

## **RESILIENCE: PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE CHILD OF PARENTAL DIVORCE AND THE DEATH OF PARENTS**

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### **Abstract**

Losing both of parents due to divorce and death is a traumatic event that provides a source of stress in life. Stress sources will be bad for the life of individuals if they do not have the ability to overcome the problems. Individuals need a capability called resilience. Resilience is a capacity to respond in a healthy and productive way when faced with misery or trauma. If the individual has resilience ability then any difficulties can be encountered after the traumatic event will be viewed positively. The purpose of this study was to understand how the dynamics of psychological resilience on the child of parental divorce and the death of parents. Subjects in this study consisted of one person based on typical case sampling. Typical cases raised are divorce and then the death of both parents. The research data was collected using semi-structured interview method. The data analysis used a thematic analysis.

The results of this study indicate that subjects have low resilience ability. This is known based on emerging themes that are adapted to resilience dimensions that Reivich and Shatte (2002) have encountered: problems in regulating emotions, impulse control, optimism, problem-causing analysis, empathy, self-efficacy and reaching out. The low ability to be attributable is caused by factors such as self-acceptance, lack of external support and problems in interpersonal relationships with others. Nevertheless, resilience sources such as subject involvement in social activities have a major effect on rebuilding the subject's view to rise from problems and become more positive individuals.

**Keywords:** Resilience, divorce of parents, death of parents

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

Every child expects full affection from both parents, but if both parents have a divorce will have a negative impact, not only for the parents themselves but also for their children. This impact affects the child's psychological condition as can make the child be quiet, low self-esteem, excessive naughty, low learning achievement and feel lost (M Yusuf, 2014). The impact of parental divorce also causes problems in the child's emotional development (Estuti, 2013).

Parents are the ones closest to the child. When a child is confronted with the event of death the parents, of course, make the child find it difficult to accept this fact. This is because death events can separate the relationship between parents and children. The death of both parents makes children lose the figure of parents as a place for children to get affection in full. The absence of a parent due to death is a stressful life

change and requires individuals to respond to adjustments (Atwater, 1999).

Childhood is seen as a critical building period in which children need protection because of their physical and psychological vulnerabilities. Children living with mentally ill parents are a risk factor for the emergence of mental illness except for individuals with good resilience (Gladstone, Boydell, & McKeever, 2006). It takes an ability to adapt after the trauma that happened to them. Early traumatic experiences such as divorce or death of the elderly affect the emergence of future depression (Poole, Dobson & Pusch, 2017), but the ability to become a protective and preventive agent to prevent depression and feeling neglected in children (Bucur, Bucur & Runcan, 2013; Schulz et al., 2014). Individuals need resilience. The success of this resilience ability can be influenced by autonomy and competence (the ability to adapt to the environment) (Thomas & Woodside, 2011) for adjustment in the face of successive trauma events. In this case, the trauma experienced is a parent's divorce and then the death of both parents. Resilience becomes the latest paradigm needed to understand the emergence of pathology. The purpose of this study to determine the psychological dynamics of children who experienced two trauma incidents of divorce and death of parents. The dynamics are seen mainly after the death of the parents. The research question in this research is how the ability of resilience of the subject to rise from the problem of life due to divorce and then the death of parents.

## **2 RESILIENCE**

### **2.1 Resilience**

Scientists view resilience as the ability to rise from a traumatic situation or event. Resilience is defined as the ability of a person to face adversity, tough and to achieve for a better life (Linley & Joseph, 2004). On the other hand, resilience is defined as the mental quality of one who helps it to develop well despite confronting a stressful situation (Connor & Davidson, 2003). A person who has the ability to resonate well will be able to develop more positively to focus more on the competencies that exist in him (Linley & Joseph, 2004). According to Reivich & Schatte (2002), resilience is the capacity to respond soundly and productively when faced with misery or trauma, which is necessary to manage the stresses of everyday life. The ability of resilience becomes important for individuals of all ages to respond to problems that occur in life because it will affect their ability to respond and respond to problems that occur in life positively.

### **2.2 Protective factors**

Brown (2015) found an effective way to reduce the risk of psychological problems caused by traumatic events experienced by individuals. Brown in his literature study concluded that factors such as locus of control, optimism, mindset and hardiness greatly affect one's ability to resilient.

#### **2.2.1 Locus of Control**

The existence of the locus of control, especially the internal locus of control (the belief that one can control events in life) can be the basic foundation of a person able to resilience with the problems of life he faces

#### **2.2.2 Mindset**

The growing mindset will result in a better behavioral change that is influenced by the previous learning process.

#### **2.2.3 Optimis**

A person with a pessimistic explanatory style will always think about his failure or his inability to accomplish something that can ultimately lead to depression. Conversely people with optimist explanatory style think about success so that influence to the perception of a better life.

#### **2.2.4 Hardiness**

Hardiness consists of three characteristics of control, commitment and challenge. Three characteristics that generate courage and motivation someone to work hard in the face of stressful circumstances that can develop in a more positive.

### **2.3 Dimensional resilience**

According to Reivich and Shatte (2002), there are seven abilities possessed of resilient individuals that are as follows

### 2.3.1 Emotional regulation

The child of the divorce victim and the death of a parent with good emotional regulation is able to remain calm from the traumatic state.

### 2.3.2 Impulse control

Impulse control is an individual's ability to control the desires, urges, preferences, and pressures that arise from within. Children with divorce victims and the deaths of parents who have good impulse controllers can see what they experienced by thinking first before acting.

### 2.3.3 Optimist

Child victims of divorce and death of parents believe that they still have bright hopes for the future. They continue to believe that they can achieve the ideal in life after the traumatic event experienced

### 2.3.4 Problem Cause Analysis

Child victims of divorce and death of parents have good cognitive analysis in identifying problems so as to deal with their problems of life more logically and systematically.

### 2.3.5 Empathy

A person who has a high sense of empathy tends to have positive social relationships. The six self-efficacies are to believe in the ability of yourself to solve problems effectively. Seventh reaching out is the ability to address the problem more positively.

### 2.3.6 Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is defined as believing in the ability of oneself to solve problems effectively (Bandura, 1977). Child victims of divorce and deaths of parents who have good self-efficacy are committed to problem-solving and never give up on the conditions and circumstances when finding that strategy used in solving a previously unsuccessful problem.

### 2.3.7 Reaching Out

It is a person's ability to find and form relationships with others, to ask for help, stories, and feelings to help each other solve both personal and interpersonal problems or talk about conflict within the family. Child victims of divorce and the death of parents who have high resilience will think and respond to problems in life with a positive.

## 2.4 Sources of resilience

Grotberg (2000) suggests resilience factors identified by different sources. The power of individuals in the personal use of the term "I Am", for external support used the term "I Have", while for interpersonal skills used the term "I Can".

### 2.4.1 I Am

Factor I Am is an inner strength that consists of personal feelings, attitudes and beliefs. Some of the personal qualities that affect I am are feelings of being loved and loving, self-proud, responsible and hopeful.

### 2.4.2 I Have

Is a source of resilience associated with the meaning of subjects to the amount of support provided by the social environment against him. Source I have some qualities that contribute to the formation of resilience, that is relationships based on full trust, home structures, and rules, role models, incentives for independence and access to health, education, security and welfare services.

### 2.4.3 I Can

I can is the ability of the individual to express feelings and thoughts in communicating with others. Some of the things that affect I can are communicating, solving problems, managing feelings and stimuli, measuring temperaments of oneself and others, looking for trustworthy relationships.

## 3 METHOD

This research uses phenomenology research design. According to Creswell (2015) phenomenology study is

a study that seeks to "essence" the meaning of a phenomenon experienced by some individuals. In this study, researchers applied a hermeneutic phenomenology research that sought, interpreted the experiences experienced by the research subjects. This study focuses on describing the resilience of children who experience divorce and death of parents. To know this the researcher will focus on the pictures of the impact of divorce and death of the parents experienced by the subject along with knowing the sources of resilience formation on the subject.

Data from interview result is descriptive then analysis of the answer (content analysis) which then in coding (coding) and identified to get the theme and category. In this study the researchers used thematic analysis. Thematic analysis by Boyatzis (in Poerwandari, 2005) is a process of coding information, which can produce a complex theme list, theme model or indicator, qualifications usually associated with the theme, or things in between or a combination of those already mentioned.

### 3.1 Subject

The number of subjects in this study was one person using a typical case sampling technique. Typical cases raised are divorce and death of parents. Patton (in Poerwandari, 2007) explains that the resulting data are not intended to be generalizable since the sample is not definitive but illustrative (giving a picture of a group considered normal representing the observed phenomenon).

### 3.2 Instrument dan Procedure

The researchers conducted data collection by interview. Researchers conducted face-to-face interviews, where there were several interview guidelines. The interview guidelines used are as follows:

**Table. 1 Interview Guide 1**

Theme	Interview guideline
Condition Before Divorce and death of parent	What is the condition of the family before the parent's divorce and die? (including the causes of divorce of family/conflict conditions, and self as a child)
Conditions during divorce and death of parents	What is the condition when divorce occurs? (including what age and its effects for yourself)
Condition after divorce and death of parent	What is the condition after divorce and death of the parents?

**Table 2. Interview Guide 2**

Theme	Interview guideline
Resilient source "I am"	How do you see yourself? What is the attitude of others towards you?
Resilient source "I have"	How is your relationship with the people around you? How do you get the facilities from your family?
Resilient source "I Can"	How do you relate to others? How you deal with the difficult situation you face?

**Table 3. Interview 3**

Components	Questions
Emotion Regulation	After the divorce and death of the parents, how do you respond to a problem?
Impulse Control	How do you respond to unexpected events happening in life?
Optimist	What are your future expectations?
Problem Cause Analysis	Tell me about what problems you face after divorce and death of the parents? How could that happen?

Empathy	How is your relationship with family? How is your relationship with peers? How is your relationship with the neighbors around?
Self-efficacy	Why do you think you can stick with what happened to you? What is your reasons to survive?
Reaching Out	How do you express the emotions you feel? How do you feel about the traumatic events you are experiencing right now?

### 3.3 Credibility and research ethics

Credibility is the extent to which a qualitative study can be trusted and accountable and can be used or applied. The credibility of qualitative studies lies in achieving the goal of exploring problems or describing settings, processes, social groups or complex interaction patterns (Poerwandari, 2005). To ensure the credibility of the researcher attach all verbatim from the interview result and the format of the participant's willingness letter as evidence to have conducted the research to the subject of the research along with the documentary evidence of subject involvement in social activities. In this research, the researcher provides informed consent in the form of participant's statement that he has been willing to be a research subject and fully involved to assist the researcher in completing the research data, from a document, interview recording etc.

## 4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Currently, the subject is aged 26 years, male sex, originally from Makasar, is Muslim and dominates in Yogyakarta. The next subject in short IM is currently taking a two-tier education majoring in Indonesian Literature in One of the Universities in Yogyakarta. The interview was conducted on May 23, 2017, for one hour 3 minutes at Rumah Coklat, Yogyakarta. Prior to the start of the study, researchers gave informed consent as evidence that the subject had agreed to be involved in the study.

IM is the youngest child and has a brother. IM parents divorced when he was 5 years old. IM's father works as a mechanic in the workshop and his mother as a housewife. Parental divorce is caused by several factors. First, the financial problem is the income of the subject father is not sufficient for family needs. Second, the nature of the subject father who does not work hard to earn a living. Third, the inter-parent interference in regulating the household relations of both parents of the subject, especially financial problems. After divorcing IM lived with his grandparents. IM also had lived with his uncle, but because his uncle also died IM eventually lived again with grandparents. Her mother went on to work as a female migrant worker (TKW) in Malaysia who worked as a tailor. Post-divorce needs of the school and everyday IM comes from his mother's income while his father has never again taken care of IM needs. After the IM divorce confessed, grew up as an unwilling and stubborn child. This nature he admits as a result of the care of his grandparents who are also hard in educating IM.

In School IM often fight with his friends even he intends not to continue school because he felt let alone by his grandparents and did not provide a good education for IM to continue education. Luckily IM is not involved in the environment of adolescents who use drugs, so IM can still finish his studies. When IM class 2 SMA mother died because of the bus hit, 3 months after that his father who died of illness. Fortunately, as long as a migrant worker in Malaysia IM mother managed to save so it can buy 3 plots of land leased, built homes and made gardening land. That is the source of income to finance the IM school until IM successfully complete his S1 studies. Grandmother and grandfather IM work as a tailor and do not really care about the future of IM.

IM once enlisted as a police officer, army, IPDN (Institute of Domestic Government), Immigration, aviation, navy and applied to be a student at two universities but all were rejected. But it turned out luck has not been his side. While on the other hand his grandparents never gave support to the choice of IM, besides that also uncle who promised to help IM looking for work after undergraduate graduation also died when IM finished his study. Finally IM struggled to set up his own life. After finishing undergraduate IM regularly followed social activities, IM met many people with the background. It came from there that he realized that he was nothing. Finally, after graduating from college, he chose to work as a teacher. His insights became wider, his hard and gruff nature slowly diminished as he met new people until he finally intended to continue his studies to a higher level with a scholarship.

Trauma events ranging from divorce to parental death plus post-traumatic IM events are faced with

indifferent and intolerant family patterns and work rejection in many places would certainly make IM struggled to survive and design a better future. IM admitted he never felt the affection of his parents, felt lonely, felt ignored and had no place to share stories. Everything that is desired must be fought for itself because it is not full of family support. IM also has no close friends because of her low self-esteem with her family background. IM often cried in his room at once regretted because he had not had time to serve his parents before they died.

Researchers conducted a brief interview with a significant person the subject of his grandmother about the truth of the story that has been submitted subject. The same thing is acknowledged by her grandmother that both the subject's parents have actually divorced and died. As a proof that the subject is really active in the organization is the researcher asked the subject to show certificates of evidence of subject involvement in various activities on and off campus. Several documents proved that the subject is really involved in the activities of the students, attending national and international conferences as well as other social activities.

**Table 4. Description of Subject State**

Component	Information
Conditions before divorce and death of parents	The subject has known that both parents are often in conflict
The period of divorce and death of the parents	Divorce occurs when the subject is 5 years old. The subject had no physical and psychological proximity to both parents so that at the time of the death of his parents when the subject was 16 years old did not feel a significant loss.
Condition after divorce and death of parent	Staying with grandparents, then living with his uncle, because he died too, finally stayed back with grandparents.

**Table 5. Summary of Subject Resilience Resources**

No	Impact of Divorce and death of parents
1	The impact of divorce makes the subject not close to his family
2	Feel the loneliness of losing the figure of both parents
3	Having a problem with his character that is stubborn and difficulty trusting others
4	Not open to family circumstances and low self-esteem with family background.

**Table 6. Summary of Subject Resilience Resources**

No	I am	I have	I can
1	Negative self-image (low self-esteem, difficulties in expressing feelings of love with others, closed with problems and loneliness)	Mother's savings	Able to understand feelings and overcome them
2	Do not have strong ambitions for future targets	Engage in organizations and social activities	Try not to depend on others
3	Just live life as it is	Have the drive to be independent	Strive to realize the ideals of his mother who wants to become a teacher
			Attempts to repay the services of the institution that has granted her a scholarship

**Table 7. Summary of Success Characteristics Subject Resilience**

Components	Description
Emotion Regulation	Grumpy, rude and cranky
Impulse Control	Less controlled because the subject took a decision without making consideration with his family
Optimist	Not eager to design future targets
Problem Cause Analysis	Know the causes of problems and failures that

	occur in his life
Empathy	Withdraw from friendship due to low self-esteem with family background. the subject trains himself to be independent and independent of others, while the dimension of reaching out the subject remains positively positive that whatever happens to him is already God's scenario for his good.
Self Efficacy	Train himself to be independent and convinced that who can change the subject's fate is himself
Reaching out	Being able to communicate with others and assume that everything that happens in his life must have a blessing

#### **4.1 Analysis of psychological dynamics of subject resilience**

Children who have experienced divorce and parental deaths require resilience and seek sources of resilience so that children can continue to live more positively. These sources can be influenced by family, peers, cultural values, religiosity, and social environment. In the end make the individual able to avoid stress and depression are pressing but still productive (Ruswahyuningsi & Afiatin, 2013). In the obtained data about the characteristics of resilient individuals in the subject looks resilient characteristics that do not develop positively in individuals, especially on the dimensions of emotional regulation, impulse control, optimism, and empathy. A person who has the ability to resonate well will be able to develop more positively to focus more on the competencies that exist in him (Linley & Joseph, 2004). Similar results indicate that the effects of parental divorce also cause problems in children's emotional development (Estutio, 2013) Resilience to children of divorce victims and deaths of parents can be seen from their ability to explore positive things and their ability to utilize sources of relativity well so that it can grow positively.

Analysis of the causes of subject resilient resources is based on the factors I Am, I Have and I can (Grotberg, 2000). Judging from the factor I Am, the subject has difficulty to love others and the subject is not proud of what he has achieved. Subjects find it difficult to open up with others especially with regard to family conditions because everything is considered useless due to the death of the people he loves. Factor I Have, the financial support prepared by the subject's mother for his success so as to make the subject is obliged to rise up and determined hard to realize his dreams as well as the dream of his mother who wants to become a teacher. Subjects are also active in the world of organizations inside and outside the campus to fill in the empty time on the sidelines of lectures. Subjects involved in organizations engaged in education of remote schools. Those factors create him able to do resilience (I can) by educating himself independently to solve his own problems and not depend entirely on others. The subject also feels heavily indebted to the institution that has awarded a scholarship to him so he is determined to want to send other people to school and build a boarding school. Loneliness due to longing with both parents conducted the subject by following the volunteer teaching activities because according to him meet new people can successfully change his point of view regarding to survive strongly and positively. The existence of protector's influence that makes the subject, in the end managed to build his view returned alive. This change is influenced by experience factors that have been felt, as Brown (2015) found that the subject has an internal locus of control, mindset, and good hardiness.

Low subject resilience is characterized by a sense of inferiority, closeness and the absence of external support to make the subject of designing the future well without even having the spirit of achievement due to excessive self-esteem with family circumstances. This is consistent with research conducted by Lennon & Heaman (2015) that Individuals with low resilience ability are characterized by low self-esteem, high perceptions of stress, and low interpersonal support that will adversely affect the child's psychological development.

Post-traumatic events experienced by the subject also shows that the subject has problems in making adjustments. Seen from the subject who is not confident to be friends because of his family conditions. Accordance with the results of research conducted by Ningrum (2013) that individuals who are able to adapt to the environment are individuals who are able to accept reality and are able to solve every problem faced with good emotional control, confident, open, purposeful, and responsible answer can also establish relationships in a quality way. The individual's ability to positively interpret events in his life is a form of deep self-acceptance of himself and his personal situation that includes the past, present, and future (in Ruswahyuningsi & Afiatin, 2013). On the subject of the study, the form of self-acceptance that arises is not based on the subject's subject and the subject's family but the external environment of the subject so that he

can fully accept the traumatic event experienced.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The impact of divorce and death of the most influential parents is the emergence of psychological problems such as loneliness, low self-esteem, difficulty trusting others and lack of mentoring in family education. Subjects have a low resilience ability, but the resilience sources of the subject, especially those originating from the I factor have been able to make the subject overcome the effects of divorce and death of the parents and succeed in rebuilding the expectations of those who have been sad. It also found an internal factor of locus of control, mindset and hardiness in the subject after the death of the parents so this is what makes the subject is obliged to repay the kindness of his mother, the institution that has sent its education and reach his dreams in the field of education which ultimately have a big effect on the dynamics subject resilience.

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