



**Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development**

**DETERMINANTS OF PARENTAL STRESS WITH SLOW LEARNER  
CHILD IN A KLANG PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Nurul Izzah Binti Missanan**

**Bachelor of Psychology (Honours)**

**2022**

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SAWARAK

Grade: \_\_\_\_A\_\_\_\_

Please tick (✓)

Final Year Project Report

Masters

PhD

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK

This declaration is made on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of July 2022.

**Student's Declaration:**

I Nurul Izzah Binti Missanan, 72617, Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development hereby declare that the work entitled, "**Determinants of Parental Stress with Slow Learner Child in a Klang Primary School**" is my original work. I have not copied from any other students' work or from any other sources except where due reference or acknowledgement is made explicitly in the text, nor has any part been written for me by another person.

16 July 2022

Date submitted



\_\_\_\_\_  
Nurul Izzah Binti Missanan (72617)

**Supervisor's Declaration:**

I **DR. MUHAMAD SOPHIAN NAZARUDDIN ANAK SUTAN SAIDI** hereby certifies that the work entitled, **DETERMINANTS OF PARENTAL STRESS WITH SLOW LEARNER CHILD IN A KLANG PRIMARY SCHOOL** was prepared by the above named student, and was submitted to the "FACULTY" as a \* partial fulfillment for the conferment of **BACHELOR OF PSYCHOLOGY (HONOURS)**, and the aforementioned work, to the best of my knowledge, is the said student's work



Received for examination by:

**(DR. MUHAMMAD SOPHIAN NAZARUDDIN ANAK SUTAN SAIDI)**

Date: 22 JULY 2022

I declare this Project/Thesis is classified as (Please tick (√)):

- CONFIDENTIAL** (Contains confidential information under the Official Secret Act 1972)\*  
 **RESTRICTED** (Contains restricted information as specified by the organisation where research was done)\*  
 **OPEN ACCESS**

### Validation of Project/Thesis

I therefore duly affirmed with free consent and willingness declared that this said Project/Thesis shall be placed officially in the PeTARY with the abide interest and rights as follows:

- This Project/Thesis is the sole legal property of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).
- The PeTARY has the lawful right to make copies for the purpose of academic and research only and not for other purpose.
- The PeTARY has the lawful right to digitise the content to for the Local Content Database.
- The PeTARY has the lawful right to make copies of the Project/Thesis for academic exchange between Higher Learning Institute.
- No dispute or any claim shall arise from the student itself neither third party on this Project/Thesis once it becomes sole property of UNIMAS.
- This Project/Thesis or any material, data and information related to it shall not be distributed, published or disclosed to any party by the student except with UNIMAS permission.

Student's signature



(16/7/2022)

Supervisor's signature:



(22/7/2022)

Current Address:

Lot 3500, Kampung Delek Kanan, 41250 Klang, Selangor Darul Ehsan.

Notes: \* If the Project/Thesis is **CONFIDENTIAL** or **RESTRICTED**, please attach together as annexure a letter from the organisation with the period and reasons of confidentiality and restriction.

[The instrument was duly prepared by the PeTARY]

**DETERMINANTS OF PARENTAL STRESS WITH SLOW LEARNER CHILD IN A  
KLANG PRIMARY SCHOOL**

NURUL IZZAH BINTI MISSANAN

This project is submitted  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a  
Bachelor of Psychology with Honours

Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development  
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK  
(2022)

The project entitled '**Determinants of Parental Stress with Slow Learner Child in a Klang Primary School**' was prepared by **Nurul Izzah Binti Missanan, 72617** and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Psychology with Honours

Received for examination by:



---

(Dr. Muhamad Sophian Nazaruddin Sutan Saidi)

Date:

22 JULY 2022

---

**Gred**

**A**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude and thank you to God, for allowing me to have this opportunity to make research about my interest scope of study. Without His permission, I would never start and accomplished this study. First of all, I would like to thank Dr. Muhamad Sophian Nazaruddin Sutan Saidi a.k.a Pak Pian as my supervisor for his support and fast response towards my countless questions and thoughts. He makes me proud of my research despite of the results, he said to us, “Do not be insecure of your research study” and I remember that.

Moreover, I also want to express my grateful and thanks towards my mother, who always helped me out for this study by teaching me about slow learner and the differences, my father, who sent me to the school for the interview and accompanied me to the front door, my cats (Oreo and Cookie) that always there beside me while I was doing the reports, my sisters listening to my stories and gossips, and last but not least, my friends for their unconditional supports, make me realized that I am not alone in this journey.

I also want to grab this opportunity to convey my appreciation to all participants, consists of parents that willingly contributed their time and energy by taking part in this study and also teachers that helped me collecting the data. Without them, this research study could never be possible to happened. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart <3

## Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	1
LIST OF TABLES .....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES .....	v
ABSTRACT .....	vi
ABSTRAK .....	vii
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.0 Introduction .....	1
1.1 Background of Study .....	1
1.2 Problem Statement .....	3
1.3 Research Objectives .....	4
1.3.1 General Objective .....	4
1.3.2 Specific Objective .....	4
1.4 Research Questions .....	4
1.5 Research Hypotheses .....	4
1.6 Conceptual Framework .....	5
1.7 Significance of Study .....	5
1.8 Definition of Terms .....	6
1.8.1 Parental Stress .....	6
1.8.2 Slow Learner .....	6
1.9 Summary .....	6

CHAPTER TWO .....	7
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	7
2.0 Introduction .....	7
2.1 Parental Stress .....	7
2.2 Theory Related to Parental Stress.....	7
2.2.3 Parental Stress and Child Behavior Problems.....	9
2.3 Previous Findings.....	9
2.3.1 Socio-Demographic .....	9
2.3.2 Gender .....	10
2.4 Improvement in Present Study .....	11
2.5 Summary .....	11
CHAPTER THREE .....	12
METHODOLOGY .....	12
3.0 Introduction .....	12
3.1 Research Design.....	12
3.2 Population and Sample.....	12
3.3 Instruments.....	13
3.3.1 Instrument Structure .....	13
3.3.2 Procedures .....	13
3.4 Data Collection Procedures.....	14
3.5 Data Analysis Procedures.....	14



3.5.1 Descriptive Data Analysis .....	14
3.5.2 Inferential Data Analysis .....	15
3.6 Summary .....	15
CHAPTER FOUR.....	16
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....	16
4.0 Introduction .....	16
4.1 Demographic Data.....	16
4.2 Inferential Data (Main Findings).....	17
4.2.1 Independent T-test .....	19
4.2.2 One-Way ANOVA .....	20
4.2.3 Pearson Correlation .....	21
4.2.4 Pearson Correlation .....	23
LIMITATION, IMPLICATION, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION .....	24
5.0 Introduction .....	24
5.1 Limitations of Study.....	24
5.2 Implications .....	24
5.3 Recommendations .....	24
5.4 Conclusion.....	25
REFERENCES .....	26
APPENDIX A.....	30
APPENDIX B .....	32

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1</b>	Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Socio-Demographic	16
<b>Table 2</b>	Mean, Mode, Median for Parental Stress Scores	17
<b>Table 3</b>	Frequency and Mode of Parental Stress Scores	18
<b>Table 4</b>	Differences of Parental Stress Scores in Male and Female (N=30)	19
<b>Table 5</b>	Mean, Standard Deviation and One-Way Analysis of Variance of Education Level and Parents' Stress Level Groups	20
<b>Table 6</b>	Correlations for Number of children and the Total scores	21
<b>Table 7</b>	Correlations for Income per Month (RM) and Total Scores	23

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1</b>	Conceptual Framework	5
<b>Figure 2</b>	Model of relationships between parental Stress, Parent behavior and child behavior problems by Deater-Deckard (1998).	9
<b>Figure 3</b>	Bar Chart of Number of Children and Parental Stress Score	22

## **ABSTRACT**

This study aimed to determine the determinants of parental stress with slow learner child in a Klang primary school using their socio-demographic information and calculated their parental stress using Parental Stress Scale (PSS). In this study, quantitative survey method was used and survey questionnaire were distributed using Google Forms to parents with slow learner child in one primary school (with special education) in Klang through selective sampling. There were 30 parents with slow learner child participated in this study. The data was analyzed using version 26 of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The socio-demographic information that used in this study for main findings are gender, income, number of children and highest education level to correlate with parental stress score or parental stress level. In this study, there is no gender differences on parental stress score when using Independent T-test. Moreover, while using One-Way ANOVA, there is no significant effect of educational level on the stress level of parents with slow learner child. Other than that, Pearson Correlation test also demonstrated that there is no significant relationship between number of children and stress level on parents with slow learner child and there is also no significant relationship between income and stress level on parents with slow learner child. Although these results were not expected, other findings could be found to discuss the outcome gain from this study. To further improve this study, future researchers were suggested to conduct this study with more participants taking part and same frequencies for each category to compare between the groups.

**Keywords:** Socio-demographic, Slow learner, Parental stress

## ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan penentu tekanan ibu bapa dengan anak Slow learner di sebuah sekolah rendah di Klang dengan menggunakan maklumat sosio-demografi mereka serta mengira jumlah skor tekanan ibu bapa melalui *Parental Stress Scale (PSS)*. Kaedah tinjauan kuantitatif telah digunakan dan soal selidik tinjauan telah diedarkan kepada ibu bapa yang mempunyai anak Slow learner di sebuah sekolah rendah (dengan pendidikan khas) menggunakan *Google Forms* melalui persampelan terpilih. Seramai 30 orang ibu bapa yang mempunyai anak Slow learner telah mengambil bahagian dalam kajian ini. Data kajian telah dianalisis menggunakan *Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)* versi ke-26.

Maklumat sosio-demografi yang digunakan dalam kajian ini terutamanya dalam dapatan kajian utama ialah jantina, pendapatan, bilangan anak dan tahap pendidikan tertinggi untuk dikaitkan dengan skor tekanan ibu bapa atau tahap tekanan ibu bapa. Dalam kajian ini, terdapat tiada perbezaan jantina pada skor tekanan ibu bapa apabila menggunakan ujian-T bebas. Selain itu, terdapat tiada kesan signifikan tahap pendidikan terhadap tahap tekanan ibu bapa dengan anak Slow learner semasa menggunakan ANOVA sehala. Selain daripada itu, Korelasi Pearson juga menunjukkan bahawa tidak terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara bilangan anak dan tahap tekanan ke atas ibu bapa dengan anak slow learner dan antara pendapatan dan tahap tekanan ke atas ibu bapa. Walaupun keputusan ini tidak dijangka, terdapat dapatan lain yang boleh digunakan untuk membincangkan daripada hasil kajian dapatan ini. Untuk penambahbaikan kajian ini, penyelidik akan datang dicadangkan untuk menjalankan kajian ini dengan lebih ramai peserta yang mengambil bahagian dan frekuensi yang sama untuk setiap kategori untuk dibandingkan antara kumpulan.

**Kata kunci:** Sosio-demografi, Slow learner (Lembam), Tekanan ibu bapa

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter includes an overall framework that covered research background of study, the statement of problem, research objectives that consist of general objective and specific objective, research questions, research hypotheses, conceptual framework, significance of study, definition of terms and summary.

#### **1.1 Background of Study**

In this era, mental health awareness has been receiving a lot of attention from people and netizens from all around the world. People getting stress and depression has been increasing and the number of people commit suicide also getting skyrocketed across the years. Stress could be advantageous to someone but it could be dangerous if the individuals did not manage their stress well. This attention-grabbing scenario made the researchers to study about stress in certain areas and population. However, parents also are not excluded to have stress thus this is the scenario that researcher want to highlight in this study.

First and foremost, parental stress happens when parents experience distress and feel they cannot cope as a parents (*Parenting Stress*, n.d.). Parenting a child could be a big responsibility for a parent because it takes a lot of commitments such as providing them necessity, safety, taking care of child's health, give supports in term of education, emotional, social and guiding to become more discipline and many more. However, it is even harder if parent has a slow learner child.

A slow learner child has academic achievement lower than average normal child but not mentally retarded and usually a slow learner child has IQ score in between 70 to 90 (Cooter and Cooter Jr, 2004; Wiley, 2007 as cited in *Bethsaida Hospital*, n.d.). Some of the characteristics of a slow learner child are having a short attention span, mentally immature for his chronological age, they are lack of interest in something, weak in reading, has a difficulty in generalizing and many more (Kamunge, 2018). So, it is very important to know that it takes a lot of patience and commitment for parents to guide their slow learner child thus social supports and education are important to help parents with slow learner child to control their parental stress.

There are some researchers showed that parents of child with intellectual disability expected to notably have higher level of stress than parents with normal child (Rodrigue, Morgan, & Geffken, 1990; Dyson, 1997; Roach, Orsmand & Barrat, 1999 as cited in Ilias, 2008). This applies that parental stress is common to be happened, especially to the parents with disability children. Therefore, this research could help parents with slow learner child to identify if they need support, could improve parenting quality thus enhance the bond between parent and child hence ascertain the determinants of parental stress with slow learner child from their socio-demographic.

Moreover, although both parents are involved in parenting slow learner child, there are previous research showed that mother will have higher stress level than father and from the result, the determinants of parental stress are either gender, level of education, marital status, income of parents, number of children.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

In this study, the researcher focused on the issues of parents with slow learner child with high parental stress with the aims to determine the determinants of parental stress, to identify parents with high level of stress and to improve quality of parent-child relationship. In order to identify parents with slow learner child with high level of parental stress, Parental Stress Scale was used to measure parental stress and the researcher used the parents' socio-demographic to establish determinants of parental stress. In this study, the researcher used a primary school with special education in Klang to find parents with slow learner child to fit the criteria of the selective sampling. At the school, slow learners are estimated at 15% to 17% average population (*Slow Learner*, n.d.). There were 30 parents from that school participated in this study. The survey questionnaire distributed from teacher to slow learner child's parent through Google Form including informed consent through group WhatsApp.

Even though teachers have done their responsibilities at school to teach slow learner child, it is matters for parents to help their child by helping them to so the homework, at least, and spending time at home so they will not feel isolated. It is due to slow learner need special instructional techniques of learning instead of calling them special children (Korikana, 2020). However, according to one research in Croatia, parents of children with disabilities shows that parents of children with disabilities shows that higher level of stress associates to gender, educational level, marital status, income of parents and number of children (Lisak et al., 2019). Nonetheless, the percentage of parents with Learning Disabilities is very low, it is better to address the problem instantly (Kamarulzaman & Nordin, 2015). Hence, this study helped parents with high parental stress to cope with their emotional stress and learn to manage their problem directly.



### **1.3 Research Objectives**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

This study aims to calculate the stress level of parents with slow learner child

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objective**

The specific objective for this study is to determine the determinants of parental stress with slow learner child in a Klang primary school

### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. Does mother with slow learner child has higher parental stress than father with slow learner child?
2. Does level of education affect the level of parental stress?
3. Does income per month affect the stress level of parents with slow learner child?
4. Does number of children affect the parent with slow learner child's level of stress?

### **1.5 Research Hypotheses**

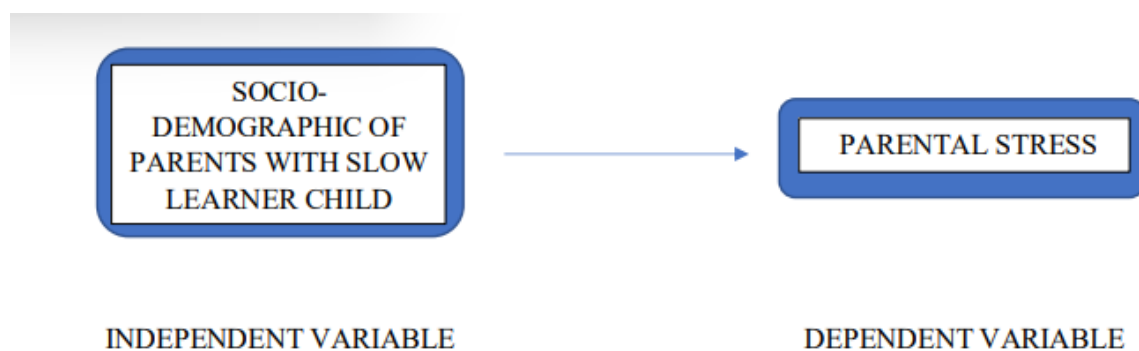
1. There is a significant gender difference on parental stress level
2. There is a significant effect of educational level on the stress level of parents with slow learner child
3. There is a significant relationship between number of children and stress level on parents with slow learner child
4. There is a significant relationship between income and stress level on parents with slow learner child

## 1.6 Conceptual Framework

In this study, determinants of parental stress determined by the socio-demographic of parents with slow learner child such as Gender, Education Level, Number of Children and Income per Month (RM) as the independent variables, and parental stress scores as dependent variable.

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual Framework*



## 1.7 Significance of Study

This research can give awareness to people to be more alert about parental stress especially parent with disability children. Parents with higher parental stress can be determined in this research from the result of their Parental Stress Scale result. Furthermore, it shows that parents with higher level of parental stress are linked to lower levels of parental sensitivity to the child, lower quality of parent and child relationship and deficient child behaviour (Purpose & Index, 2013). Therefore, identified parents with high level of parental stress learn how to improve their moods, relieve stress and how to enhance the bond between parents and child, find social support through this research.

This study also benefits parents with slow learner child to acknowledge their emotion or physical stress of child-rearing. Moreover, the society capable to be more aware and alert about

parental stress received by parents with slow learner child. Educational class is needed to learn about managing parental stress to all parents especially parents with disability children so they know some methods, approach or any organization that can provide them with counselling session that they can utilize all the opportunities they have to manage their problems. Besides, this study could give insights for community to be more understanding towards parents with disability children, learning difficulties thus helping them when they need supports.

## **1.8 Definition of Terms**

### **1.8.1 Parental Stress**

**Conceptual Definition:** An imbalance demands of parenting and available resources from parental perceptions (Raphael, Zhang, Liu & Giardino, 2010, as cited in Hsiao, 2018).

**Operational Definition:** as measured using Parenting Stress Index, it is assumes parenting stress as high levels of parental distress, parent-child dysfunctional interactions, and perceived child difficulty (Abidin, 1995).

### **1.8.2 Slow Learner**

**Conceptual Definition:** individuals that learn slowly than their peers but it does not mean disability (Ruhela, 2014).

**Operational Definition:** child with intelligence below average and has thinking skills below normal within his/her age (Ruhela, 2014).

## **1.9 Summary**

This chapter summarized the overall overview, insights about the stress being a parent with a slow learner child and some expectations or results that can be gain from past studies.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the previous study related to parental stress and slow learner. After that, the related theories are also being discussed in this chapter.

#### **2.1 Parental Stress**

Parents with high stress often experience fewer satisfaction in their parental role and little positive perspective on parenting thus receive limited gratification in their children hence it is reported that parenting stress is correlated with decrease emotional well-being in parents due to major events and daily encounters (Jennings & Dietz, 2007). However, stress received by parents depends on how they observe the situation and the coping strategies used to control the stress such as emotion-focused, perception-focused coping or problem-focused (Vicki et al., 2008). Parental stress can be in different conditions such as deficient in social support, marriage problems or financial difficulties that can diminish parents' patient, tolerance, participation, concentration toward their children (Bornstein & Zlotnik, 2008).

#### **2.2 Theory Related to Parental Stress**

##### **2.2.1 Parental Burnout**

From Mikolajczak & Roskam (2018), Parental Burnout take places when parents enduring the exposure to chronic parenting stress and since it is a stress-related disorder, they characterize the risk factors that can increase parental stress significantly such as low emotional intelligence, lack of external support or from co-parent, poor childrearing practices, parental perfectionism,

countless parental chores and duties. The symptoms could be loss of accomplishment, overwhelming exhaustion and emotional distancing from their children.

This theory of Parental Burnout applied that parents are also included to have parental stress due to the responsibilities they hold as parents. They easily got energy or emotionally drained due to child-rearing and taking care of children. This could be harder for parents to handle a slow learner child and a normal child at the same time. The relationship between parent and children also can contribute to parental stress if they do not have a good interaction between each other.

### **2.2.2 Family Systems Theory**

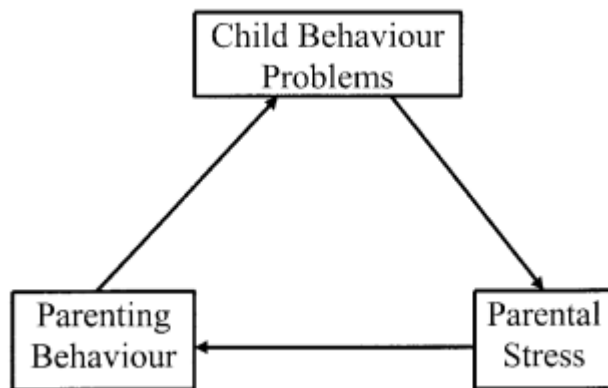
From (Watson, 2012), Family systems theory is to understand human functioning between family members that focuses on the interaction between them. Family systems theory has been applied to psychotherapy and family therapy particularly from wide variety of areas that highlighted on emotional, behavioral or relational symptoms in individuals, couples and family.

This theory could be seen as an approach to see the interaction between the family members. As the parents with slow learner child might have difficulty to communicate normally with their slow learner child can be displayed as difficult conversations between them, thus could make a parent with slow learner child has a higher parental stress. Moreover, on a long term of raising children with special needs from their adolescence until become an adult, the family will face stress thus impacting the quality of family relationship due to the demands of participations and efforts from parents such as medical treatment and long term psychological therapies (Lisak et al., 2019).

### 2.2.3 Parental Stress and Child Behavior Problems

**Figure 2**

*Model of relationships between parental Stress, Parent behavior and child behavior problems by Deater-Deckard (1998).*



From Figure 2 above, implied the process of when children have behavior problems, they make their parents having stress thus parents embracing the parenting behavior from their behaviors problems and this cycle continue hence make the child's behavior problems become even worse than previous one (Hastings, 2002). There are few studies implied that parents with high parental stress correlated with child's behavior problems but none of them are confirm to show that child's behavior problem can be a factor of parental stress.

## 2.3 Previous Findings

### 2.3.1 Socio-Demographic

From Lisak et al. (2019), the factors of higher parental stress from their socio-demographic correspond to gender, education level, number of children, marital status, income of parents with children with disabilities. The result shows that mother, parents with higher education level, parents living in extramarital relation, parents with middle income, parents with lower 3

children experience more stress rather than fathers, parents of lower socio-economic status, lower education level and parents with more than 3 children.

Thus, this study focused on comparing the gender (mother and father), educational level (low, middle, high), number of children (lower than 3, more than 3) and income with stress level of parents with slow learner child.

### **2.3.2 Gender**

From a recent study by Nur Farahana & Manisah (2020), implies that mothers are closer to their children than fathers thus mother tend to experience higher stress level than father. In addition, the study from Lisak et al. (2019), from the result illustrates that mother experience more stress than father due to always paying attention to their child's feeling because of their curiosity since they did not know how and what their child feelings. Slow learners have poor social skills since they cannot express their emotion through language thus it is easy for them to feel frustrated and anxious (Ruhela, 2014). Thus, it is very hard for parents especially mothers to understand their slow learner child in this situation because the child cannot express their emotion well so parents need to find their own way to understand their emotions and feelings.

Moreover, a study in Iran by the Department of Psychology concluded that mothers got too much mental pressure from their slow learner child where they compared mothers with normal child and mothers with slow learner and it showed the significant differences between them in terms of psychological needs and also come to an end that mothers with slow learner child have weaker family performance rather than mothers with normal child (Zamrodah, 2016). Thus, this could aid that not only mothers are affected by stress but family members' mental health also getting influenced by a slow learner child.

However, there was a study about acceptance of fathers toward their daughters with special needs in Malaysia from the type of child disability. From the result, it shows that level of acceptance of fathers toward daughters are highest in hearing impaired children, accompanied by child with visual impairment and learning disabilities using Questionnaire Child Acceptance-Rejection (Ali et al., n.d.). It shows that there was low rejection towards child, but parents' acceptance does not mean that parents do not have stress while rearing the child.

#### **2.4 Improvement in Present Study**

Compared to this small research study, the improvement that can be seen is the new findings that can be gain from the result. Furthermore, the new findings can give new ideas to the future researchers to do more research and prepare better planning on how and what to focus on their chosen scope of study.

#### **2.5 Summary**

To sum up, this chapter overall brief explanation about some theories that can be used to support the reasons for researcher to choose this tittle as her interest study. In addition, past studies also give researcher some ideas on collecting data using selective sampling and aspects that needed to focus on.