

Gratitude and Resilience among Students with Disabilities in Indonesia

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Abstract

Students with disabilities face challenges in their daily lives due to their limitations. This often causes them a lot of stress, as they have to adapt to an environment dominated by non-disabled students. The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between gratitude and resilience in students with disabilities. This study used a quantitative method with a correlation design. The sample of this study consisted of 108 students with disabilities obtained by purposive sampling technique. Measurements were made using the Indonesian Gratitude Scale (Skala Bersyukur Indonesia (SBI)) ($\alpha=0.88$) and The Connor-Davidson Resilience scale (CD-RISC) ($\alpha=0.92$). Data analysis used Karl Pearson's Product Moment method and found a correlation coefficient between gratitude and resilience of 0.316 with a significance of 0.000 ($p<0.01$). The results showed a significant positive relationship between gratitude and resilience in students with disabilities. This shows that gratitude is a factor that plays a role in increasing the resilience of students with disabilities. The implication of this study is the importance of students with disabilities having gratitude that can help them adapt and thrive in difficult situations. It is hoped that future research can use different variables or different subjects to broaden understanding in this field of positive psychology.

Keywords: *Gratitude, Resilience, Students with Disabilities, Product Moment Method, Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale*

1. Introduction

People with disabilities frequently experience poor treatment in daily life, including being ignored by their environment and even by their own families. As a result, many of them may decide not to continue their education and may find it difficult to form relationships and interact with others (Bartz, 2020; Jarus et al., 2023). As society frequently stigmatizes those with disabilities, discrimination frequently results in unfavorable treatment and attitudes (DeMatthews et al., 2020; Silván-Ferrero et al., 2020). In addition, they encounter prejudice from faculty members who sometimes mistrust their abilities to study and continue their education at the university level (Moriña, 2017). Furthermore, the negative stigma that students with disabilities receive tends to result in relatively poor mental health, which can further hinder their ability to adapt (Chen, 2021).

The availability of the facilities including equipment that can suitable their needs to enhance learning, as well as personal and communication hurdles, are other obstacles that students with disabilities must overcome when adapting and going about their daily lives (Martín & Moriña, 2022; Huwae, Saija, & Dese, 2022). Students with limited mobility face tough obstacles due to physical and architectural limits (Odame, Opoku, Nketsia, & Nanor, 2021). Some of the many challenges faced by students with disabilities in their daily lives at universities include the narrow elevators or lack of accessible lifts, inaccessible toilets, desks in classrooms and laboratories that are difficult for wheelchairs to reach due to being too high and narrow, and libraries that lack braille books or literature (Zabeli, Kaçaniku, & Koliqi, 2021). It is usual for students with disabilities to have a negative experience because of the numerous issues and constraints they face, leading them to leave school (McKinney & Swartz, 2022).

According to the 2020 Inclusiveness Index data quoted from The Ministry of National Development Planning/ National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas) disability study report (Fajri et al., 2021), Indonesia ranks 125th internationally in the implementation of inclusive development, which is still far behind compared to other developed countries. The final educational attained by people with disabilities is then significantly lower—nearly twice as low as that of people without disabilities with a proportion of attainment at the tertiary level of 5% compared to 10% for non-disabled people, according to the 2020 National Socio-Economic Survey (Susenas) data. The ultimate educational attainment at the tertiary level for people with disabilities has fallen from 2018 to 2020, from a percentage of 5.19% to 5.12%, according to the National Socio-Economic Survey Susenas data for 2018 and 2020 (Fajri et al., 2021).

To address this issue, researchers conducted interviews with five respondents throughout January and February 2023 to observe the phenomena faced by students with disabilities with various types of disabilities from various universities. Based on the preliminary information collected by the researchers, respondents generally claim that they experience a variety of difficulties while carrying out their daily lives as students. The respondents frequently endure unfair treatment from the people around them, including bullying and discriminatory views. Due to the fact that the majority of deaf students are not proficient sign language users, they have trouble connecting with their peers and lecturers. Students are expected to comprehend and master language that adheres to the conventions of scientific writing in the lectures themselves. This poses a challenge for deaf students because they have trouble comprehending linguistic ideas that adhere to the conventions of scientific writing. In addition, they face challenges since the infrastructure and facilities on campus are insufficient to support the needs of students with disabilities. The challenges faced include the absence of sign language interpreters for deaf students, difficulty getting to classrooms due to the lack of designated wheelchair-accessible routes, and lack of support from the school.

Due to these restrictions, respondents have a hard time relating to their surroundings, and they worry about being rejected, lonely, and undervalued by those

around them. They find it challenging to attend lectures due to their learning constraints. As a result, they are forced to work more than other students to adjust and pay attention during lectures. As they must adjust and follow other students who have adequate skills, respondents occasionally experience a great deal of pressure because of their limitations. Thus, in order to overcome these constraints and compete academically with other kids, students with disabilities must be able to handle a variety of challenging and stressful situations (Grafiyana, 2018). For this reason, students must learn resilience.

Resilience plays an important role for individuals who face many obstacles and limitations in their daily life functions (Silván-Ferrero et al., 2020). Resilience can be defined as the capacity for survival and growth, in this case for students with disabilities to deal with the challenges they confront (Connor & Davidson, 2003). Resilience can be viewed from both reactive and proactive perspectives. While proactive resilience is a student's capacity to adjust to change and perceived control in anticipating problem-focused methods, reactive resilience stresses individual tolerance skills and spiritual conduct for emotion-focused coping techniques (de la Fuente et al., 2022).

Resilience is shaped during its development by four key components. The first component is determination, which refers to a person's strong aims and resolve to succeed or survive. The second element revolves around fortitude, reflecting an individual's capacity to endure challenging circumstances without surrendering. The third factor is adaptability, while the fourth is the ability to bounce back from adversity (Taormina, 2015). In addition, individuals with low resilience face an elevated risk of encountering psychological stress (Tian et al., 2016). On the contrary, students with disabilities with high resilience levels may bolster their self-confidence, enhance their ability to engage in lectures, and foster more positive relationships with their peers in academic settings (Ganguly & Perera, 2019).

Resilience is impacted by a variety of factors, including self-esteem, social support, psychological well-being, and gratitude (Kardaş & Yalçın, 2021). Individuals who cultivate gratitude tend to have a wider range of behavioral choices and coping strategies, which can lead to a shift in their mindset during stressful situations, allowing them to concentrate on the positive aspects of daily life (Kumar, Neetu, & Sharma, 2021). Gratitude can also enable students to perceive and accept reality in a more optimistic light as they navigate challenging circumstances (Zainoodin, Hutassuhut, Bakar, and Wardhani, 2021). Thus, it becomes evident that gratitude serves as a protective factor, bolstering the resilience of individuals, including students with disabilities, in their ability to confront the stresses encountered in their daily lives (Hwei, L. & Abdullah, 2017).

Gratitude can be defined as the driving force behind acts of compassion in life, characterized by mutual dependency, mutual penetration, and mutuality that shape our existence (R. A. Emmons & Stern, 2013). It is an attitude of valuing the gifts in every life and recognizing the importance of expressing that appreciation (Watkins, Woodward, Stone, & Kolts, 2003). In addition, gratitude assists people, such as students with disabilities, to

respond more effectively to their environment (Emmons & McCoullough, 2004). Three factors contribute to the development of gratitude. Firstly, a sense of abundance suggests that grateful individuals perceive richness in their lives and do not feel lacking in essential aspects. Secondly, having a simple appreciation means that people with gratitude tend to find joy in life's small pleasures. Lastly, showing appreciation for others indicates that people who have gratitude value the contributions made by others in their lives (Watkins et al., 2003).

Low gratitude, in this issue for students with disabilities, can have negative consequences, making them feel anxious, restless, inferior, and always comparing themselves to others (Strnadová, Hájková, & Květoňová, 2015; Naudé, Nel, & de Beer, 2024). In addition, a lack of gratitude will negatively affect a person's psychological well-being (Cholilah & Sulistiyowati, 2022; Andriani & Huwae, 2024). On the other hand, those who have gratitude and a high sense of self-worth tend to value their ability to live (Ayudia & Solicha, 2019). Students with high levels of gratitude can face problems and perceive them positively because their hearts and minds are filled with positive emotions. (Zainoodin et al., 2021).

With all the restrictions they must adhere to survive, students with disabilities must deal with a variety of issues. Students with disabilities are expected to be resilient in the face of these challenges so that they can endure the challenging circumstances that they may encounter. There is undoubtedly gratefulness or gratitude in how they live that they exhibit in good or bad circumstances. In this example, for students with impairments, gratitude itself can aid people in lessening their propensity to avoid difficulties or unpleasant feelings (Lin, 2015). Thus, gratitude assists individuals, particularly those with disabilities, in dealing with obstacles more effectively. Gratitude allows them to find better methods to cope with problems and feel more positive, not perceive the problems they face as burdensome to manage their problems and keep them from being too overwhelming (Listiyandini, 2016). On the other hand, a lack of gratitude for individuals might cause problems in their environment (Phillips et al., 2023; Bono, Duffy, & Moreno, 2022).

Previous research by Ayudia and Solicha (2019) discovered a significant positive association between gratitude and resilience, with one aspect of appreciation, a sense of abundance, being key in boosting gratitude for disabled persons. According to Shabrina, Khusristanti, and Listiyandini (2020), gratitude is vital in resilience, with the higher the level of gratitude, the higher the level of resilience. However, this contradicts the findings of Tong et al., (2022), who claim that there is no association between gratitude and resilience since other qualities, such as emotional intelligence, influence gratitude.

Based on the findings, students with disabilities, with all their limitations, must rely on their individual strengths and abilities to cope with the social stigma they face. They, too, confront obstacles and difficulties in their daily lives as students with disabilities. The issues and difficulties that they face are triggered by themselves, their social

surroundings, and the university itself. This can affect their mental health, making it difficult for them to adapt, get through, and face their challenges. Therefore, they need to develop resilience through their personal strengths and abilities to deal with existing issues. To achieve resilience, students with disabilities require strategies, such as gratitude, for them to be resilient.

2. Method

This study is considered a quantitative study with a correlation design. The participants in this study are Indonesian students with disabilities. Students with disabilities in this study refer to students with physical restrictions or special requirements. Purposive sampling is applied in this study, and the total number of participants who matched the desired criteria is 108.

Table 1. Demographics of Research Participants

Participant Classification	Information	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	50	46.3
	Female	58	53.7
College Generation	2017	2	2
	2018	1	1
	2019	7	6
	2020	17	16
	2021	45	42
	2022	36	33
Type of Disabilities	Autism	4	4
	Autism and ADHD	1	1
	Low Vision	1	1
	Congenital Physical Disability	27	25
	Physical Disability Due to Polio	7	6
	Physical Disability Due to Accident	12	11
	Visual Impairment (Blindness)	26	24
	Visual Impairment and Autism	1	1
	Hearing Impairment (Deafness)	25	23
	Hearing Impairment and Speech Impairment	4	4
Degree of Disability	Degree of Disability 1	35	32
	Degree of Disability 2	43	40
	Degree of Disability 3	30	28
Type of Residence	Dormitory	4	4
	Boarding House	29	27
	House	75	69

From April 19th to June 1st, 2023, researchers collect the data online by distributing questionnaires in the form of a Google form (<https://forms.gle/ixugyFbV7WWLoR4k7>) via

a link sent on digital networks such as Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, and Telegram. In addition to using the digital platform, researchers distribute it to several universities in Indonesia that have disability communities or services, including the Center for Disability Studies and Services (PSLD) Brawijaya University and the Center for Disability Studies and Services (PSLD) Argopuro University Jember. The Brawijaya Center for Disability Studies and Services granted ethical approval for this study under the code 6821/UN10.B10.02/TU/2023.

This study employs a gratitude scale as well as a resilience scale. The Gratitude Resentment and Appreciation Test (GRAT) is used to assess gratitude, and it is based on aspects identified by Watkins et al, (2003)W, namely a sense of abundance, simple appreciation, and appreciation for others. Listiyandini et al, (2020) translated this measurement tool, the Indonesian Gratitude Scale (SBI), into Indonesian, based on aspects from Watkins et al., (2003). The Indonesian Gratitude Scale (SBI) consists of 30 items organized around two statements, favorable and unfavorable, and uses a Likert scale with six answer options: Very Unsuitable (STS), Not Appropriate (TS), Not Appropriate (KS), Fairly Suitable (CS), Suitable (S), and Very Suitable (SS). "I feel that God is unfair to me because of my current conditions or limitations," for example, is an item on this scale. The gratitude variable's item's total correlation coefficient is in the range $r = .442-.722$, with a Cronbach Alpha reliability rating of $=.880$.

The Connor Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) is used to assess resilience, referring to the components of resilience stated by Connor and Davidson (2003) and has been adapted in the Indonesian form by (Wahyudi et al., 2020). Personal competence, trust in instincts, positive acceptance of change and intimate relationships with others, control, and spiritual impact are some of these aspects. The resilience scale consists of 25 items, all of which are positive statements; for example, "I can adapt to the changes I face in college" is an item on this scale. The number range 0 (if the statement is felt to be very untrue with your condition), 1 (if the statement is felt to be almost not true with your condition), 2 (if the statement is felt to be sometimes true with your condition), 3 (if the statement is felt to be often true in your condition), and 4 (if the statement is felt to be true almost every time in your condition) is utilized in the response to this answer. The validity coefficient of resilience items is between .351 and .715, with a Cronbach Alpha reliability rating of .920. Furthermore, testing of the data obtained in this research is assisted with the help of IBM SPSS Statistics 25 for Windows software using Karl Pearson's Product Moment correlation.

3. Result

3.1 Descriptive Analysis

According to the descriptive statistical data in Table 2, the 108 participants in appreciation had scores ranging from 51 to 114. The standard deviation achieved was 15.656 and the average obtained was 87.69. Then there is resilience, which has a score

that ranges from 28 to 96. The standard deviation obtained is 13,000, and the average obtained is 65.72.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gratitude	108	51	114	87.69	15.656
Resilience	108	28	96	65.72	13.000

Table 3 shows that the average gratitude score obtained is 87.69 from 108 participants, indicating that gratitude held by students with disabilities is in the high category with a percentage of 39%. The average score obtained from 108 participants was 65.72, with a percentage of 38% suggesting that the resilience of students with disabilities is in the medium range.

Table 3. Categorization of Gratitude and Resilience

	Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gratitude	$111.174 \leq x \leq 114$	Very High	2	2
	$95.518 \leq x \leq 111.174$	High	42	39
	$79.862 \leq x \leq 95.518$	Medium	36	33
	$64.206 \leq x \leq 79.862$	Low	17	16
	$51 \leq x \leq 64.206$	Very Low	11	10
Resilience	$85.22 \leq y \leq 125$	Very High	12	11
	$96.4 \leq y \leq 112.4$	High	18	17
	$80.4 \leq y \leq 96.4$	Medium	41	38
	$64.3 \leq y \leq 80.4$	Low	32	30
	$49 \leq y \leq 64.3$	Very Low	5	5

3.2 Assumption Test

Normality testing reveals that the gratitude variable is 1.321 with sig. = .061 ($p > .05$) and the resilience variable is .704 with sig. = .705 ($p > .05$). Linearity testing also reveals that gratitude and resilience achieved an F_{count} linearity test result of 17.706 with a sig value. = .000 ($p < .05$), indicating that gratitude and resilience in students with disabilities are linear.

3.3 Hypothesis Test

The Pearson correlation value is obtained at .333 with sig. = .000 ($p < .01$) between the gratitude aspect, sense of abundance, and resilience, based on the results of correlation test calculations for each aspect of gratitude towards the resilience of students with disabilities in Table 4 indicating that there is a very significant relationship. The Pearson correlation value for the simple appreciation feature of resilience is .235 with

sig. = .007 ($p < .01$), indicating that there is a very significant association between simple appreciation and resilience. Furthermore, the Pearson correlation value is .291 with sig. = .001 ($p < .01$) in the aspect of gratitude, and appreciation for others, indicating that there is a very significant association between this feature and resilience.

*Table 4. Correlation Test Between Gratitude and Resilience
in students with disabilities*

	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4	5
Gratitude	87.69	15.656	1				
Sense of Abundance	22.22	4.721	.861**	1			
Simple Appreciation	18.62	3.403	.856**	.570**	1		
Appreciation for Others	46.84	8.875	.978**	.768**	.824**	1	
Resilience	65.72	13.000	.316**	.333**	.235**	.291**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the .01 level (1 tailed).

4. Discussion

The findings indicate that the hypothesis provided in this study is correct and that there is a strong positive association between gratitude and resilience among students with disabilities. This is confirmed by correlation analysis, which demonstrates the existence of a relationship between gratitude and resilience, as evidenced by the correlation coefficient $r = 0.316$ with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). In other words, as the level of gratitude rises, so will the resilience of students with disabilities. In contrast, if their sense of gratitude diminishes, so will their resilience. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Ayudia and Solicha (2019), who discovered a substantial positive connection between gratitude and resilience.

In addition, according to this research, the reasons why students with disabilities can have resilience abilities are obtained due to their gratitude. The effective contribution of gratitude obtained from this research is 10%, which from these results means that gratitude is a factor related to increased resilience in students with disabilities. These findings support research conducted by Shabrina, Khusristanti, and Listiyandini (2020) which proves that gratitude plays an important role in resilience. Thus, gratitude can predict optimal functioning which can influence the resilience abilities of students with disabilities. The results of this research reveal that gratitude is a factor of resilience. It confirms the research done by Kumar et al. (2021), which proves that gratitude is a factor that can influence resilience.

According to the findings, the majority of students with disabilities, 42 participants or 39% of all participants, characterize their gratitude as high. This suggests that students with disabilities have a strong ability to value their lives and enjoy and identify the good

values they receive, which can assist them in maintaining their mental health. High gratitude can also be interpreted as a resource for maintaining excellent mental health and the ability to discover positive coping strategies (Jans-Beken et al., 2020).

Students with disabilities who are grateful might be described as individuals who are grateful to God and others, who are happy, and who appreciate what they have gotten in life from God or other people. This motivates them to do the same with what they have, to appreciate everything in life as a gift, and to understand how vital it is to express their gratitude. The findings of this research explain that students with disabilities express positive emotions such as contentment and appreciation for their surroundings and the basic things in life. Therefore, when confronted with obstacles or challenges in life, this condition might enable them to perceive everything positively. This study supports previous research that claims gratitude functions as positive behavior expressed in order to remain emotionally strong in the face of difficulties in effectively overcoming difficult situations and stressors (Dwiwardani, Bollinger, Marks, Steele, Doolin, & Davis, 2014). Their ability to generate positive feelings and develop less depressive symptoms is likewise connected with gratitude (Petrocchi & Couyoumdjian, 2016). These situations can therefore assist people in becoming more grateful, and gratitude can assist people in becoming more resilient (Tong et al., 2022).

The resilience capacities of students with disabilities who participated in this study are largely in the medium range, with 41 out of 108 participants (or 38% of all participants) falling into this category. This indicates that students with disabilities can overcome problems and constraints in their daily lives. They can also survive and flourish in the face of problems and challenges. As a result of their ability to overcome these obstacles, students with disabilities have a reduced risk of psychological stress. The findings of this study also support prior research by Yuhenita and Indiaty (2021), which discovered that low levels of resilience can influence psychological pressures such as high levels of stress.

According to this study, students with impairments indicate resilience characteristics that are described as having a sense of abundance for what they have without feeling lacking in their lives. This can be seen in the reflection of students with disabilities sense of sufficiency through emotions of happiness with themselves and happiness that exist in themselves and because of the presence of other people around them. As a result, students with disabilities who are grateful focus more on and utilize what they have rather than looking for flaws or what they don't have. These findings support the findings of McCanlies, Gu, Andrew, and Violanti (2018), who discovered that people who feel grateful to themselves are more likely to appreciate the good in their lives and are less critical of themselves.

This study also demonstrates the determination of disabled pupils through their simple admiration. Appreciating basic things like worship as a kind of thanks for life to God and carrying out daily tasks as best as possible as a gesture of gratitude to life and God. Aside from that, those who are resilient are more likely to demonstrate gratitude to

those around them by assisting others and returning kindness to others as a sort of appreciation for the aid they have received. This study confirms the idea of Wu, Chi, Lin, and Dhu (2018) that grateful people appreciate everything they have, encouraging them to focus on the positive elements of life and engage in prosocial activity.

In this study, students with disabilities express their gratitude to those around them. This is evident in their knowledge of the simplest joys derived from God and their life, as well as their recognition of the goodness that God has bestowed onto their life. Students with disabilities in this study also mention receiving simple awareness from others, realizing the role of others in their well-being, and having a positive attitude toward others. Appreciation for others will assist students with disabilities in developing meaningful relationships with them. Individuals who can recognize and respect other people tend to improve their social bonds and obtain more social support. When experiencing challenges, strong social support can provide emotional and practical help, enhancing a person's resilience (Zhang et al., 2016).

This study has various limitations that need to be noted. One of them is that this study does not define the age range of students with disabilities, resulting in an uneven age distribution. The age range is between 30 years and older, in particular, shows an unbalanced distribution. This is crucial to examine because restrictions may have an impact on the study's result. The limitation of this research also arises from the diversity of disabilities among participants. The diversity of disabilities among participants can affect various aspects, including their level of gratitude, how they cope with problems, and the treatment they receive from their surroundings. Therefore, in future research, it is important to consider the diversity of disabilities and how it may affect research outcomes. Another limitation is the demographic data obtained, particularly the degree of disability of students with disabilities, which must be filled out by the participants themselves. This offers the possibility of subjectivity while filling out data. This subjectivity may jeopardize the research's validity. Therefore, it is expected that future studies will take a new approach to minimizing subjectivity.

Despite its limitations, this study contributes significantly to our understanding of gratitude theory. This study also emphasizes the significance of a positive psychology viewpoint in the relationship between gratitude and resilience. Previous research has focused on positive affect, self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-regulation, and processes in explaining resilience (Baguri, Roslan, Hassan, Krauss, & Zeremohzzabieh, 2022; Pillay et al., 2022). This research, on the other hand, focuses on the importance of positive emotions, specifically gratitude, which can be a useful component in developing resilience, particularly for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities tends to have more vulnerable mental health because they often experience negative stigma and poor treatment from their social environment, which can make it difficult for them to adjust (Chen, 2021; Padang & Huwae, 2024). As disabled individuals, it is difficult for students to have and retain happy feelings given the many dynamics they confront in everyday life. However, this study demonstrates that they can experience these pleasant

emotions, which might aid them in their daily lives. As a result, this research can provide information and expertise for students with disabilities to become resilient persons by incorporating gratitude into their daily lives. Despite it is important for disabled students to acquire gratitude, it still needs to be acknowledged that gratitude alone is not enough. The support from government and society in creating equalities for disabled people is important, hence disabled students do not have to experience discrimination and stigmatization which would ease them in developing gratitude.

5. Conclusion

Based on the research conducted, it can be concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between gratitude and resilience in students with disabilities. The higher the level of gratitude that students with disabilities possess, the higher their resilience ability as well. In contrast, if the students with a disability have a low degree of gratitude, they are also likely to have a low level of resilience. In other words, students with disabilities who are grateful for themselves significantly improve their ability to achieve and develop strong resilience in the face of daily challenges.

There are various suggestions that researchers should express based on the studies that have been conducted, such that students with disabilities are expected to receive information or insight concerning gratitude and its consequences for resilience. The objective is that the information acquired will help students with disabilities realize the necessity of training and developing gratitude in all situations to increase resilience, which will help them survive and grow in their current difficult situations. In order to acquire more specific results, future researchers should pay attention to the age range of people that will be used. Furthermore, it is intended that future research will employ new factors or participants to broaden the scope of the study and present more diversified knowledge on this topic.

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