

## *Rising Through Challenges: A Phenomenological Study of Adversity Quotient in Single Mothers' Child Stimulation Efforts*

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Being a single mother presents various challenges, not only in terms of economic stability but also in meeting the needs of early childhood development. The adversity quotient is crucial for single mothers to face difficulties and devise strategies to provide the best stimulation for their children during the early stages of growth and development. **Objective:** This study aimed to explore the profile of the Adversity Quotient and the factors affecting single mothers' efforts to achieve optimal stimulation in early childhood. **Methods:** This study employed a phenomenological qualitative approach with three single mothers as subjects, domiciled in Pudak Village, Kumpeh Ulu District. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews and analyzed using interpretive phenomenological analysis to understand the participants' subjective experiences. **Results:** The adversity quotient among single mothers was reflected in their ability to overcome difficulties, self-control, independence, hard work, and high motivation in providing the best stimulation for their children. Factors supporting resilience included parental support, social support from the surrounding environment, religiosity, and gratitude. **Conclusion:** All participants demonstrated strong dimensions of resilience and its supporting factors, as they endeavored to meet the needs of stimulating early childhood development despite facing various challenges as single mothers.

**Keywords:** Adversity Quotient, Single Mother, Women's Empowerment, Early Childhood Stimulation, Parenting Practices

### INTRODUCTION

Every year, the divorce rate in Indonesia shows a significant upward trend. Based on data from the Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Culture, the number of divorce cases increased from 291,667 in 2020 to 447,743 in 2021, and continued to rise to 516,334 cases in 2022 (AsiaNews.network, 2023). Although there was a slight decrease in 2023 to around 463,654 cases, overall, there was a clear year-on-year increase during this period (Lokadata, 2024). According to (Rais, 2021), this increase is influenced by various factors, such as economic pressures and increasingly complex household conflicts during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Divorce cases are not only prevalent in large cities but also increase significantly in suburban districts such as Muaro Jambi Regency. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency of Jambi Province, throughout 2023, there were 538 recorded divorce cases in Muaro Jambi Regency, an increase compared to previous years (BPS Jambi Province, 2024). The Sengeti Religious Court of Muaro Jambi Regency noted that the number of divorce cases decided continues to rise each year. In 2023, the court decided 520 cases, up from 462 cases in 2022 (Jambi, 2024)

Research by (Mauliddina *et al.*, 2021) explains that many factors contribute to divorce. Generally, the causes include family conflicts stemming from household financial and economic problems, misalignment of activities and



shared time, domestic violence, changes in communication methods, and issues related to raising a family at a certain age.

The impact of divorce, which often begins with the separation of couples, can lead to the emergence of widowers and widows, making life difficult for each. For men, losing a wife means taking on all household responsibilities themselves, including chores such as cooking, washing, and cleaning—tasks typically performed by wives at home (Ousman and Bulut, 2022).

For women, the difficulties include economic hardship, stress, loss of confidence, traumatic experiences, life instability, and fear of starting new relationships (Taoheed, 2018). This fear often causes women to choose not to remarry and instead remain widows or single parents.

Nowadays, widows and women acting as single parents are increasingly common in society. Based on population data from Puduk Village—which is divided into four hamlets—there are 240 women who are divorced or widowed, representing about 19% of the total families in the village. This means nearly 2 out of 10 families are headed by a single mother (Liu and Wang, 2023).

Field observations by the researchers indicated that this data includes women across all age groups, from young adults to the elderly. However, only a fraction of these women actively raise children as single parents. This distinction is important because not all widowed or divorced women continue to fulfill parenting roles, especially if their children are already independent.

Research by (Barardehi, Babiarz and Mauldin, 2020) states that women decide to become single parents for various reasons, including a desire to focus on raising their children, comfort with solitude, and loyalty to their late husbands.

Lopresti (2023) reports that women who are single parents face many problems, with the most prominent being economic difficulties. The researcher conducted an interview with Participant Y, a single mother in Puduk Village. Participant Y stated that she felt various difficulties in her life after her husband's departure. These difficulties include economic problems, the burden of household responsibilities, and meeting

the needs of children who were previously usually assisted by husbands.

The realities faced by single mothers in Indonesia reveal complex psychological and economic challenges. Participant Y, a mother who lost her husband, described the transformation she experienced:

*"There were certainly many challenges, because the one who passed away was the head of the family, the person who used to provide for our daily needs. The first and most obvious problem was financial. Everything that was usually done by a man in the household suddenly became my responsibility."*

She further reflected:

*"Now I have to take on responsibilities, especially for the children. What used to be the role of the breadwinner has shifted to me, so I have to find ways to earn an income on my own."*

This testimony highlights the multidimensional burden faced by single mothers, where the need for financial independence is coupled with emotional endurance and psychological resilience. It also underscores the importance of examining parental competence in early childhood care from the perspective of those who bear these challenges alone.

Undoubtedly, women as single parents must make significant efforts to provide optimal stimulation in early childhood. The Adversity Quotient (AQ), or fighting power, is crucial for overcoming life's challenges. AQ plays a vital role when a woman as a single parent encounters difficulties.

AQ refers to a person's ability to survive adversity and to demonstrate resilience in overcoming difficulties (Stoltz, 1999). The results of the research conducted by (Naudé *et al.*, 2023) show that AQ is a form of intelligence used to handle problems. It is the capacity to direct thoughts, shift perspectives, and determine appropriate actions when facing challenges that could threaten happiness and life stability (Huda and Mulyana, 2017).

(Stoltz, 1999) explains that AQ has four dimensions, including control. This dimension indicates that an individual can manage her emotions, thoughts, and behaviors to overcome difficulties. The second dimension, origin and possession,

reflects one's ability to identify the cause of problems and take responsibility for her actions.

The third dimension, the range, pertains to one's ability to limit or expand her capacity to handle difficulties. The last dimension, endurance, refers to resilience and consistency in achieving success, maintaining a steadfast attitude to create opportunities and persevere through challenges (Stoltz, 1999).

A person with high AQ will always be motivated to improve their situation, striving to meet their needs despite hardships (DI, 2021); (Safi'i *et al.*, 2021).

In the context of single mothers, AQ is essential for balancing economic survival and nurturing their children's development. Single mothers must demonstrate resilience amid financial struggles, personal hardships, and the complex responsibilities of raising children alone. Therefore, this study aims to explore, through a phenomenological approach, the life experiences of single mothers in Puduk Village, focusing on how their AQ influences their ability to provide optimal early childhood stimulation. By examining their daily struggles and resilience-supporting factors, this research seeks to offer a comprehensive understanding of the strategies single mothers employ to thrive despite adversity.

## METHODS

This investigation was grounded in a qualitative, phenomenological framework designed to elucidate the lived experiences of single mothers concerning their Adversity Quotient (AQ). A cohort of three single mothers from Puduk Village, Kumpeh Ulu District, was selected through purposive sampling. Inclusion criteria mandated that participants be single parents with a child aged 0-6 years, a stipulation established to ensure the phenomenological depth and richness of the data required for this study.

Data were collected between February and September 2022 through in-depth, semi-structured interviews. This method was chosen for its capacity to generate rich, nuanced narratives of participants' lived realities. The transcribed data were analyzed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), a strategy that facilitated

systematic interpretation of the meanings attributed by participants to their experiences, thereby enabling the identification of essential themes related to resilience and parenting.

The scientific rigor of this study was systematically established through a comprehensive trustworthiness framework. Credibility was enhanced through source triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checking to validate interpretive accuracy. Transferability was addressed by providing detailed contextual descriptions, while an audit trail ensured both dependability and confirmability of the findings. The research protocol adhered to strict ethical guidelines and received formal approval from the Ethics Committee of the LPPM at Panca Sakti University, Bekasi (Certificate No. 003/LPPM.ECC/PSUB/VI/2025), safeguarding participant welfare throughout the study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After data collection, the researcher analyzed the data by describing each theme in detail, providing descriptive explanations, and including evidence from interview transcripts for each participant. The results were presented as an overview that highlighted the challenges faced by women as single parents in increasing family income and the factors that influence their Adversity Quotient (AQ) in providing early childhood stimulation.

**Table 1.** Research Participants

**Table 1.** Key Mental Health Challenges Among Santri in Pesantren

Initials	Age	Work	Condition
Y	35	Farmer	Divorce Death
H	34	Teacher	Divorce Life
G	38	Worker	Divorce Life

Source: Primary Data

### An Overview of the AQ of Women as Single Parents in Fulfilling the Best Stimulation in Early Childhood

#### Overcoming Difficulties

The difficulties faced by women as single parents are mostly related to economic issues and the challenges of caring for and accompanying their

children. In addition to lacking work experience, these obstacles also stem from limited time and space for mobility. Often, early childhood feels reluctant to be abandoned, requiring mothers to divide their attention between earning a living and providing optimal developmental stimulation. This situation demands that single mothers possess high mental resilience, creativity, and adaptability.

In facing these difficulties, women employ strategies such as daring to undertake work they are capable of, even if they lack prior experience. Besides demonstrating courage, they also consider whether their work might interfere with their relationship with their children, and therefore tend to avoid jobs that could hinder their bonding.

For participant Y, her strategy to overcome difficulties involves doing work that can be performed at home, allowing her to care for her children. Her activities include selling cakes and running a home-based shop. Y also engages in agricultural activities, such as growing vegetables, which can be used if her business or pastry shop does not yield sufficient results.

*"... I try to sell a little, the term is selling sweets, selling snacks, yes thank God it can more or less help because the needs of children are still small, at this time that is what can be done, yes while planting plants in the garden, even though we do not sell, at least still meet the needs, right, like we can grow chili peppers for daily needs."* (Y, 85-97)

*"I cannot work now because the children cannot live there, at least work like making cakes to sell to supplement my income"* (Y, 157-162)

H managed to overcome the challenge of caring for her sick child by asking her ex-husband's twins for help so she could seek treatment. She also increases her income to meet sudden needs, demonstrating resourcefulness.

*"... Ultimately, you have to call your parents to pick you up and take care of your child if you cannot take care of them."* (H, 134-138)

*"I also have a little income in addition to my salary, now my oil palm plantation also sometimes sells clothes such as the hijab online system."* (H, 150-155)

To address financial difficulties, participant G helps her neighbors or friends by doing paid work, such as helping with chip-making. She also attempted to open a store, but it closed due to an unfavorable location.

*"Helping sell to make such chips is why people cannot be silent. Sometimes they have opened a shop, but here it is quiet"* (G, 149-153).

### Control

At the beginning of their journey as single parents, women often face difficulties in managing finances to meet family needs, including providing early childhood stimulation. Additionally, because they must confront various problems alone, they frequently struggle with managing their thoughts and emotions. Over time, they learn to control their finances and thoughts in order to persevere and live as single parents.

By gaining control over their finances, women can handle economic challenges more effectively, ensuring they can still meet basic needs and provide optimal stimulation for their children. Mental control also helps maintain motivation and resilience amid the pressures of daily life.

Participant Y is able to manage her finances by saving and prioritizing essential items that are scarce. To control her thoughts, she engages in activities such as gardening, which helps her avoid negative thoughts and complaints about life's difficulties.

*"...I had to be frugal and manage the finances carefully. At that time, I couldn't work or go to the fields because I had a small child to take care of, so I relied solely on the remaining savings."* (Y, 71-79)

*"...With only a small amount of capital, I often had to prioritize essential items when shopping. I also had to allocate the money in such a way that there would be some left to reinvest in small-scale selling."* (Y, 167-173)

*"Yes, if we have work or activities at home, we are not at home for the first time; if we just stay at home so that our mind goes everywhere we think about what we need to think when we get to the garden, there is*



*something we can do, it will help"* (Y, 276-284)

*"If you are at home, you have many thoughts; if we think about needs, it seems like innate complaints are not enough; why is it like this so if we talk about it, it makes us more grateful."* (Y, 290-297)

Participant H was able to control her finances by having savings prior to becoming a single parent. After her divorce, she used those savings to purchase oil palm land, which now provides her with income.

*".. Yesterday, after the divorce, I had savings, so I bought an oil palm plantation with that money."* (H, 206-208)

*"It was the savings I used to collect when I still had a husband, so the money from my husband, I collected to buy gold after the divorce; the gold was sold by my older brother and bought an oil palm plantation."* (H, 220-226)

Participant G manages her thoughts by rising from her slump and focusing on positivity, ignoring negative comments from others. She believes that maintaining a positive mindset benefits her health.

*".. It's up at the moment, take the positive."* (G, 137-138)

*"We are now thinking positively, let's just leave it if people want to say what they want to say or don't think, God willing, the body is healthy if the mind is positive."* (G, 290-295)

*"... We focus on our way forward, yes, we look for luck, people can't ask for money, people don't have enough, as long as they don't, make a conversation."* (G, 305-310)

*".. Think positively now"* (G, 357-358)

### Self-sufficient

A woman, as a single person, is required to be independent in managing her life. This includes raising children and seeking income to meet her family's needs. Independence is crucial for single women because they cannot always rely on others to support them.

Y feels compelled to provide for herself and her children because she no longer expects help from her husband. She believes that her circumstances should motivate her even more, as her

responsibilities and needs with her children are increasing.

*"... From that status, he was the backbone, and the accident happened, and I automatically became the backbone in this house; I had two daughters"* (Y, 46-51)

*"... If after this happens, it will change completely because we used to rely on him as the backbone and we have to try to meet our needs."* (Y, 55-61)

*"As a single mother, I feel the need to stay even more motivated, because the burden of raising two daughters alone can be overwhelming. As they grow older, their needs also continue to grow and become increasingly difficult to fulfill."* (Y, 501-511)

For Participant H, independence means being able to do what her husband used to do, but now on her own—including earning income and educating her children. If H can manage everything independently, she does so without relying on others.

*"After you get divorced, all your work is done on your own to earn money to shop, educate the children, all your own brothers are usually with their husbands"* (H, 88-93)

*"There is no deck if you help from your ex-husband, if you can do it yourself, you can do it yourself"* (H, 194-197)

Participant G defines independence as living life according to one's abilities, without depending on or relying on others to meet needs.

*"I just try to get through it, because I have needs and can't always rely on others. It's not possible to keep asking people for help—they might be facing difficulties too."* (G, 213-2018)

### Strive

Hard work is an effort that a woman, as a single parent, makes to earn income and meet all the needs of herself and her child. The more actively a single parent works, the easier it will be to provide for her family. Conversely, if a single parent is not actively engaged in work, fulfilling all responsibilities becomes more difficult.

Hard work is characterized by how much a woman, as a single parent, engages in business, activities, or jobs that generate income to support her family. It also depends on how effectively she utilizes her potential, manages her time, and perseveres in her efforts.

Participant Y engages in numerous activities to strive to meet the needs of herself and her child. Besides her role as a housewife, Y often goes to her garden to farm, runs a small shop, and makes cakes at home. She also participates in village organizations and finds her activities to be quite intensive. For Y, it is important to do something—even if the results are uncertain and may not fulfill all needs.

*"Mom's busyness is normal when I take care of the house at home, later when I have time to go to the garden, sometimes I go to participate in village activities and take care of the small shop."* (Y, 9-13)

*"Making cakes to sell in order to increase income."* (Y, 160-162)

*"The bottom line is how those needs can be met even if not all of them."* (Y, 272-275)

*"Yes, sometimes I also participate in village organizations, there is BKB, thank God I became intensive."* (Y, 262-264)

*"As much as possible, you should fight, don't do nothing, even if the outcome is uncertain."* (Y, 272-275)

Participant H is also actively engaged in various income-generating activities to support herself and her child. She works as an elementary school teacher, manages oil palm plantations, raises fish and cattle, and sells clothes and cakes online.

*"In the morning, I teach in the elementary school near home"* (H, 8-13).

*"Sometimes you go to see the oil palm plantations"* (H, 17-18)

*"Sometimes give gourami fish to eat"* (H, 23-24)

*"There are also cows"* (H, 28)

*"There are those who order such clothes or cakes, so before they order them first, then later they make a cake or take such clothes"* (H, 285-289)

While Participant G does not have a permanent job, she actively helps her

family by managing the family store, raising livestock, and accepting job offers from friends or neighbors for wages.

*"Currently, the participant does not have a permanent job. At present, she assists with managing the family-owned shop, particularly in handling daily purchasing needs. Additionally, her mother has assigned her to take care of a fish pond, which she manages alongside other occasional tasks."* (G, 14-20)

*"Sometimes, a friend brings chili peppers from her parents in Angso Duo Market and offers them to me – asking if I want some to sell. From that, I can earn a little extra to buy snacks for my child. Basically, anything works, as long as I can get something."* (G, 29-35)

*"I help sell things, like making and selling chips – I'm the type of person who can't stay still. I've even tried opening a shop before."* (G, 149-152)

#### Motivation

One form of AQ (Adversity Quotient) for women as single parents is motivation. A woman's motivation as a single parent can be understood as her enthusiasm, resilience, and strong desire to earn more income in order to care for, raise, and ensure the success of her children.

For Participant Y, she struggles to fulfill her desire to earn more to meet her increasing needs. The most important thing for Y is to continue caring for and supporting her child. Her spirit should not be dampened by her limited income; instead, she must maintain enthusiasm for life and keep moving forward.

*"If you want to go to elementary school, maybe the need will also be more, there will also be a need to earn more."* (Y, 149-153)

*".. We must maintain our motivation for this child so that her development is optimal, then our life must continue, let's try little by little"* (Y, 320-325)

*"Our lives have to go on so we can't keep complaining that's why we're so excited."* (Y, 320-325)

Participant H struggles to increase her income from her various businesses. She remains enthusiastic and determined to keep trying and fighting because, as her

children grow, their needs for money also increase.

*"If you can, you can do business like the products of your oil palm plantation, someone will order food like cakes like clothes, from there you can increase your own income"* (H, 267-273)

*"I'm excited to try because I see that your kids are getting older and it costs a lot of money."* (H, 355-358)

Participant G feels the need to rise to meet her children's wishes, especially to provide school allowances and necessities. Her enthusiasm is centered on improving and organizing her children's lives.

*".. This child wants to be a person, people don't know, from there they have to wake up, what can happen, the important thing is that this child's school, my child's snack is at least enough"* (G, 105-115)

*"Be happy, be happy"* (G, 175-176)

*"Yes, enthusiasm, which no longer needs to be thought about now in the future for the future of children"* (G, 398-401)

### Factors Influencing Women's AQ as Single Parents in Fulfilling the Best Stimulation in Early Childhood

#### Family Support

Family is the closest support system a woman has as a single parent. The support provided by family members can be verbal, psychological, or physical, and can be delivered both directly and indirectly. With strong family support, women as single parents are more empowered to struggle and work hard to increase their income in order to meet the needs of their children.

For Y, support from her family comes in the form of moral reinforcement from her children, which motivates her to keep fighting to increase her income. Additionally, she receives support from her parents, who assist her in her struggles.

*".. Because I see children as reinforcements."* (Y, 351-352)

*".. I still have a family, my parents are still grateful"* (Y, 356-357)

Participants H and G also expressed similar sentiments, stating that their families—especially their children and parents—have greatly helped them in their struggles. Family support continually

motivates them to keep selling and working. They feel happy and encouraged when their families are willing to help them through difficulties and when they can overcome those challenges.

*"You really want to try because you see that your children are getting bigger and need a lot of money"* (H, 355-358)

*"Another factor of the deck family is that the family is also happy to see us happy"* (H, 367-369)

*"My father often helps with the shopping, and he uses it to buy snacks for my child."* (G, 247-248)

*"Children must be successful and that is the main factor"* (G, 371-372)

*"I have a family."* (G, 412)

#### Social Support

As social beings, women who serve as single parents cannot be separated from their relationships with others beyond their immediate family. Social support involves assistance from close friends, neighbors, and the surrounding community.

Forms of social support include verbal encouragement to boost confidence, as well as tangible help that can assist a woman in increasing her family income.

Participant Y stated that she has neighbors who help each other during difficult times. In addition to neighbors, the village government also provides support through programs or activities that residents can participate in. These programs aim to improve skills and knowledge useful in daily life, such as sewing training.

*"... I have neighbors who can help each other if there is a need, and they can help each other"* (Y, 358-36)

*"There are villages from the village, right, if there is such an activity, they invite single parents."* (Y, 371-374)

*"There's something like this here, taught how to sew, so it's a skill that they have, so they can be used for everyday life."* (Y, 399-404)

For participant H, social support from friends and the village helps her in selling her products by becoming customers. She also receives reinforcement and praise from the community for her efforts to support her

children despite being a single parent. Similar to Y, H benefits from village activities.

*"A friend of mine told me to sell it"* (H, 278-279).

*"Alhamdulillah, the neighbors are all good, they often praise them too because even though the widow wants to work hard and support her children, so that she becomes more enthusiastic in fighting"* (H, 382-388)

*"Alhamdulillah, the village also supports, for example, if there is an event in the village, sometimes I often order my brother to make rice and if there is a village activity, she never forgets to invite the single parent's mother"* (H, 391-398)

As for participant G, her social support includes advice, encouragement, and a spirit of perseverance from her friends. G was also helped by a friend who remembered her and offered her a job, providing her with income.

*".. It's just that we met a lot of friends, people gave us a lot of advice."*

(G, 80-82)

*"It is fortunate that friends have the support of that spirit"* (G, 97-99)

*"If you are like a friend, for example, if there is a drought, here I have a request to help so many times that I am already gone, I will give it to you"* (G421-426)

### Religiosity

Religiosity is one of the factors influencing the AQ (Adaptability Quotient). Participant Y, guided by her religious beliefs, believes that the children she raises are entrusted to her by God, and it is her duty to care for them. Meanwhile, participant H, in her efforts to raise her children, finds support through religious activities such as studying and listening to lectures.

*".. Yes, as I said before, yes because it is a religious factor, yes because we see that the child is a trust of God, so it is our duty to be able to take care of her"* (Y, 442-447)

*"From religion, thank God you also participate in the recitation activities of PKK women's events, sometimes in mosques or homes, sometimes you also listen to lectures, so you are enthusiastic to*

*fight, you raise children"* (H, 401-408)

### Gratitude

As single parents, they face various difficulties in life. In the process of increasing income to meet family needs, gratitude serves as a driving force that sustains their struggle. Gratitude is a unique form of energy that empowers women as single parents to persevere.

For Y and other participants, feelings of gratitude stem from being blessed with good health, which allows them to work. Y also feels grateful for her ability to meet her family's essential needs, such as clothing. Additionally, she appreciates being surrounded by caring and helpful people.

*"If we do activities to make us more grateful, we are still given a healthy body, we can work, right"* (Y, 295-298)

*"Thankful I can still eat and make ends meet."* (Y, 334-337)

*"Alhamdulillah, I'm still surrounded by people who care about me."* (Y, 352-364)

Participants H and G also express feelings of gratitude and fulfillment concerning their sustenance and support in increasing their income. H is especially grateful for good neighbors.

*".. Alhamdulillah, I am always grateful, because with gratitude God willing, it is enough."* (H 347-349)

*"Thank God neighbors everything is fine."* (H, 383-384)

*"We are grateful that our sustenance is possible like that."* (G 125-126)

*" So now, just be grateful for whatever there is, this is enough – just go with it, hehe."* (G 184-186)

### Discussion

The themes emerging from this study highlight the resilience and strength of women as single parents. Based on the findings, (Stoltz, 1999) theory shares similarities and differences with the experiences described. It is understandable that these similarities and differences exist because this study specifically focuses on women as single parents striving to increase their family income, whereas (Stoltz, 1999) research primarily explores contexts within industry



and organizations. These parallels and distinctions can be summarized in the following table.

**Table 2.** Comparison of Theoretical Perspectives and Field Findings

Dimension of AQ according to Stoltz's (2005) theory.	The Dimension of AQ of Women as Single Parents in Fulfilling the Best Stimulation in Early Childhood
<p><b>Control:</b> having control over herself to be able to overcome difficulties by controlling her emotions, thoughts, and behaviors</p> <p><b>Origin &amp; ownership:</b> guilt , responsibility</p> <p><b>Reach:</b> limits the scope of incoming issues, not associating one issue with another</p> <p><b>Resilience:</b> resilience in the face of adversity, belief that problems will pass quickly</p>	<p><b>Control :</b> financial control, mind control</p>
Component Findings (custom and unique)	
	<p><b>Overcoming Difficulties:</b> overcoming financial difficulties, getting permission for children to work, save, sell, when children are sick, and meet sudden needs</p> <p><b>Independent:</b> taking care of one's own child, earning one's own income, and not wanting to trouble others</p> <p><b>Active work:</b> actively working, farming, selling, breeding, and being a laborer</p> <p><b>Motivation:</b> Desire to increase income, continue living, make ends meet, and raise and succeed children,</p>

The findings that show similarities with Stoltz's (2005) theory primarily relate to the concept of control. Women who are single parents demonstrate their contribution to increasing family income through their ability to manage finances and maintain mental resilience. This theme aligns with one of the dimensions in Stoltz's (2005) theory of fighting power, namely **control**, which is interpreted as a person's capacity to understand their difficulties and believe in their ability to overcome them. Research by Rahmilasari et al. (2023) indicates that the control dimension has the most significant impact on the AQ (Adaptability Quotient) compared to other dimensions.

Aliana et al. (2020) state that individuals with high fighting power are characterized by their ability to control themselves effectively. This assertion is supported by research from Destriarani (2018), which suggests that a person is considered to have fighting power if she can maintain self-control even in difficult situations.

However, some findings differ from (Stoltz, 1999) framework, particularly

regarding overcoming difficulties. Overcoming challenges is a crucial aspect of the struggle faced by women as single parents in increasing family income. These difficulties include financial hardships, obtaining permission for children to work or sell goods when children are sick, and meeting sudden needs. Research by (Sukmaningrum and Kurniasari, 2022) states that the higher one's problem-solving ability and capacity to face difficulties, the greater their fighting power.

Regarding the theme of independence, women as single parents exhibit independence in raising their children and seeking income sources, along with a reluctance to trouble others. This is supported by (Wahyuni, Syahrilfuddin and Putra, 2020), who found a relationship between independence and the AQ, and by (Askalania and Usman, 2021), who discovered a significant correlation between resilience and independence.

In the theme of hard work, women as single parents actively engage in various activities to increase their family income. They do everything they can, including

farming, selling goods, raising livestock, and working as laborers. (Nofita and Nadapdap, 2021) explain that working harder is one of the characteristics of individuals with the strength to fight.

Regarding motivation, single mothers possess a strong desire to increase their income to sustain their lives, meet their needs, and successfully raise their children. This is supported by research from (Safi'i *et al.*, 2021), which indicates a significant connection between motivation and the power of struggle.

This study identified four key themes influencing women's AQ as single parents striving to provide the best environment for their children's early growth and development: family support, social support, religiosity, and gratitude. These findings suggest that while internal psychological traits are vital, external resources and spiritual values play a significant role in shaping resilience and adaptive capacity.

This perspective broadens the classical view of AQ proposed by (Stoltz, 1999), which primarily emphasizes individual traits such as grit, persistence, and the capacity to endure hardship. More recent literature supports a more integrative model, where both personal and contextual factors interact to influence resilience, especially among vulnerable populations like single mothers (Pujihavuty *et al.*, 2024).

For example, Dharani and (Dharani and Balamurugan, 2024) highlight that female-headed households experience heightened emotional and financial stress, with social support serving as a critical buffer. This aligns with findings by (Alfirdosi *et al.*, 2022), who report a significant positive correlation between social support and AQ in young mothers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Financial assistance, emotional encouragement, and community validation were all found to enhance coping capacity.

Religiosity also functions as an effective coping mechanism, offering emotional refuge and reinforcing meaning-making during hardships (Sholeh, Saputra and Manurung, 2021). Spiritual values not only promote perseverance but also foster a sense of hope and control in adverse situations (Baldacchino and Draper, 2001). Additionally, gratitude mediates the stress response by enhancing emotional

regulation and motivating problem-solving behaviors (Macaraeg, no date).

Research by Tripathi *et al.* (2019) underscores the importance of combined factors—such as personal resilience and support networks—in strengthening mothers' ability to navigate life's challenges and develop income strategies. Furthermore, (Rokhmatun, Salsabila and Yulianti, 2024) demonstrate how AQ, shaped by family support, mediates the relationship between economic adversity and psychological readiness.

Based on these findings, it can be suggested that the AQ in single-parent women is not solely determined by internal psychological strength but rather emerges from the synergy between the individual's mental state, their social environment, and the religious values they uphold. This holistic perspective should draw the attention of policymakers and social practitioners, enabling the development of empowerment programs for single mothers that are more effectively tailored to improve their families' economic welfare. However, it is important to interpret these insights with caution due to the limited sample size, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that AQ in single mothers is reflected in their ability to overcome difficulties, maintain self-control, demonstrate independence, work hard, and sustain high levels of motivation in providing optimal stimulation for their children. With the exception of the control theme, which aligns with the core dimensions of Stoltz's (2005) theory, most of the identified themes exhibit unique characteristics that extend beyond the original theoretical framework.

Additionally, factors influencing the resilience of women as single parents in fulfilling early childhood development stimulation include family support, social support, religiosity, and gratitude. These factors represent contextual and cultural elements that are not explicitly addressed in Stoltz's theory, thereby highlighting the particularities and relevance of these findings within the lived experiences of single mothers.

A suggestion for future researchers interested in enriching the understanding

of this topic is to explore the dimensions and factors of resilience in men or fathers who are single and not only focus on increasing family income but also on aspects related to childcare.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We gratefully acknowledge the Varians Statistik Kesehatan and Kaukus Masyarakat Peduli Kesehatan Jiwa for providing the boot camp and mentoring to improve the manuscript writing.

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