

Parental Control in Shaping Children's Religios Character in Rural Communities: a Case Study of *Balikhakilir* Hamlet

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Abstract: The good and bad character of children depends a lot on how much the role of parents in educating them. School, teachers and society only help to complement and maximize the role of parents in the formation of children's character. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to present how parents' control in the formation of children's religious character. The descriptive qualitative method was used to describe the dynamics of the relationship between parents and children and identify best practices in educating children based on religious values. The results show that parents who are actively involved in their children's religious education can help shape a disciplined, empathetic and moral character, which is important for children's social and emotional development. This research emphasizes the importance of parents' role in providing consistent and balanced religious education and creating an environment that supports children's early spiritual development.

Keywords: Parental Control, Character Building, Religious.

Abstrak: Karakter baik dan buruk anak-anak sangat bergantung pada peran orang tua dalam mendidik mereka. Sekolah, guru, dan masyarakat hanya berperan sebagai pelengkap dan memaksimalkan peran orang tua dalam pembentukan karakter anak-anak. Oleh karena itu, tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menggambarkan bagaimana kontrol orang tua dalam pembentukan karakter agama anak-anak. Metode deskriptif kualitatif digunakan untuk menggambarkan dinamika hubungan antara orang tua dan anak serta mengidentifikasi praktik terbaik dalam mendidik anak berdasarkan nilai-nilai agama. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa orang tua yang aktif terlibat dalam pendidikan agama anak-anak mereka dapat membantu membentuk karakter yang disiplin, empati, dan bermoral, yang penting bagi perkembangan sosial dan emosional anak-anak. Penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya peran orang tua dalam memberikan pendidikan agama yang konsisten dan seimbang serta menciptakan lingkungan yang mendukung perkembangan spiritual anak-anak sejak dini.

Kata Kunci: Controlling Orang Tua, Pembentukan Karakter, Religius.

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Introduction

Islamic boarding school accommodation as part Discussing children will certainly be inseparable from parents because however much a child's personality will reflect his parents. Of course in this case it also applies in the formation of religious character in children. In a theory put forward by Ki Hajar Dewantara that the role of parents ranks first and foremost in children's education. then, departing from this explanation, of course the role of parents in children's education becomes very urgent, good and bad children will depend on how much the educational role of parents in carrying out their role as a father and mother (Ansharuddin, n.d.), (Ansharuddin & Putri, 2023). Religious character building in early childhood is an important process in individual development based on religious values. At this time, children are in a very crucial stage of development, where the cultivation of moral and spiritual values will form a strong foundation for their character in the future. In this context, the role of parents as *controllers* is vital. Parents not only act as role models, but also as guides and mentors who shape children's spiritual foundation through various daily activities and interactions (Elan Elan, 2023).

Parents are the main and first educators for their children because it is from them that children first receive education which is essentially an environment that shapes and influences the personality and behavior of children based on the Quran and Al-Hadist (Ningsih, 2024) . Parents also have the main responsibility in directing, guiding and providing good examples for their children. Early childhood is an individual who is in a very rapid and critical phase of development. At this time, they are very easily influenced by the surrounding environment, including by parenting (Ningsih, 2024). Therefore, parents must be able to control various aspects of children's lives so that the process of forming religious characters can take place effectively.

Religious character can be defined as a collection of attitudes, values, and behaviors that are in accordance with the religion adhered to. This character includes moral, ethical, and spiritual dimensions that influence the way individuals interact with God, fellow humans, and the surrounding environment. In early childhood, religious character building includes the introduction and understanding of basic

religious concepts, such as knowing God, understanding the values of kindness, honesty, compassion, and responsibility (Setiawati, 2024).

Early religious character building has many benefits for child development. First, religious values provide a strong moral foundation, helping children understand the difference between right and wrong. Second, religious teachings often teach about compassion, empathy and tolerance, which are very important in a child's social and emotional development. Thirdly, religious beliefs can provide a sense of security and calmness for children, which has a positive impact on their mental health. In addition, religious character can also help children develop an attitude of discipline and responsibility that will be useful throughout their lives (Nadela Sustiarini, 2023).

National character is an important aspect of the quality of human resources because the quality of national character determines the progress of a nation. Quality character needs to be formed from an early age because early childhood is a critical period for the formation of a person's character (Arsyad, 2020). So, this character education changes a person for the better. Value education is an effort to educate children to make wise decisions and practice them in everyday life so that they can do good by nature. To form a religious character in children, parents must instill noble values in children such as: tolerance, solidarity, brotherhood, respect, love, self-sacrifice and sensitivity, kindness and friendship, peace, discipline, loyalty and affection, if this is the price. Embedded in every child, then the child will learn a lot about the process, including the value of parental closeness (Siti Hajrah, 2024). Character is a combination of a person's attitudes and behaviors that reflect the way they think, feel, and act, and distinguish them from other people. This character is formed through the internalization of values taken from various aspects of life, such as relationships with God, interactions with others, and the influence of the social environment. These values come from religious norms, laws, manners, culture, and customs, which form a strong character and are difficult to change, so that the character continues to be closely attached to a person (Iin Turyani, 2024).

Religiosity is good behavior and actions that are in accordance with the teachings of the religion they follow. Personal values that connect a person with their

God. Religiosity is a personal value that shows that a person's thoughts, words, and actions are always based on sacred values and/or religious teachings. In this case, according to a statement by one of the informants named Hasiyah, who stated that for early childhood in this area, it is indeed very thick with control from parents because seeing from the scope of the mountains, almost all of them are educated or have been embedded in a character in themselves that is better or positive in every case. Controlling or supervision is one of the management functions in the form of conducting assessments, making corrections so that what is done by subordinates can be directed to the right path so that the goals that have been outlined can be achieved. In essence, parental control in the context of religious character building in early childhood includes several important aspects. First, parents must create an environment that is conducive to children's spiritual development. The environment includes the physical environment, such as a home filled with religious values, as well as the social environment, such as a community that supports religious practices (M. Jaya Adi Putra, 2023).

However, in this controlling process, parents must also pay attention to the balance between control and freedom. Too much control without providing space for children to think and ask questions can cause children to feel pressured and not develop optimally. Therefore, it is important for parents to provide directed freedom, which is freedom that remains within the boundaries of the religious values they want to instill. From the description above, it can be understood that actually parental supervision or control is very important in child development, because after all, it is parents who know the condition of a child best. Due to the importance of this, the role of parents must be optimal, of course, the form of parental supervision must be adjusted to the growth and development of children and not force themselves by only looking from one side, namely in the perspective of parents but also having to consider from the side of a child.

Research Method

Methods relate to the validity and reliability of the research results obtained and reported in scientific articles. The method is a means for the reader (reviewer) to assess whether. The methods (and materials/equipment/models) used are

appropriate to obtain valid research results. Methods are a means for readers (other researchers within the scope of the research) to critically evaluate the results or re-conduct part or all of the research reported in the scientific article in exactly the same way as outlined in the Methods written in the scientific article. Things that are already known by the researcher in a particular research scope do not need to be written down, as well as general equipment and equipment used. For each method, please provide a chart or stages of what will be done, both from data collection, to benchmarks to determine the success of the research that has been carried out.

Results and Discussion

Parental Contolling in Children's Character Building Early Age

The role of parents in early childhood character building is very important and fundamental. As the first and primary educators, parents have a great responsibility in providing a moral and ethical foundation for their children. Parents serve as direct examples in everyday life, so the behaviors, attitudes, and values they demonstrate will be observed and imitated by children. Through daily interactions, such as playing, talking and doing activities together, parents can instill positive values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy and hard work. In addition, by providing consistent affection and attention, parents help children feel safe and valued, which is an important foundation for the development of strong and healthy character. Parents also play a role in directing and supervising their children's behavior. By providing proper guidance, parents can help children develop self-discipline and the ability to make good decisions. From the results of the research we conducted in Balikhilir Hamlet, the parents there have a very low education, some of whom have only finished elementary school, junior high school, or high school, and some have never been to school at all. They do not realize that parents are the first teachers for children. As a result, many children grow up with poor behavior, such as speaking rudely and angrily, and using language that is not appropriate for their age. This is due to parents' lack of knowledge about how to educate their children and the absence of sufficient guidance at home. Parents mostly leave their children's education to schools, even though the formation of children's character starts at home, especially from parents.

1. Instilling the Values of Cleanliness, Order, and Honesty

The role of parents in the development of children's positive moral traits is very important and diverse. Parents act as models, teachers, and main supporters in the process of children's moral development. Here are some of the main aspects of the role of parents in the development of positive moral traits (Azwina, 2024):

- a. **Modeling Behavior:** Parents are direct role models for children. Children often mimic their parents' behavior. Therefore, it is important for parents to demonstrate positive moral traits such as honesty, responsibility, empathy and respect in their daily lives.
- b. **Moral Education:** Parents need to explicitly teach moral values to their children. This can be done through discussions, stories, and direct teaching about what is right and wrong. Parents can also use everyday situations as opportunities to teach moral lessons.
- c. **Emotional Support:** Providing consistent emotional support helps children feel safe and valued, which in turn supports their moral development. Children who feel loved and accepted tend to develop positive moral traits more easily.
- d. **Positive Reinforcement:** Giving praise and rewards when a child demonstrates good moral behavior can reinforce those traits. Positive reinforcement helps children understand that good behavior is recognized and rewarded.

Through these roles, parents can help their children develop positive moral traits that will form the basis for their future behavior. Meanwhile, from the results of the interviews we conducted according to Hasna that::

"Parents play an important role in shaping children's moral character. Children will develop positive traits if parents instill values such as cleanliness, order, honesty, and provide good education and love. In addition, parents also need to be role models, provide religious information, and teach religion from an early age."

Parents have a very important role in the development of children's positive moral traits. Through these various roles, they can help their children develop moral traits that will be the basis for their future behavior. This role is evident from interviews with parents in Balikhilir Hamlet, one of whom is Mrs. Hasiyah. Mrs.

Hasiyah emphasized that "parents have an important role in shaping children's moral character.

According to him, children will develop positive moral traits if parents instill values such as cleanliness, orderliness and honesty in them". He explained that hygiene should be taught from an early age. Children need to be taught to keep themselves and the environment clean which not only reflects personal responsibility but also concern for others. In addition, orderliness is another important value that must be instilled. Teaching children to live in an orderly manner, such as adhering to a daily schedule, tidying up toys after play, and following household rules, helps them develop discipline and a sense of responsibility. Honesty is also a major focus in moral teaching at home. Parents need to teach the importance of telling the truth and acting with integrity. Children who see their parents always being honest will emulate and value honesty in their lives. In addition to instilling these values, providing a good education is also an important responsibility of parents. Formal and informal education is very important in shaping children's character. Parents need to ensure that children get a good education, both at school and at home. By providing educational books, discussing school lessons, and supporting children's learning activities, parents play an active role in their educational process (Pertiwi, 2021). Showing concern for others is also an important aspect of moral education provided by parents. Children need to be taught to care for others, such as helping friends who are in trouble, sharing with those in need, and treating everyone with respect. This care helps children develop empathy and a strong social sense (Nurjanah et al., 2022).

Undivided affection is also very important in a child's moral development. Children need genuine affection and full attention from their parents. When parents provide undivided affection, children feel valued and secure. This affection is the foundation of healthy and positive emotional development. By instilling positive values, providing a good education, showing affection and care, and being a good role model, parents can help their children grow into moral and responsible individuals (Ilmi, 2024).

2. Educating children to behave well

Educating children to behave well is a process that involves teaching and

guiding children to understand and apply moral values, social norms, and generally accepted behaviors in society. This includes various aspects, such as (Arianto, 2024):

- a. Teaching Ethics and Morals: Provides an understanding of what is right and wrong, and the importance of behaving honestly, fairly and responsibly.
- b. Empathy Development: Helps children understand and feel the feelings of others, so that they can act with compassion and understanding.
- c. Positive Discipline: Using discipline methods that are educational, rather than punitive, to help children understand the consequences of their actions and learn to make better choices in the future.

Parents have a huge responsibility to advise and guide children not to repeat bad behavior. Children tend to imitate what they see from their parents, so it is important for parents to always set a good example. Without proper supervision, children can imitate good or bad behavior from outside the home. Therefore, parents need to monitor children's activities and ensure they are in a positive environment.

In addition to supervision, it is also important to provide an understanding of religious values to children so that children are not influenced by bad things when they are outside the home, they must have a strong moral and spiritual foundation. Religious values instilled early on will guide children in making good decisions and avoiding bad behavior (Rosida, 2024). By providing proper advice, guidance and supervision, as well as instilling strong religious values, parents can help their children grow into responsible and well-moralized individuals.

3. Providing Supervision or Controlling

Parental supervision or controlling is an active process undertaken by parents to monitor, direct and control various aspects of their children's lives. The aim is to ensure that children grow and develop in a safe, healthy and supportive environment, and are protected from adverse influences that can be detrimental to their physical, mental and moral development. This involves monitoring children's daily activities, controlling their use of technology, and their social and emotional interactions as follows (Purwaningsih et al., 2024) :

- a. Supervision of Daily Activities: Parents monitor their children's activities directly to ensure they are engaged in positive and beneficial activities.
- b. Setting a Good Example: Parents try to be role models in their daily behavior so

that children can imitate positive and religious attitudes.

- c. Controlling Technology Use: Parents supervise children's use of technology, ensuring that children are not exposed to negative outside influences that can damage mental and moral development.
- d. Active Guidance and Presence: Parents always try to be physically and emotionally present to provide guidance to their children according to their needs.
- e. Creating a Positive Environment: Parents ensure children are in an environment that supports their character and moral development.
- f. Establishing Good Communication: Parents maintain open communication with the child to discuss the problem at hand and give appropriate advice.
- g. Encouraging Religious Activities: Parents direct children to participate in religious activities that can strengthen religious and spiritual values in children.

This can also be seen from how the role of parents in shaping children's character based on the following interview:

"Nowadays, there are many bad influences that can affect children, so parents need to be more vigilant. Parents should monitor their children's activities, ensure they are involved in positive and religious activities, and model good behavior. With the rapid development of technology, children are easily exposed to outside influences, so it is important for parents to be present and provide guidance. Good communication is also necessary to keep children's character positive."

With the development of today's times, there are many bad influences that can affect children. Therefore, parents must be more careful in supervising their children. Especially in today's technological era, many children are wrong in using technology so that many are trapped in negative activities. In this case it can be seen that to form a child's religious character depends on the upbringing of his parents because an important role in the character of the child lies in the following theory which explains that, National character is an important aspect of the quality of human resources because the quality of the nation's character determines the progress of a nation. Quality character needs to be formed from an early because early childhood is a critical period for the formation of a person's character (Hardianti F dan Adawiyah R, 2023).

Parents' Habits in Building Children's Character in Balikbakhilir Hamlet

The strategy of habituation to good behavior in daily life can be achieved by getting children used to doing so. By doing so, children will develop daily routines freely, consciously and without coercion. Children have learned discipline in carrying out and completing an activity through direct habituation. With direct habituation, starting from practicing the five daily prayers at a predetermined time, praying in congregation, dhikr after prayer and reading the Koran, maintaining proper eating and drinking manners, and keeping the environment clean are a small part of the routine tasks performed. To train and familiarize children permanently and continuously with a purpose, so that it is truly embedded in the child and eventually becomes a habit that is difficult to leave in the future, as for some of the habits that parents do in shaping children's character in Balikbakhilir Hamlet as follows:

a. Habit of Honest Behavior

Honesty habituation involves a consistent and caring approach in educating children. This honesty education starts from infancy and continues into adulthood, with an emphasis on recognizing the truth in difficult situations, such as admitting the amount of money that may have been stolen from parents. It includes setting a good example, teaching the consequences of actions, practicing honest speaking skills, and managing the child's actions in an educational way (Maulid & Salmia, 2023).

In the interviews, parents practiced honesty by training children to admit mistakes. This approach also involves managing children's actions in a nurturing manner, rather than simply punishing, so that they develop lifelong habits of honesty.

b. Request permission before using items

Based on the results of the interviews, parents' views on the habituation they apply to shape their children's character start with simple but significant daily habits. One of the main habits she emphasizes is the importance of asking permission before doing something. Parents teach their children to ask permission first when they want to use things that do not belong to them, such as toys or relatives' belongings. Similarly, before going out of the house to play or do activities, their children should inform and ask for permission. Even for non-routine activities, they must inform their parents first. The approach given is the creation of habituation (habit formation), where behavior that is repeated consistently will become an automatic habit

(Halimatussa'diah & Napitupulu, 2023). When children are taught to always ask permission before doing something, they will build positive behavior patterns, such as respecting other people's property and communicating with parents. Through this simple but consistent habituation, children learn to understand the value of responsibility, respect, and the importance of honoring parental authority.

c. Train children to get used to Positive Religious Activities

Training children to be accustomed to positive religious activities means getting them used to actively doing activities that have the value of worship and kindness from an early age. Activities such as praying, reading the holy book, helping others, and attending religious events become an important part of children's character building. Through this habituation, children not only recognize spiritual values, but also build discipline, a sense of responsibility, and social care. With consistent mentoring and role models from the surrounding environment, children will grow into individuals with noble character and a strong moral foundation.

This habituation is designed to form a strong foundation for children in living a life full of good ethics and spiritual values. The habituation of Dhuha prayer in children can be explained by habituation theory, which states that behavior that is done continuously will become a habit (Ilmiyah et al., 2024). Parents, as the main example, teach children to routinely perform congregational prayers, be polite, diligent in giving alms and others, so that this habit becomes part of the child's daily routine

Conclusion

This research shows that controlling parents in a rural environment, especially in Balikhilir Hamlet, plays a central role in shaping children's religious character. Parents not only carry out the supervisory function, but also provide exemplary religious values through daily activities. Religious education at home is combined with real practices such as habituation to praying in congregation, reciting the Quran, and participating in community religious activities, so that religious values are more easily embedded in children. The control exercised by parents in this hamlet is not repressive, but more in the form of loving supervision and wise direction. High emotional involvement, coupled with strong social ties in the rural environment, makes children feel that practicing religious values is a natural part of their lives. This

condition is reinforced by a culture of gotong royong and family values that are still very strong, which further strengthens the formation of religious character in children. Thus, controlling parents in Balikkabhilir Hamlet is a strategic key in the formation of children's religious character. The harmonious rural environment, plus parenting patterns based on religious values and local culture, make the process of internalizing religious values run more effectively and sustainably. This research emphasizes the importance of parents' active role in assisting children's growth and development, especially in building character rooted in religiosity from an early age.

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