related to the daily demands experienced by parents such as caring for and raising children, chaos in the household with busy activities, and disorganization which then begins to give rise to feelings of frustration, worry, and inadequacy (Deater-Deckard & Panneton, 2017). Parenting stress experienced by parents can have a negative impact on parenting because it can cause parents to behave in unhealthy and negative ways, which will hinder parents in carrying out daily activities and have a negative impact on children's growth and development (Nuha et al., 2020).

In this study, the majority of parents had a moderate level of parenting stress with a percentage of 33.2%. Similar to research conducted by Maysa and Khairiyah (2019) which shows that parents who have children with disabilities have moderate levels of parenting stress. The parenting stress

experienced by parents is related to the time and flexibility they have as well as the difficulties experienced in balancing the various responsibilities they have (Nurhidayah et al., 2022). Parents who face stressful events and situations will make it difficult for parents to create personal defense which results in increased stress experienced and can have a negative impact on the resilience that is formed (Edraki & Rambod, 2018). Parents who have low caregiver stress indicate that the parents have good social integration, emotional closeness to their children, no symptoms of depression, no restrictions on freedom, and support from the surrounding environment (Indriasari, 2022). Parenting stress experienced by parents is a factor that can develop into pathologies which have an impact on the low level of parental resilience.

Based on the results of the analysis, it was found that there were differences in the level of parenting stress experienced by parents based on the parent's gender and the parent's occupation as indicated by a significance value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Meanwhile, other demographic characteristics, namely the gender of the child, the age of the parents and the child, the education level of the parents, and the condition of the child's intellectual disability, there were no differences in the level of parenting stress among parents. Hidangmayum and Khadi (2012) stated that the factors that influence parenting stress are the condition of the parents which includes gender, age, education and employment of the parents as well as the condition of the child which includes gender, age and the child's intelligence level.

The parenting stress experienced by parents when viewed from the parent's gender shows differences. Fathers and mothers have different levels of parenting stress. Fathers and mothers have different roles related to children's growth and development. In traditional roles based on gender, men are synonymous with responsibility for earning a living and women are responsible for childcare and household tasks (Suminta, 2017). Women who are more empathetic than men make society assume that women have greater responsibilities in terms of caring for children and household duties compared to men, while men must focus on work to earn a living for the family. This is why the responsibility for caring for children tends to be carried out by the mother. Even though there are mothers who work, fathers are still seen as the main breadwinner while mothers are only additional breadwinners and childcare remains the mother's responsibility even though the mother also works (Yaremko & Lawson, 2007). The different roles played by fathers and mothers in caring for children causes different levels of parenting stress to be experienced.

The parenting stress experienced by working parents and non-working parents will of course be different, as will the type of work the parents do. Working parents have a tendency to experience parenting stress due to difficulties in dividing their time between work and accompanying their children (Alisma & Adri, 2021). Working parents tend to have limited time to care for their children, resulting in a gap between parent and child interactions which causes parenting stress for parents and can have an impact on the care and treatment provided to children (Ayun, 2017; Widiasari & Pujiati, 2017).

Every job carried out by parents certainly has different burdens, responsibilities and flexibility. This causes differences in the level of parenting stress experienced by parents depending on the work they do.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study showed that the majority of research subjects had moderate levels of parenting stress with a percentage of 33.2%. Based on comparative test analysis, it shows that there are differences in the level of parenting stress experienced by parents based on subject demographics, namely parent gender and parent occupation. Meanwhile, based on other demographics, namely the gender of the child, the age of the parents and the child, the education level of the parents, and the condition of the child's intellectual disability, there is no difference in the level of parenting stress experienced by the parents.

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