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Resilience and Love: A Phenomenological Study on the Parenting Experiences of Mothers with Physical Disabilities in the Northern Philippines

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About Article

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ABSTRACT

This research investigated the experiences of parents who have physical disabilities in raising children, emphasizing difficulties, coping strategies, and the core aspects of parenting using a qualitative method. Despite multiple studies relevant to the topic, to the best of my knowledge, no other work has explored this specific subject in the Philippines, particularly in Mountain Province. To address this, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with seven mothers residing in the town of Poblacion, Tadian, Mountain Province (Philippines). The analysis of the data was conducted through thematic analysis. The analysis identified six themes that surfaced among parents who have physical disabilities. These themes address two challenges, including nurturing care: financial instability and child safety; discipline: tough love and gentle love; two coping mechanisms, incorporating unconditional love and mothers' supporters; and the two themes of the essence of parenting with physical disabilities, promoting child well-being, and self-love: unique and empowered. The results emphasized parenting with physical disabilities during everyday interactions with their children, revealing that despite their limitations, the mothers exhibited resilience, flexibility, and commitment in meeting parental duties and obligations. The physical disability did not impede effective parenting and encouraged parents to develop enhanced opportunities for both themselves and their children, cultivating a sense of purpose, significance, and robust connections within the family through a consistently upheld strong framework of discipline, affection within the family, and support in overcoming challenges. A significant result of this research indicates that parenting requires support from the government and other organizations to foster acceptance of individuality and strengthen parent-child bonds, which will assist in societal integration.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The lack of standardization in measuring and defining disability is a challenge; characterization tends to vary in sectors (Ginis *et al.*, 2021). In this study, people with disabilities were characterized in WHO 2023 and RA 7277 as a heterogeneous group with diverse needs due to the impairment of the body or mind, making the condition restrictive to the ability to engage in certain activities. To grasp disabled people's parenting, I examined how parents with physical disabilities fulfill their responsibilities despite physical limitations.

Disability spares no one; approximately 1.5 billion people worldwide live with diverse disabilities (Ginis *et al.*, 2021). However, despite available data on people with disabilities around the world, few studies were conducted on the parenting experiences of parents with physical disabilities (Andrews & Dunn, 2019); thus, literature on people with disabilities in different forms of disablism was considered.

Understanding the parenting experiences of parents with physical disabilities, which are often framed in societal expectations, accessibility issues, support systems, child-parent relationships, and the child's overall well-being, significantly impacts parenting practices despite physical limitations and environmental barriers to parenting (Dunne & Ryan, 2024). However, the limit of doing tasks for parents with physical disabilities takes courage and passion to perform a parental role, and it's a fact that parenting is a journey of challenges and rewarding encounters (McConnell & Hahn, 2020; Selander & Engwall, 2021). Also, there are instances that they are seldom recognized as parents, discouraged and prevented from parenthood (Beitiks, 2016), and face negative perceptions from society, healthcare providers, and their families. Stigma and discrimination are associated with adoption and fertility practice; clinical providers may refuse to provide services to those they judge as unfit for pregnancy and parenthood on ethical or legal grounds (Andrews & Dunn, 2019). Further, some mothers with disabilities had been physically and socially restricted. Their families do not allow them to participate in community activities, depriving them of social involvement (Marella *et al.*, 2016). As a result, the lack of involvement and freedom in maximizing capabilities could hamper them in facing additional difficulties, making them uncomfortable in seeking help from formal networks; rather, they rely on informal networks (Lightfoot *et al.*, 2018) and prefer support from someone they can trust to enable the best parenting ability and develop parenting skills to overcome family problems (Andrews & Ayers, 2016).

This study explores child-parenting experiences of parents with physical disabilities. Specifically, it aims to understand the challenges they face in their daily parenting activities, the coping skills they employ to manage parenting responsibilities, and the essence of experiences in performing the parental role regardless of physical disabilities. This study is significant in that there are limited studies that have explored the parenting of people with physical disabilities in the Philippines. Nevertheless, there is a prevailing lack of knowledge and studies among parents with physical disabilities about their parenting practices and how they engage in society (Andrews & Dunn, 2019).

This research will contribute valuable insights into disability and

parenting. This can also be used as a guide to policymaking for enhancing programs to support and understand the challenges that prevail in assumptions and to advocate for a more equitable environment for all people with disabilities (PWD) and their families. Gaining insight into their experiences can enable women and individuals with disabilities to manage parenting duties, navigate daily life, and improve their parenting skills to deliver supportive and nurturing care for their children.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Disability is not solely a health issue and characteristic of a person; however, it shows the challenges they face when engaging with society and navigating physical environments. People with disabilities continue to be an overlooked segment of society and face numerous obstacles due to limited involvement. In the study of Barnes (2019) on the social model of disability, disability is not the main cause of the problem; rather, it is how society responds. If society were designed in a way that people with disabilities could access and fully participate, then they would not be excluded; however, when society sees their impairment as a hindrance, then it is the mental attitudes and physical structures of society. As Grue and Laerum (2002) agreed, limitations are not the source of impairment; it is when society fails to offer appropriate services and meet needs. Disability is only disabling when it hampers someone from doing what they want or need to do. They also make themselves accountable to others and avoid being dependent and incapacitated, but they are typically not expected to have children because parenting is considered a demanding and tough role. Moreover, the availability of resources and support for parents with disabilities varies the way they deal in their daily lives with the negative responses from society and being denied the opportunity to perform social and parental roles. These explain that disability refers to the disadvantageous impact of the societal barriers faced by people with impairments, resulting in disablism, which represents social exclusion. Further, Waldschmidt (2017) shows that the barriers and discrimination brought by physically and socially disabling environments are the influence of social media and everyday communication that affects the way society sees people with disabilities.

On the contrary, the study of Banaszak *et al.* (2023) & Shahali *et al.* (2024) revealed the challenges of parents with physical disabilities in their parental roles; the physical condition limits their ability to function and perform activities such as moving, communicating, and taking care of their children. The difficulties in holding, walking, and other physical and sleep issues and facing doubts about their capacity to adequately supervise their children may escalate problems. However, Ruditsky (2024) emphasized coping skills as an essential way to overcome the downsides of having a physical disability while parenting a child. Moreover, Tefera *et al.* (2017) & Powell *et al.* (2018) recognized the obstacles and limitations posed by disability are shattered by using coping mechanisms such as joy and delight in parenting and love and acceptance, reshaping negative societal attitudes, and seeing their bodies differently rather than primarily as disabled people developing harmonious relationships with their children. These support



the study of Waldschmidt (2017) that physical limitation is not an issue; thus, stop blaming disabled people and look into their disability as an ability to remove barriers that hinder full capability and the existence created and employed by society to be socially included and engaged. Cowling and Gordon (2021) highlight the importance of experiencing joy in parenting; it contributes to resilience, which is essential for thriving in difficult circumstances. The joy found in relationships, work, and achievements can provide the strength needed to face challenges, persist through adversity, and live a fulfilling life because it is the source of happiness and the vital force that nurtures inner strength, which helps in parenting difficulties. Another way to improve the quality of parenting and parent-child relationships and enhance levels of resilience is through mindful parenting, which teaches parents to be aware of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Kabat-Zinn & Kabat-Zinn, 2021). Moreover, Moreira *et al.* (2018) assert that being mindful doesn't require being different from who they are because it helps them not to lose their minds; rather, it can grow greater awareness in recognizing and accepting things as they are, which develops positive learning and experiences within the family to cope with stressful life events and difficult thoughts and emotions. Additionally, Dunne & Ryan (2024), Grossman & Magaña (2016), and Raghunathan *et al.* (2015) found out the role of trusted networks, such as family, friends, mentors, and communities, in offering meaningful support is pivotal. The families are an important source of assistance for parents with disabilities in performing tasks, community relations, and going through the life course. Further, when families assign tasks to children, it is not for caregiving but for development, the same way non-disabled parents do (Powell, 2019). Likewise, Hunt *et al.* (2022) revealed the importance of various forms of help with household tasks, attending to self-care needs, giving advice, facilitating childcare and safety, and bringing children to places or activities that are inaccessible to the parent with a physical disability. Because Dunne & Ryan (2024) found out that it is necessary to be unified into the communities and to be engaged in activities that are useful and significant for life. Children parented by a parent with a physical disability highlighted their beliefs that their experiences contributed to their growth in having more life skills and a greater sense of independence. Such studies include the National Council on Disability 2012, which asserts that parents with disabilities expressed high levels of satisfaction and happiness in fulfilling parenting, forming deep and meaningful relationships with their children, and providing nurturing environments. Another is the 8-year study of Jacob *et al.* (2018) that highlights valuable upbringing experiences, resulting in a high level of self-esteem and a low level of stigma in children. Moreover, the

study of Kirshbaum & Olkin (2002) and Lanci (2019) revealed that the assumption that children are a burden in caring for their disabled parents is baseless. Also, Kong & Yasmin (2022) ascertained that parenting influences a child's well-being through methods like affectionate and supportive techniques, expectations, dialogue, and disciplinary approaches. Further, Beitiks (2016) perceive societal progress and awareness about individuals with disabilities as being about securing the family's future, enhancing their well-being, contributing to personal growth, and building and fostering trust, which aids growth and emotional progress. Additionally, Cerino (2021) recognized that children develop creativity, engage in critical thinking, and are able to articulate their thoughts, indicating that love, cognitive intelligence, emotional intelligence, and wisdom work together to guide individuals through life's challenges. To navigate complex situations and create surroundings that nourish well-being through sacrifices, time, and effort, Thomas *et al.* (2017) stressed the significance of striking a balance between heart and mind, love and wisdom. These studies affirm that society becomes more inclusive and supportive of the parenting of people with disabilities as it continues to evolve towards empowerment and recognition of diverse parenting experiences.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study examines the lived experiences of parents with physical disabilities using a constructivist view and a qualitative phenomenological approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) to provide a broader understanding of the parenting role, allowing an in-depth exploration of participants' complex and personal parenting experiences. This qualitative approach was chosen for open-ended questioning to have a careful examination and understanding of what parents with physical disabilities say or do in their life settings. As a researcher, I departed from my personal experiences in conducting the study to reveal the essence of participants' experiences. The place of study is my hometown, which is located in Barangay Poblacion, Tadian, Mountain Province (Philippines). It was selected to better understand the local context, specific challenges, and the societal dynamics that may influence the experiences of this group.

Key informants were selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. In this case, I specifically sought participants who were parents with physical disabilities, such as with arm and leg dysfunction, speech impairment, and blindness. Additionally, the participants had been actively involved in child-rearing, meaning they cared for at least one child, and there were no restrictions on age or civil status, allowing for a diverse range of experiences across different life stages and family situations, which contributed to the final sample size of seven mothers.

Table 1. Key Informant's Profile

Key Informants	Number Of Children	Physical Disability	Source of Income
K1	8	Inborn Right hand minimal mobility	Farmer and Laborer
K2	2	Small right foot with twisted fingers	Vegetable Vendor and Farmer
K3	1	Polio	Tailorress
K4	4	Right hand and foot malfunction due to stroke	Sundry Store Vendor



K5	3	Left-eye blindness	Laborer
K6	2	Blind	Massage Therapist
K7	2	Inborn speech impairment	Vendor

The narratives of the mothers with physical disabilities were collected through semi-structured interviews. The data was cross-checked with the neighbors and family members of the key informants; for example, the data of key informant 7 was gathered and clarified through a detailed conversation. I had to repeat after her and ask whether I had it right, and during the interview, her husband was with us for me to clarify and further understand the conversation. Then, the data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the six-step process of Braun & Clarke (2006): familiarizing data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and lastly writing up.

Ethical guidelines were followed to ensure the rights and well-being of key informants by maintaining confidentiality and privacy through informed consent. Before the interview, the key informants were fully informed about the study's purpose, potential risks, and benefits, and all participation was voluntary; they could stop and end the interview without any compensation. Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities and to maintain anonymity. The interviews were recorded via an audio recorder to ensure accuracy, and then the recordings were secured in encrypted file storage after transcription to further ensure participants' privacy and confidentiality.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The various experiences of parents with physical disabilities were evident in their statements about parenting struggles and adapting circumstances into enjoyable and momentous parenthood. The findings showed raising children despite physical disabilities does not hamper the ability to function and perform parenting, even though there are limitations of movement in caring for the children (Banaszak *et al.*, 2023).

4.1. Nurturing care: unstable finance and child safety

Four out of seven informants admitted they struggled financially. These financial struggles were exacerbated by their physical limitations, not to mention several criticisms: the way they do tasks, saying that they can't carry heavy loads or compete in speedy work, or that they can't do the task. The criticisms caused the mothers to refuse giving services to people who criticize them; therefore, they decline the work even though it can be a source of finances to provide the needs of the children during emergency cases like hospitalization due to illness (pneumonia, primary complex) and other health problems during their younger years and other necessities as they grow up. The loss of resources and how society disregards their capabilities affect the way they meet the needs of their children because they can only rely on some people who acknowledge their body limitations and ask for their services. The stories of mothers provided with necessary resources aided the needs of the children. Key informant 3 mastered tailoring and started tailoring services when she became a

National Certified Tailoress of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and was eventually hired as a tailoring trainer at TESDA Mountain Province while accepting tailoring services in the community. However, the trained tailors became competitors, and TESDA stopped offering training, so her salary ceased while her clients who catered her services were reduced. Another is the story of key informant six, which shows she had been given the resources needed to support her children. Being a blind person, she received training on massage from the Department of Social Welfare and Development in Baguio City, so she had to leave her children with her parents and work as a massage therapist in Baguio City, then eventually returned home to be with her children while massaging in different places. These show that despite disability, the mothers are providers and can manage their family, meaning they are capable when provided with the necessary resources (Kraus & Olkin, 2020).

For the safety of infants, blind mothers mentioned that they had to carry their children all the time, even when they were doing household chores, because they couldn't look after them, and they feared that they might fall or accidents may happen. This persistent baby wearing was associated with having secure attachments and fewer disorganized attachments (Williams & Turner, 2020), and the physical contact with infants caused the release of oxytocin, which is connected with nurturing behaviors and positive mood states, calming the infant (Unvas-Moberg *et al.*, 2015).

4.2. Disciplining children: tough love and gentle love

One of the toughest parts of child parenting is the unending problem of discipline. That parenting isn't just feeding, changing diapers, and providing needs. It's securing children from the threat of danger and teaching them to be kind, respectful, worthwhile, and productive human beings through the hard work of teaching and training children because it doesn't just happen as different strategies materialize, like tough and gentle love—a balance between firmness and care. Most of the key informants admitted that during the childhood of children, they scold and whip them when they don't listen and behave, fight with siblings, or neglect doing tasks. However, mothers stop whipping their children because they fear it might cause disability, and this way of disciplining was done because they believe that painful learning is an effective way of disciplining, resulting in stronger relationships and personal growth (Faw *et al.*, 2019). Additionally, the undesirable actions of children during teenage years are inevitable as they grow up and explore society, like making friends with those with vices, gallivanting, and going home late at night. This results in parents' emotional strain, like hopelessness, as children keep on doing it despite continuous advice and emphasizing the consequences of their actions. The disrespect they felt potentially exacerbated stress levels and physical difficulties. However, mothers expressed that the way parents discipline their children affects their



relationship. A grown-up can think for themselves and decide for his/her good. So, parents continuously guide and advise them. Through communication and having stories with children, they help them discuss their emotions, expectations, and problems; in this way, they can discipline them.

Disciplinary actions can be viewed as abusive but acceptable and considered as corrective in other cultures. Children and parents may react differently to the same situations because the nature of the disciplinary approach depends on the rules of what are culturally accepted parenting practices. Tough love teaches the child to understand the socially accepted norms, values, and expectations through physical or emotional punishment of the child as a form of correction and training (Ramiro & Madrid, 2020). Given that children are frequently driven by strong emotions and lack cognition, mothers view tough love as a harsh discipline that is applied out of love. Tough love is evident from the mothers' way of scolding, whipping, and giving tasks to the children. These methods are an expression of parental affection and an essential way of fostering the child's best interest to have positive values, develop their character, equip them with a moral sense of right and wrong, and prepare them to become compassionate and principled people.

4.3. Unconditional love: endurance, open communication and active listening

Mothers' narratives showed how they responded to challenging circumstances. All mothers endured all challenges, reflecting resilience and recharge in the face of adversity. Mothers mentioned they ignore stigma and social exclusion and just focus on providing needs and continuously guiding the children. Accepting judgments will affect their lives negatively, so trusting themselves, strengthening their mind, and being relaxed and not overthinking even with problems enables them to do all parental responsibilities.

As perceived by the mothers, unconditional love comes with resilience, endurance, patience, and a mindset because it is shown through continuances, enduring from here and now. This helps emotional regulation and strengthens the mindset to cope with the struggles, which benefits both children and parents (Cordner, 2016). Further, mothers' resilience in all challenges from pregnancy, giving birth, and rearing until even children have their own families reflects the relief in giving all maternal capabilities through self-care, which is vital to surviving life's struggles. With the importance of self-care which signifies recharging and maintaining mental clarity, mothers cope with difficulties to have a balanced and sustained effort and resilience with regular intervals of rest and reflection to maintain long-term well-being, productivity, and development. This underscores that endurance alone is not enough to maintain strong relationships and emotional and mental health; without resilience and self-care, individuals risk burnout. Highlighting a mother's capability to withstand hardship maintains effort over time to keep going. As they expressed, sustaining patience and mindset over time in the face of adversity, whether mental or emotional toughness or physical stamina, is critical in maintaining progress; overcoming obstacles, continuously learning about self-reliance, and being capable of self-direction

help their parenting.

The role of open communication and active listening cannot be overlooked: worries and problems in the family were openly discussed and addressed. Parents mentioned they need to become friends, advisers, and mothers and fathers for single parents to solve problems. Mothers use active listening to help in giving wise advice to the children and to sustain harmonious relationships in the family. Like when the children were bullied in the community, the gossip they heard about the situation of their mother made them question their lives. In this case, mothers pity their children; however, they need to protect them and uplift their well-being through dialogue, sharing their struggles, and thriving. Mothers' stories on their survival in the unequal society kindled inspiration, eased the children's fear and anxiety, and helped them feel they are loved and secure, fostering trust because they are prepared for what is to be done. The improved outcomes for children when they feel valued and loved by their parents are visible. These interactions can predict self-disclosure and maintain a non-judgmental attitude. Also, listening to children is crucial for their personal growth, decision-making, safety, development, societal preparation, and values of tolerance, respect, and accountability. Through active listening, it encourages open communication and understanding, which is evident from the advice from mothers and dialogue between parents and children. So when parents and children actively listen and talk to one another, explaining properly the situations, having discussions, and making decisions together, it creates openness. This theme is fundamental in understanding long-term parent-child relationships that reflect an ongoing commitment to facing challenges and continuing forward despite hardships.

4.4. Mother's teammates

The role of teammates provides a sense of security, reliability, and connection to mothers with physical disabilities. Receiving and offering support in practical and tangible ways encompasses emotional and concrete help, such as financial assistance, physical presence, and access to resources, which help them navigate life's challenges. This dimension of social support emphasized both emotional and instrumental support (Thoits, 2011).

The foremost support of mothers with physical disabilities is their family, which provides practical and financial help. For single mothers, specifically in the case of key informant six, parents helped in caring for the children as they worked; the children were left under the care of grandparents, who fed, trained, and taught them values and engaged them in life learning experiences. By the time that the children can already help, they assist in doing tasks and carrying heavy loads, which is undoubted in the case of all key informants except key informant 7, which is evident from the statement of the mothers, "If there is something difficult to do, I have my children to help me." This scenario underscores the mutual support, reliance, and cooperation of children and family members when physical limitations arise within the family.

In terms of providence, mothers rely on the support of friends and neighbors who want their services; they are thankful if they trust their service despite the way they perform it. They



acknowledge the limitations of the service and still believe in and appreciate their work. When it comes to children's school requirements, mothers recount that they cannot help them at all times because they don't know the activity, and they usually go home late at night from the fields; thus, they seek assistance from friends and neighbors.

Prayer became a stable support used throughout the family life cycle, which is evident in the claims of the participants that through faith and prayer, difficulties are alleviated with ease. Children and mothers pray and entrust everything to God, praying for God's guidance, strength, and vitality. During sickness and hospitalization of children, prayer is the only hope because they believe God helps without payment or exchange. In embracing faithfulness, negative conditions help in gaining positive attitudes, buffer parenting stress, and provide a source of strength. Emphasizing the importance of financial, physical, spiritual, and emotional support from family and society helps mothers stay stable and secure in the face of struggles.

4.5. Fostering child's well-being

Mothers' primary responsibility is to ensure the welfare of their children (Cantillon & Hutton, 2020), an important role in shaping children's values, character, and social skills. The unending guidance, training, and teachings from mothers trained children's independence and responsibility in doing household chores, assigned tasks, and social involvement. Training a child doesn't just happen, as disclosed by mothers. They bring them into the fields to play and learn, so as they play, they imitate the mothers, letting the child learn by giving them a simple task and then a difficult one. When it comes to household chores, they are sorted among the family members; in this way, children can explore and learn how to start, manage, and accomplish tasks. In building children's well-being, it starts from birth with the training and learning of emotional aspects, which creates an emotional connection and affection between the child, family, and society to have a grounded understanding, discernment, and insight in navigating complex life situations, relationships, and choices. As they grow up, experiential learning and social exposure nurture their self-confidence, independence, resilience, problem-solving ability, and social involvement, keeping them on the right track. Thus, developing character and instilling values towards all abilities without any speculation reflects a thoughtful approach in guiding a child. Illustrating how respect and humility are foundational in their relationships as mothers cling to being models, showing them how to be humble, kind, and understanding at all costs, indicating that the morality of a child is driven by how the parents raised them; children raised in a humble and friendly family will follow as they grow up, so this powerful connection between parents and children is the building block of their child's well-being.

4.6. Self-love: unique and empowered

Having children and being a mother with physical disabilities was a joyous and blissful moment. It gave them a purpose to live and the privilege of motherhood and parenthood despite the doubt and fear of becoming a mother. The dread gave them hope to explore and discover what they could do to be a capable

mother, even with bodily limitations.

"To have a child is overwhelming, an extraordinary happiness that turned into a realization that I have to learn to deal with society because I have a child to protect and raise with". These thoughts and feelings of mothers have driven them to have strength and focus to give the children a better life as they navigate their uniqueness and parenting. The children became the priorities, and mothers' needs and leisure lessened; youthful life was given up, adapting to parenthood with numerous challenges, from sleepless nights to managing complex family dynamics. These changes in mothers' lives became the strength and capability for love and dedication that led to a deeper understanding and acceptance of oneself and capabilities. This profound love for children empowers mothers to be adept at managing their way of creating a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment for their children to thrive.

Motherhood is a source of joy, gratification, and challenges, not detracting from the joy and delight in parenting (Prilleltensky, 2004), resulting in a good and harmonious relationship with their children, enabling them to love and care for themselves and to give and receive trust, respect, and responsibilities. The love and acceptance of oneself challenge and give them a sense of meaning and direction in life while navigating negative societal expectations and hardships, wherein they find strength and pride in their motherhood. Mother's amazing statement: *"I am so happy I have children, and I am proud I supported, fostered, and guided them. I am proud of who I am and what I can,"* connoting self-acceptance and being an empowered mother.

From conceiving until giving birth, nurturing, and raising a child, mothers learned how to be a parent, a mother, and a father in the family, most especially for a single parent. Being a mother is not just about childbirth and providing for the needs of the children, but it's about adapting to changing circumstances and priorities for continuous, effective parenting and mutually beneficial child and parent relationships. Parenting is a continuous learning and responsibility that empowers mothers to build stronger family dynamics and healthy relationships in the family.

Self-love challenges the stigma that a person's worth is defined by conforming to societal norms or achieving certain standards. It encourages the idea that imperfections are opportunities for growth, rather than a reason for shame, and fosters empowerment through action. Empowered mothers learn to value what they need, turn down things that don't benefit them, and challenge pleasing other people to establish the expectation for how they wish to be treated. Individuals who embrace self-love can inspire others to do the same, creating a ripple effect that slowly transforms the culture to one that honors uniqueness rather than shaming it. Believing in one's own abilities and strengths while facing challenges with resilience instead of being paralyzed by self-doubt builds self-confidence, which creates a more accepting environment. Self-love can empower change. When mothers experience worth and value, they start on navigating life filled with joy and peace. The decisions become based on what is most beneficial rather than what is easiest or according to low self-esteem. These affirm that intrinsic value is a given, and they deserve love and acceptance as a recognition of their innate worth, regardless of external expectations, by promoting self-compassion and



setting limits. So when mothers embrace their unique qualities, imperfections, and prioritized well-being, they resist societal demands that tie value to an unattainable standard, fostering improved self-esteem, mental health, and resilience.

5. CONCLUSION

The six themes show that mothers with physical disabilities can demonstrate exemplary parenting. They can successfully raise their children and overcome various challenges. Disabilities do not hinder the ability to become an effective parent, as they manage to meet their children's needs, ensuring the long-term success and well-being of their children.

To cope with child parenting struggles, the use of various strategies is applied not in a single way but in a combination of physical, emotional, spiritual, and social ways. To foster the child's well-being and raise them in a normal life, mothers turn their disadvantages into opportunities for life improvement and growth with the help and support of the family, children, and community, which eases all difficulties. This positive relationship between parents and children is characterized by the fact that children are sources of purpose, joy, and a meaningful life, but not an aid for their movement and investment in their welfare.

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