

## The Importance of Self-Acceptance and Gratitude as Mediators to Increase The Influence of Social Support on Subjective Well-Being in Parents of Children with Special Needs

Alice Zellawati<sup>1</sup>, Dwi Yuwono Puji Sugiharto<sup>2</sup>, Mulawarman<sup>3</sup>, Sunawan<sup>4</sup>

S3 Guidance and Counseling Education Study Program, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia<sup>1</sup>

S3 Guidance and Counseling Education Study Program, Faculty of Education and Psychology n, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia<sup>2</sup>

S3 Guidance and Counseling Education Study Program, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia<sup>3</sup>

S3 Guidance and Counseling Education Study Program, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia<sup>4</sup>

E-mail: [alicezellawati@students.unnes.ac.id](mailto:alicezellawati@students.unnes.ac.id)<sup>1</sup>, [dypsugiharto@mail.unnes.ac.id](mailto:dypsugiharto@mail.unnes.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>, [mulawarman@mail.unnes.ac.id](mailto:mulawarman@mail.unnes.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>, [sunawan@mail.unnes.ac.id](mailto:sunawan@mail.unnes.ac.id)<sup>4</sup>

Corresponding Author: Alice Zellawati, [alicezellawati@students.unnes.ac.id](mailto:alicezellawati@students.unnes.ac.id)

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of self-acceptance and gratitude in mediating the influence of social support on subjective well-being. The research sample consisted of 102 mothers of children with special needs aged 1–12 years, selected through purposive sampling. The instruments used included the SWLS (Satisfaction with Life Scale) and PANAS (Positive Affect Negative Affect Schedule) to measure subjective well-being; GQ-6 (Gratitude Questionnaire) to assess gratitude; MSPSS (Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support) to assess social support; and PPAS (Porter Parent Acceptance Scale) to assess self-acceptance. Data were analyzed using path analysis mediation with JASP version 18.3. Scientifically, this research contributes to expanding psychological understanding of internal and external factors that influence parental subjective well-being through positive emotional mechanisms. The findings show that self-acceptance and gratitude significantly mediate the effect of social support on subjective well-being, with a total contribution of 97.4%.

**Keywords:** gratitude, social support, subjective well-being, self-acceptance

### Abstract

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis peran self-acceptance dan gratitude dalam memediasi pengaruh social support terhadap subjective well-being. Sampel penelitian berjumlah 102 ibu yang memiliki anak berkebutuhan khusus berusia 1–12 tahun, diperoleh melalui teknik purposive sampling. Instrumen yang digunakan meliputi SWLS (Satisfaction with Life Scale) dan PANAS (Positive Affect Negative Affect Schedule) untuk mengukur subjective well-being; GQ-6 (Gratitude Questionnaire) untuk gratitude; MSPSS (Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support) untuk social support; serta PPAS (Porter Parent Acceptance Scale) untuk self-acceptance. Analisis data menggunakan path analysis mediation dengan perangkat lunak JASP versi 18.3. Secara ilmiah, penelitian ini memperluas pemahaman psikologis mengenai peran faktor internal dan eksternal dalam meningkatkan kesejahteraan subjektif orang tua melalui mekanisme emosional positif. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa self-acceptance dan gratitude secara signifikan memediasi pengaruh social support terhadap subjective well-being, dengan kontribusi total sebesar 97,4%.

**Kata kunci:** gratitude, social support, subjective well-being, self-acceptance

### Article info

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## INTRODUCTION

Parenting a child with special needs can involve high levels of parental stress (Britner et al, 2003; Feldman et al, 2007). In fact, a research study that examined parents with children with special needs showed an increased risk of depression (Lee, 2013), low levels of subjective well-being (SWB), and increased feelings of pessimism about the future (Cantwell et al., 2014) and damage the physical and mental health of the elderly (Gallagher & Hannigan, 2014), when compared to parents of normal children of appropriate mental age (Gallagher & Hannigan, 2014). Raising children with special needs involves ongoing coping efforts and can negatively impact various aspects of a person's life (Gallagher & Hannigan, 2014). Financial reasons include the cost of therapy and treatment, as well as lost work time when accompanying the child to treatment (Aaron et al., 2012). According to Faradina (2016) the first reaction of parents when initially said to have a "problematic" child is disbelief, shock, sadness, disappointment, guilt, anger, and rejection. It is not easy for parents whose children have special needs to experience this phase before finally reaching the acceptance stage. Parents' acceptance of children with special needs greatly affects the child's development process. Acceptance is the feeling and behavior of parents who can accept their child's existence unconditionally, recognizing that their child also has the right to express opinions and feelings and the need to become an independent individual (Porter, 1954). Parental acceptance can positively contribute to children's psychological adjustment (Carrasco et al., 2019). Loving them unconditionally can help parents and children to live life with lower stress levels, and showering children with unconditional love, accepting them as individuals, will also increase life satisfaction (Jigyel, 2014)

Based on pre-interviews and pre-observation of problems in several SLBs in Semarang City, information was obtained that mothers felt sad, confused, irritated, and anxious about their children with special needs, wanted to share their experiences and needed a lot of advice and information to take care of their children properly, but it was difficult to find the right person or place. Sometimes, when parents pick up their children to meet other parents, they tell and advise each other. There are only a few things they do not know the answers to, or how to deal with disruptive children. There are some mothers who also consult directly with classroom teachers because in Exceptional School, there is no availability of guidance and counseling teachers, but the limitations of existing teachers are caused by the number of tasks and their capabilities that are not adequate, so that the answers given to the parents of students are also less satisfactory. Likewise, in the pre-observation, it was also found that there were still parents who treated their children inappropriately, such as yelling at the child, scolding loudly, and pulling their children when they did not want to go home because they were still playing from the case, it was seen that the self-acceptance of mothers with children with special needs was still low.

In addition, Inclusive School Services are currently still facing challenges in the school environment, such as rejection from some parents/communities, harassment of people with disabilities, and limited competent Special Supervisors (GPK), low ability to adapt curriculum and learning, and the availability of accessible learning media. In addition, there is also a Support System that has not been maximized, the availability and accuracy of data on Children with Special Needs (ABK), the Center for Identification and Assessment Services, and Affirmative Policies that have not reached all regions. Through this study, the researcher expects the commitment of the government, both central and regional, to cultivate inclusive education at all levels of society, both the scope of policy



makers, the scope of schools, communities, and families, and the fulfillment of the availability of Special Supervisors in Exceptional Schools and Inclusive Schools and have specific competencies. In addition, it is also expected that accessible learning media will be fulfilled, strengthening the identification and assessment of Children with Special Needs (ABK), providing Disability Service Units (ULD) in Provinces and Regencies/Cities, and supporting the issuance of regulations for the implementation of inclusive education in the Regional Government.

For this reason, parents, especially mothers who have children with disabilities, are expected to be able to show their unconditional love by getting social support from family, friends and significant others and being grateful for what God has given. The maternal sample used in this study was empirically found to be a difference in psychological approaches between mothers and fathers in the pattern of interaction with children (Feldman, 2003; Pajulo et al., 2015; Cooke et al., 2017; Pazzagli et al., 2018). In addition, fathers' level of affective closeness was lower than mothers' due to different socialization of gender roles, resulting in lower awareness and emotional expression among men (Cooke et al., 2017). This low parental self-acceptance ultimately affects parents' subjective well-being (SWB). SWB is a broad concept for evaluating a person's life and emotional experiences, characterized by high life satisfaction, positive effects, and low negative effects. A person with a strong SWB is able to regulate emotions and overcome problems. Conversely, those with inadequate SWB tend to feel unhappy, full of negative thoughts and feelings, causing anxiety, anger, and even the risk of depression (Davey et al., 2019). The importance of the role of self-acceptance in mothers towards their SWB is shown from several studies conducted Xu et al., (2016), Muthmainah et al.(2019), Li et al. (2021) and Su et al. (2019) but vice versa Hafiza et al., (2020), rather, it states that self-acceptance does not affect SWB.

In addition to the self-acceptance factor, the second factor assumed to affect SWB is the gratitude factor. The self-acceptance and gratitude factor is considered a mediator that can influence the SWB of mothers of children with special needs. This is shown by research (Putra et al., 2019) that self-acceptance and gratitude are the two main factors that enable parents of children with special needs to have good SWB. Even Putra et al (2019) also expressing gratitude to parents who have children with special needs is characterized by parents who always pray for their children as a form of gratitude to God, accept the child's condition as it is, try the best for the child, have a positive affectation and feel satisfaction in life, have a prosocial nature, experience improvement in terms of worship, take wisdom and learn from the child's condition and participate in events and activities related to limitations on their children. Parents who also experience gratitude in their lives because of the support provided by their respective spouses, parents both fathers and mothers support each other, strengthen each other and try their best for their children with special needs. In addition, parents also get support from family, neighbors, friends and people who were previously unsuspecting

Many cases show that there is a mother who finds it difficult to accept the condition of her child with special needs, but in several other examples, there are also parents who have children with special needs who consider that their child is a sign of love and favor from God. Therefore, they feel compelled to provide diligent, attentive parenting for their children without harboring regret. Some studies, such as Hikmawati et al.(2023), Homan & Hosack (2019), Ikkyu & Yuliawati (2022), Gadzella et al., (2012), Cholili et al. (2023) proving that gratitude has a significant effect on self-acceptance. Individuals with feelings of gratitude also affect their subjective well-being because gratitude is a form of positive



expression that fosters pleasant emotions (Megawati et al., 2019). In addition, they also feel happy in the meaning of life and appreciate what they have. Parents who are able to create SWB in themselves can be sure to have high self-acceptance, as shown by Komarudin et al. (2022), who state that gratitude can affect a person's happiness if they are able to accept themselves as they are. Through high self-acceptance, parents are expected to also have a high SWB. Grateful parents are those who accept everything they have without feeling lacking. Some previous studies have shown that gratitude also affects SWB, such as research from Situmorang & Syuhada (2021), Salces-Cubero et al. (2019), Ramzan & Rana (2014), Tilkeridou et al., (2021), Alkozei et al (2018), Situmorang & Syuhada (2021), Safaria (2018), Bono et al. (2020), Mead et al. (2021). The existence of different research results is also shown by Yang et al. (2021) and Hermaen & Bhutto (2020) that gratitude has not been shown to affect SWB.

Another factor that also affects SWB is social support. Several studies that prove that social support has a significant effect on self-acceptance include Kristiadi & Soetjningsih (2024), Hafni (2020), Teak & Muhid (2022), Komarudin et al. (2022), Pastimo & Muslikah (2022). According to Carpenter et al. (2016) When support from the partner is low, it is likely that the mother will have difficulty adjusting psychologically, to the point of showing more intense feelings of anxiety and depression. Similar results were reported Cavonius-Rinkaya et al., (2019) that the functionality of the family is determined by the level of support, especially in families where the responsibilities and upbringing are equal, and all the nuclear families participate according to their abilities, then the result is that the support is positive. When couples do not have support from the family environment, parents who care for children with special needs experience high levels of anxiety and depression. Increased anxiety and depression are one of the indications that the SWB felt by couples, especially mothers, has decreased. In addition to the social support factor, which can affect self-acceptance, it turns out that social support can also affect SWB. Some previous studies that support that social support has a significant effect on SWB include Shang (2022), Brajša-Žganec et al. (2018) stated that of the three forms of social support (Family, Friends & Significant Other) only social support from friends has been proven to have an effect on subjective well-being. Gülaçti, (2010) also stated that of the three forms of social support, family support has the most significant effect on SWB. Even Dewi et al., (2021) adding that family support, gratitude and self-acceptance have a simultaneous effect on subjective well-being. However, other research from Naraha et al. (2023) in fact, it shows that social support, especially the husband's, does not affect the mother's SWB, because the mother's subjective well-being is not always influenced by external factors such as the husband's social support

This study stems from a scientific urgency to understand the subjective well-being (SWB) of mothers with children with special needs who experience high levels of psychological stress. Empirically, previous studies have shown complex social and emotional influences; however, the findings remain inconsistent, particularly regarding the roles of self-acceptance and gratitude in explaining the relationship between social support and SWB. Based on empirical problems and the pros and cons of several previous research results, the researcher determined the purpose of this study to analyze the role of gratitude and self-acceptance in mediating the influence of social support on subjective well-being in order to form high subjective well-being in mothers with children with special needs. The results of this research are also expected to benefit counseling services by developing the potential of counselors through informal education that optimally supports the education of children with special needs.



The novelty of this study lies in the simultaneous examination of two positive psychological mediators, self-acceptance and gratitude, within a single integrative model, which has rarely been tested among mothers of children with special needs in Indonesia. This approach not only highlights the theoretical relevance of Fredrickson's (2004) Broaden and Build theory but also extends practical implications for family guidance and counseling interventions aimed at enhancing parents' emotional well-being through strength-based strategies.

## METHOD

The approach used in this study is quantitative cross-sectional. The variables used include the bound variable, subjective well-being, the predictor variable, social support, and the intervening variable, self-acceptance and gratitude. The number of samples used was 102 people. This research was conducted at an Extraordinary School in Semarang City. The inclusion sample criterion is a mother who has a child with special needs. The exclusion criterion is the child's age; in this study, the age range is 1-12 years, and, according to Rahayu & Hastuti (2017), the age factor also influences the positive relationship between the application of discipline and parental attachment to the child. The sampling technique is purposive.

The instruments used to measure subjective well-being variables are SWLS (Satisfaction with Life Scale) and PANAS (Positive Affect Negative Affect Schedule), where SWLS and PANAS instruments are based on the theory Diener et al (2017) namely affective aspects (consisting of positive affects and negative affects) and cognitive aspects (related to life satisfaction). SWLS has been adapted into Indonesian with 5 items and a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87 (Diener et al., 1985). SWLS was developed to identify the subject's overall life satisfaction, and the PANAS (Positive Affect Negative Affect Schedule) scale to measure aspects of positive affect and negative affect. This scale contains twenty items, ten measuring positive affect (such as being happy and excited) and ten measuring negative affect. This scale contains twenty items with ten items measuring positive affectation (such as: happy and excited) and ten items measuring negative affectation with an alpha Cronbach value of  $> 0.84$  (Tran, 2020)

The gratitude variable was measured using the Gratitude-Questionnaire (GQ-6) which is based on the theory McCullough et al., (2004) namely intensity, frequency, span, density. The GQ-6 scale consists of six items GQ-6 scale has been translated and adapted by Indonesian researchers, namely Moningga & Soewastika (2023). The reliability of the Indonesian Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ-6) was conducted on 300 respondents and tested using the Cronbach's alpha method. The test results showed that the reliability value of this measuring instrument was 0.73 ( $M = 21.65$ ,  $SD = 4.62$ ). Model GQ-6 has an RMSEA value = 0.051; GFI = 0.99; AGFI = 0.99; CFI = 0.99; NNFI = 0.99. Based on the model parameters, the GQ-6 measurement model appears suitable.

The social support variable is measured by MSPSS (Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support) based on the theory of aspects, Zimet et al. (1988) namely families, friends, and significant others, with 12 items. This MPSS has been translated into Indonesian and has been tested for validity and reliability by Istiqlal (2018) where from the results of the CFA analysis, the fit model was obtained with chi square = 51.48,  $df = 39$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.08698$  ( $p > 5\%$ ),  $RMSEA = 0.037$  meaning that the model matches one factor (unidimensional) in the MSPSS and all items are valid/valid. The Self Acceptance variable was measured using the Porter Parent Acceptance Scale (PPAS). PPAS was created by Porter (1954). The dimensions of self-acceptance are acceptance of



feeling, acceptance of uniqueness, recognition of the child's need for autonomy and unconditional love (Porter, 1954). The PPAS has been adapted to Indonesian by Sumiati et al (2022), with the second-order CFA model: Chi-Square = 764,612, df = 704, p-value = 0.053, RMSEA = 0.021, CFI = 0.962, and TLI = 0.958. Based on these four indices, the model was deemed a good fit to the data. The total number of PPAS questions is 40. The data analysis was conducted using regression mediation analysis in JASP version 18.3. This model determines the independent variables' direction and influence on the dependent variable

**Table 1.**  
 AVE, Cronbach's Alpha, CR

Construct	Item	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Subjective Well-Being (SWB)	25	0.951	0.958	0.595
Social Support	12	0.931	0.945	0.593
Self-Acceptance	40	0.943	0.950	0.530
Gratitude	6	0.929	0.951	0.763

An instrument has met convergent validity if it meets the requirements (a) AVE factor load  $\geq 0.5$ , (b) Composite reliability value (CR)  $\geq 0.7$ , and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value  $\geq 0.5$  (Hair et al, 2010). All constructs had Cronbach's  $\alpha > 0.90$  and CR  $> 0.90$ , indicating very strong internal reliability. AVE  $\geq 0.50$  indicates good convergent validity. In these results, Social Support, Gratitude, Subjective Well-being, and Self-Acceptance met the criteria (AVE  $> 0.50$ ).

**Table 2.**  
 Matriks Fornell-Larcker

Construct	SWB	Social Support	Self-Acceptance	Gratitude
SWB	<b>0.704</b>	0.631	0.588	0.612
Social Support	0.631	<b>0.770</b>	0.556	0.628
Self-Acceptance	0.588	0.556	<b>0.594</b>	0.547
Gratitude	0.612	0.628	0.547	<b>0.874</b>

Because the Diagonal Value (AVE) is greater than the correlation between constructs, the discriminant validity is fulfilled.

**Table 3.**  
 HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio)

Construct	SWB	Social Support	Self-Acceptance	Gratitude
SWB	1.000	0.782	0.703	0.756
Social Support	0.782	1.000	0.692	0.744
Self-Acceptance	0.703	0.692	1.000	0.663
Gratitude	0.756	0.744	0.663	1.000



All HTMT values < 0.90, meaning there are no discriminant problems between constructs.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

In Table 4, the direct effect, it can be concluded that self-acceptance has a positive and significant effect on subjective well-being, as shown by the z value = 4.963 ( $p < .001$ ). Second, Variable gratitude has a positive and significant effect on subjective well-being which is shown by the value of z value = 12.225 ( $p < .001$ ). Third, the social support variable had a positive and significant effect on subjective well-being, as indicated by a z-score of 19.534 ( $p < .001$ ). Fourth, the social support variable has a positive and significant effect on self-acceptance, as indicated by a z-value of 18.194 ( $p < .001$ ). Fifth: The social support variable had a positive and significant effect on the gratitude variable, as indicated by the z-value = 13.978 ( $p < .001$ ).

**Table 4.**  
 Path Coefficients Direct Effect

							95% Confidence Interval	
			Std. estimate	Std. error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
Acceptance	→	SWB	0.136	0.027	4.963	<.001	0.082	0.190
Gratitude	→	SWB	0.354	0.029	12.225	<.001	0.297	0.410
SS	→	SWB	0.589	0.030	19.534	<.001	0.530	0.648
SS	→	Acceptance	0.760	0.042	18.194	<.001	0.678	0.842
SS	→	Gratitude	0.702	0.050	13.978	<.001	0.604	0.800

Note. Estimator is ML.

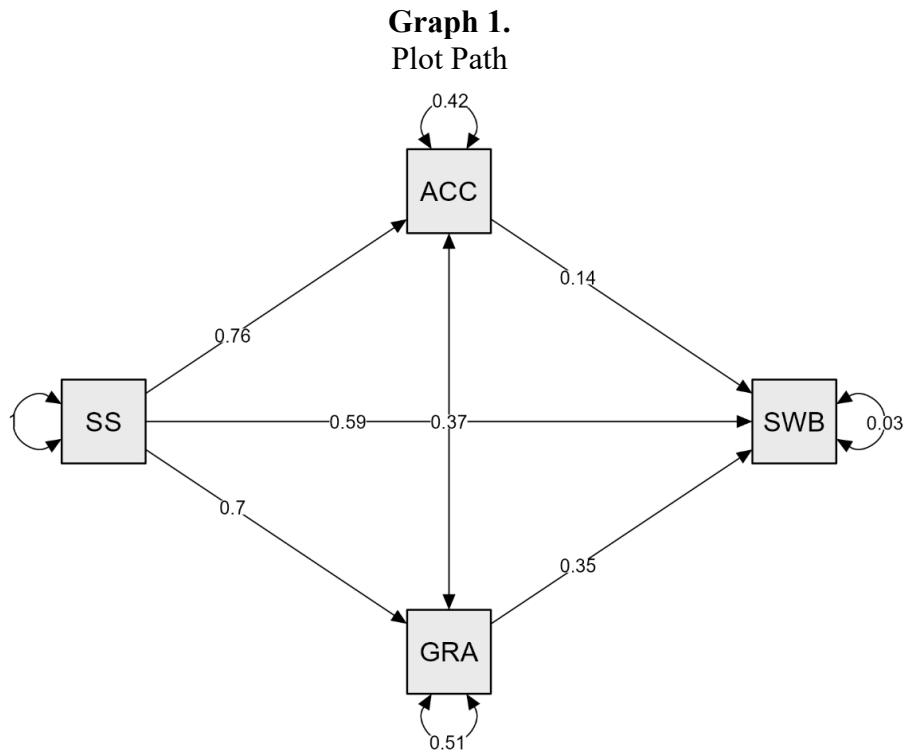
The results of the study shown in Table 5 can be seen that first; Self acceptance was able to significantly mediate the relationship between social support and SWB, this was shown by the z-value = 1.822 ( $p < .001$ ). Second; It was also seen that variable gratitude was able to significantly mediate the relationship between social support and SWB, this was shown by the z-value = 9.963 ( $p < .001$ ).

**Table 5.**  
 Indirect Effect

							95% Confidence Interval		
				Std. estimate	Std. error	z-value	p	Lower	
SS	→	Acceptance	→	SWB	0.104	0.021	4.822	<.001	0.146
SS	→	Gratitude	→	SWB	0.248	0.025	9.963	<.001	0.297

Note. Estimator is ML.





These findings indicate that the higher the social support mothers receive from family, friends, and significant others, the higher their levels of gratitude and self-acceptance, ultimately leading to increased subjective well-being. Overall, the combined contribution of social support, self-acceptance, and gratitude to subjective well-being reached 97.4%, indicating a very strong relationship between these variables.

## Discussion

The results of this study demonstrate that social support has a positive, highly significant effect on self-acceptance. Several studies prove that Social Support has a significant effect on self-acceptance, including Kristiadi & Soetjningsih (2024), Hafni, (2020), Teak & Muhid (2022), Komarudin et al. (2022), Pastimo & Muslikah (2022). According to Carpenter et al. (2016) When support from the partner is low, it is likely that the mother will have difficulty adjusting psychologically, to the point of showing more intense feelings of anxiety and depression. Similar results were reported by Cavonius-Rinkaya et al., (2019) that family functionality is determined by the level of support, especially in families where responsibilities and upbringing are equal and all nuclear families participate according to their abilities, then the result is positive support

The results of this study show that social support has a positive and very significant effect on SWB. This is in accordance with previous research, including Shang (2022), (Brajša-Žganec et al., 2018) stated that social support is dependent on SWB, but from all three forms Social Support ( Family, Friends & Significant Other) only Social Support Friends alone has been proven to have an effect on subjective well-being. Gülaçtı (2010) also stated that of the three forms of social support, family support has the most significant effect on SWB. Even Dewi et al., (2021) adding that Family Support, Gratitude, and Self-Acceptance Simultaneously affect subjective well-being



The results of this study also show that social support has a positive and significant effect on gratitude, meaning that the more social support is received, the greater the sense of gratitude felt by mothers of children with special needs. This is also supported by the results of the research Hermansyah et al (2018) , which suggest that social support has a significant effect on gratitude. Moreover Rahmania & Nashori (2021), also stated that social support from family, friends, and significant others has a positive effect on gratitude and patience, but has a negative effect on stress. The support and help that parents get also make them even more grateful. Parents become even more grateful because they receive help from people who were unexpected to them before. This is in line with research conducted by Smith et al (2017) who found that individuals become more grateful when someone unexpectedly is generous and provides help and benefits to them. The value and benefits of the help received by parents also make them even more grateful. Parents are even more grateful because the help they receive is very useful and eases their burden when they have children with special needs.

The results of this study demonstrate that self-acceptance has a positive, highly significant effect on SWB. The importance of the role of Self-Acceptance in the mother's attitude towards the SWB that she has is shown by several studies conducted Xu et al. (2016), Muthmainah et al., (2019), Li et al. (2021) and Su et al. (2019). SWB is a broad concept for evaluating a person's life and emotional experiences, characterized by high life satisfaction, positive effects, and low negative effects. A person with a strong SWB is able to regulate emotions and overcome problems. Conversely, those with inadequate SWB tend to feel unhappy, full of negative thoughts and feelings, causing anxiety, anger, and even the risk of depression (Davey et al., 2019).

The results of this study also prove that gratitude has a positive and significant effect on SWB. This is in accordance with research Komarudin et al.(2022) , which states that gratitude can affect a person's happiness if he is able to accept himself as he is. With high self-acceptance, parents are expected to also have a high SWB. Grateful parents are those who accept everything they have without feeling lacking. This shows that Individuals with feelings of gratitude also affect their subjective well-being because gratitude is a form of positive expression that contributes to the creation of pleasant emotions (Megawati et al., 2019). In addition, they also feel happy with the meaning of life and appreciate what they have. Parents who are able to create SWB in themselves can be sure to have Self-Acceptance tall

The results of this study also demonstrate that self-acceptance significantly mediates the relationship between social support and SWB. Individual interaction in the family or with others, as well as the social support they get from their peers, family, and significant others, can not only motivate a mother positively but also help her feel accepted by the surrounding environment, feel that there are other people who can understand her, and not judge her. When the partner does not get support from the family, friends, and significant other, then the mother will feel rejected and not recognized because she has a child with special needs, so indirectly she feels anxious and depressed. Increased anxiety and depression are one of the indications that the SWB felt by mothers has decreased. Role Self-Acceptance by the mother, which involves accepting her identity as a parent of a child with special needs, is very important. This acceptance leads to the provision of love, attention, warmth, comfort, and support, which has a significant impact on the well-being of the child (Rahayu et al, 2022; Kristiadi & Soetjiningsih, (2024). Winarsih et al. (2020) Argues that self-acceptance is a positive attitude towards oneself, accepting one's shortcomings without negative feelings such as shame, guilt, or



inferiority, and freedom from anxiety about the judgment of others; the determining factor in the emergence of self-acceptance is social support from those around them. For mothers who have children with special needs, self-acceptance is essential to provide the necessary care and affection. Without a mother's self-acceptance, many negative impacts are caused in her parenting of children and families.

The importance of gratitude in mediating the relationship between social support and SWB is also demonstrated in this study. The results of this study are consistent with research (Dewi & Nasywa, 2019) indicating that social support, as an external factor, and gratitude, as an internal factor, have a significant effect on SWB. Putra et al (2019), expressing gratitude to parents who have children with special needs is characterized by parents who always pray for their children as a form of gratitude to God, accept the child's condition as it is, try the best for the child, have a positive affectation and feel satisfaction in life, have a prosocial nature, experience improvement in terms of worship, take wisdom and learn from the child's condition and participate in events and activities related to limitations on their children. Parents who also experience gratitude in their lives because of the support provided by their respective spouses, parents both fathers and mothers support each other, strengthen each other and try their best for their children with special needs. In addition, parents get support from family, neighbors, friends, and people they did not expect to support them. This is in line with research conducted by Nura & Sari (2018) researchers who found that social support can influence and increase gratitude in parents of children with special needs. Gratitude toward parents also has a positive effect, making them experience positive emotions and helping minimize the negative emotions they feel when they have children with special needs. Where parents do not close themselves off from the environment, are not ashamed of the condition of their children with special needs, and do not feel negative emotions when facing their children. In addition, parents also feel satisfaction in their lives when they have children with special needs.

The results of this study confirm previous findings that social support plays a crucial role in improving psychological well-being, particularly for mothers of children with special needs (Carpenter et al., 2016; Cavonius-Rinkaya et al., 2019). Adequate social support can provide a sense of security, acceptance, and understanding within the community, thereby reducing stress levels and improving mothers' emotional adaptability.

Furthermore, these results also confirm that gratitude plays a key mediator in the relationship between social support and subjective well-being. This aligns with Fredrickson's (2004) Broaden and Build theory, which posits that positive emotions, such as gratitude, can broaden an individual's thinking and build long-term psychological resources. Grateful mothers tend to view their child's condition positively, find meaning in parenting, and exhibit greater optimism for their child's future.

In addition to gratitude, self-acceptance has also been shown to be an important factor in strengthening subjective well-being. Mothers with high self-acceptance tend to accept their child's condition without feelings of guilt, shame, or anger. This attitude enables them to provide consistent attention, affection, and emotional support to their children, which in turn increases their own happiness and life satisfaction.

In practice, the results of this study suggest that guidance and counseling interventions for parents of children with special needs should emphasize strengthening two key aspects: increasing gratitude and developing self-acceptance. Through a



strengths-based counseling approach or positive emotion-based therapy, counselors can help mothers develop a positive perspective on parenting challenges.

To broaden the generalizability of the findings, future research should conduct cross-cultural comparisons. Research in other countries with different social and cultural contexts could enrich our understanding of how social support, gratitude, and self-acceptance interact to influence subjective well-being. This approach would strengthen the research's contribution to the global literature on the psychological well-being of parents of children with special needs.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study confirm that self-acceptance and gratitude significantly mediate the effect of social support on subjective well-being among mothers of children with special needs. These findings strengthen the theoretical foundations of Subjective Well-Being and Social Support theories by emphasizing the importance of internal emotional regulation and external relational resources in maintaining psychological health. In practice, this study suggests that counselors, school psychologists, and family therapists should design interventions to cultivate gratitude and self-acceptance to enhance parental well-being. Intervention programs can include structured gratitude journaling, group counseling focused on acceptance, and psychoeducation for families to build supportive networks. Such approaches can reduce stress and increase resilience among parents caring for children with special needs. Future research is encouraged to test this integrative model across diverse cultural contexts and to include fathers or extended family to enrich the understanding of family well-being dynamics.

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