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The Role of Fathers in Guiding the Development of Children's Moral Intelligence

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Abstract

This research focuses on the role of fathers in guiding the moral intelligence development of 4th-grade children at SDN 22 Mataram. This focus was chosen based on the increasing significance of the father's role in child development, particularly in the aspect of moral intelligence. Moral intelligence, as defined by Borba, encompasses seven main virtues: empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance, and justice. The research method used is a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The research subjects consisted of approximately 3 fathers of students, 2 teachers (class advisors), and 3 students who each met the criteria of still living with their fathers and being willing to participate in this study. The research results show that active father involvement significantly affects the child's moral intelligence. Although busy with work, fathers still take the time to play together, accompany their children while studying, and give advice with a gentle approach without anger or violence. This approach not only strengthens emotional bonds but also instills moral values such as patience, responsibility, and empathy in the child. This proves that the father's role in accompanying and guiding the child is very important for creating an environment that supports the development of positive character. Based on the research findings, it is recommended that fathers remain actively involved in their children's lives despite their busy work schedules. Fathers can take time to play together, accompany their children while studying, and give advice with a gentle approach without using violence. This is important to help instill moral values such as patience, responsibility, and empathy, which contribute to the optimal development of a child's moral intelligence.

Keywords: *The Role of Father Involvement, Children's Moral Intelligence*

Introduction

The moral development of children is one of the important aspects of education that not only focuses on the mastery of knowledge but also on character formation. Morality becomes the main foundation in a child's behavior to interact with the social environment ethically and responsibly. This moral intelligence encompasses a child's ability to understand good and bad values, as well as to apply those values in daily life. In the context of the family, parents play the role of the first educators who teach children about these moral values. One component that is often overlooked in moral education within the family is the role of the father, even though the father's involvement in the moral development of the child is very important.¹

Fathers are often regarded as authority figures in the family who have the responsibility of providing material needs and safety for the children, while mothers play a more direct role in nurturing. However, research shows that the father's role in child-rearing and moral guidance is equally important. A study conducted by Sugiyanto mentioned that a father's involvement in the process of moral guidance can influence a child's moral intelligence. Children who have fathers actively involved in moral discussions tend to be more capable of demonstrating better ethical behavior, empathy, and social responsibility compared to children whose fathers are less involved.²

The father's involvement in the child's moral guidance not only impacts the child's behavior in the family environment but also in the school environment. Children with good moral intelligence are better able to adapt to the social environment at school and have better relationships with their peers. This shows the importance of the father's role in the formation of moral intelligence, which begins in the family and is then reflected in the child's behavior in a broader social environment. In the developmental stage of children aged 9-10 years, where they begin to transition from the heteronomous moral stage to the autonomous moral stage, guidance from fathers is greatly needed to help children understand more complex moral concepts.³ However, the father's role in parenting is often influenced by the strong patriarchal culture still prevalent in Indonesia. Many fathers feel that their primary responsibility is to work and provide financial needs, while nurturing

¹Mizal, B. (2014). Education in the family. *Peuradeun Scientific Journal*, 2(3), 155-178

²Septiani, D., & Nasution, I. N. (2018). The role of father involvement in parenting for the development of children's moral intelligence. *Journal of Psychology UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim*, 13(2), 120-125

³Fajri, M. (2019). *Moral and character development in Elementary Schools*. Guepedia

and moral education are considered the mother's responsibility. Such views lead to many fathers being less involved in their children's daily lives, including moral guidance. Research conducted by Dewi (2018) revealed that only about 40% of fathers are actively involved in their children's education, while the rest tend to leave that task to the mothers.⁴

At SDN 22 Mataram, fourth-grade children are at an age where they begin to understand social values and ethics taught both at school and at home. The school provides moral education through various activities and interactions with teachers and peers. However, effective moral education requires continuity between home and school. Here lies the importance of the father's role in accompanying and guiding children at home, so that the children can internalize the moral values taught at school.⁵

The phenomenological method is used in this research to explore fathers' experiences and perceptions regarding their role in guiding children's moral development. Phenomenology is an approach suitable for understanding individuals' subjective experiences within a specific social context. By using this method, researchers can uncover how fathers interpret their role in moral guidance for children, as well as the obstacles they may face in fulfilling that role. This research will also examine how the interaction between fathers and children in the context of moral guidance can influence the development of children's moral intelligence.⁶

The results of this research are expected to provide a deeper understanding of the father's role in the moral guidance of children, particularly in elementary school-aged children. Additionally, this research is also expected to contribute to the development of theories regarding children's moral intelligence and the role of parents in its formation process. Through a deeper understanding of the dynamics of interaction between fathers and children, it is hoped that more effective strategies can be found to increase fathers' involvement in children's moral education.⁷ On the other hand, a father's involvement in moral education can also be influenced by other factors such as work, education, and culture. A study conducted by Wahyudi (2019)

⁴ Mulyana, I. (2022). *The Special Role of Fathers in Child Care*. CV Jejak (Jejak Publisher).

⁵ Manik, N. S. Z., Harahap, S. N. P., Ramadani, N., Chofillah, I., & Iqbal, M. (2024). The Role of Family in Moral Education for Adolescents. *Indonesian Research Journal on Education*, 4(2), 637-646.

⁶ Syahril, S., Ayu, K., Ahmad, S. N., & Salam, R. (2023). Students' Perception Of Islamic Education In Schools: A Phenomenological Study At Smk Perwira Bangsa, Depok City.

⁷ Arliman, L., Arif, E., & SARMIATI, S. (2022). Character Education to Overcome Moral Degradation in Family Communication. *Encyclopedia of Journal*, 4(2), 143-149.

shows that fathers with higher education and more flexible jobs tend to be more involved in the moral upbringing and guidance of their children. Conversely, fathers with long working hours or harsh work environments tend to find it more difficult to be actively involved in their children's lives.⁸

Thus, it is important for fathers to understand that their role in the moral guidance of their children cannot be overlooked. Father's involvement in parenting not only impacts the child's moral intelligence but also the emotional relationship between father and child. Fathers who are actively involved in their children's lives can build closer relationships, making the child feel more comfortable discussing and seeking advice on moral issues they face.⁹

Therefore, this research aims to further examine the role of fathers in the moral guidance of children, as well as how these experiences shape the development of moral intelligence in 4th-grade students at SDN 22 Mataram. It is hoped that the results of this research will not only provide academic contributions but also offer practical guidance for fathers and educators in enhancing the role and contribution of fathers in the moral education of children today..¹⁰

Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a type of field research. The choice of a qualitative approach is based on the characteristics of the problem being investigated, which requires an in-depth exploration of experiences, perceptions, and complex social dynamics in the context of the father's role in moral guidance for children.¹¹

This research adopts a phenomenological approach as its philosophical and methodological framework. Phenomenology, as proposed by Husserl and developed by subsequent philosophers and researchers, aims to understand the essence of individual life experiences related to a specific phenomenon. In the context of this

⁸ Haryanti, D., Ashom, K., & Aeni, Q. (2019). Description of parental behavior in stimulation of children with developmental delays aged 0-6 years. *Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 6(2), 64-70.

⁹ Wijayanti, R. M., & Fauziah, P. Y. (2020). Father involvement in child care. *Vision*, 15(2), 546967

¹⁰ Wahyuni, A., Siregar, S. D., & Wahyuningsih, R. (2021). The role of fathers (fathering) in early childhood care. *AL IHSAN: Journal of Islamic Education for Early Childhood*, 2(2), 055-066

¹¹ Moleong, L. J. (2017). *Qualitative research methodology*/Lexy J. Moleong.

research, the phenomenon of focus is the role of the father in guiding the development of the child's moral intelligenc.¹²

Data analysis in this study uses an inductive approach, following the interactive model of Miles and Huberman. The analysis process begins with data reduction, where the researcher conducts the selection, focus, and abstraction of data from field notes and interview transcripts. Data relevant to the research question is identified and coded, while less relevant data is separated but still retained as context. The second stage is data presentation, where the reduced data is organized and compressed to facilitate drawing conclusions. This process helps researchers understand the complexity of the father's role in the moral guidance of children in the 4th grade at SDN 22 Mataram. The final stage is drawing conclusions and verification. The initial conclusions drawn are tentative and continuously verified throughout the research process. Verification is carried out by seeking supporting evidence, comparing it with existing theories, and discussing it with participants and fellow researchers. This process is carried out iteratively until data saturation and credible conclusions are reached.¹³

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this research is the role of fathers in guiding the development of children's moral intelligence. The research results will be detailed below.

a. Subject 1

1) The Role of Fathers in Guiding the Development of Children's Moral Intelligence

Based on an interview with SA, the father's role in guiding children's moral intelligence encompasses three main aspects: as a guide, a role model, and an advisor. SA explained that fathers are responsible for helping children understand moral values such as honesty, responsibility, and tolerance. He stated that children will find it easier to absorb these values when they see directly how their parents act in daily life. SA added that providing in-depth explanations whenever the child asks questions or faces complex situations is very important for shaping their moral intelligence. For example, he once used

¹² Husserl, E., & Moran, D. (2012). *Ideas: General introduction to pure phenomenology*. Routledge.

¹³ Huberman, A. (2019). *Qualitative data analysis a methods sourcebook*

the incident when his child was late for school to teach the importance of responsibility and time discipline.

2) Forms of Father's Involvement in Guiding the Development of Children's Moral Intelligence

SA explains that his forms of involvement in guiding children's moral development include regular discussion activities, providing examples of positive behavior, and reinforcement through appreciation. He explained that every night before bed, he has a habit of telling his child stories about figures who possess high moral values. In addition, he always tries to show polite and honest behavior to his child, such as apologizing when he makes a mistake in front of the child. SA also ensures to give appreciation, whether in the form of praise or small gifts, every time the child shows good moral behavior.

3) Factors Influencing the Father's Role in Guidance on Development

SA revealed that busyness with work has become the main obstacle in fulfilling his role as a father. However, he strives to make good use of the available time, such as arranging his work schedule to allow for family time in the evenings. Support from his wife is also an important factor that helps him remain consistently involved in the moral guidance of the child. He mentioned that her educational background and experience in attending parenting seminars also provide insights that help her perform her role more effectively.

b. Subject 2

1) The Role of Fathers in Guiding the Development of Children's Moral Intelligence

AKD states that the role of fathers in children's moral intelligence is to create a conducive environment for children to learn and develop. Iamerasa bahwa ayah adalah figur utama dalam membantu anak memahami perbedaan antara benar dan salah, terutama melalui diskusi-diskusi kecil di rumah. AKD revealed that he often uses everyday events, such as watching the news together with his child, to discuss topics like justice and empathy. In his view, emotional involvement and open communication are key in shaping a child's morality.

2) Forms of Father's Involvement in Guiding the Development of Moral Intelligence

According to AKD, the forms of involvement are through direct supervision of the child's daily behavior and open dialogue regarding the challenges faced by the child. He often teaches his children the values of

honesty and responsibility through simple activities, such as assigning them household chores. He also gives guidance when his child interacts with peers, ensuring his child understands the importance of mutual respect. In his view, a father's involvement is not only in major moments but also in the small interactions that happen every day.

3) Factors Influencing the Father's Role in Guidance on Development

AKD mentions that the main factor influencing his role is the strong emotional bond with his child. He believes that emotional closeness makes the child more receptive to receiving moral guidance from him. In addition, the surrounding environment also becomes an important factor, such as the school community that has a positive influence on the child. However, he also admitted that work pressure sometimes makes it difficult for him to always be physically present for his children, although he tries to compensate for it with communication over the phone..

c. Subject 3

1) The Role of Fathers in Guiding the Development of Children's Moral Intelligence

HR views his role as a father as more than just providing guidance; he believes that direct involvement in children's social activities is crucial for nurturing empathy and other moral values. In the interview, he emphasized that moral education should be practical, not just theoretical. For example, he often encourages his children to participate in social activities in the community, such as helping neighbors in need or cleaning places of worship. He believes that by involving his child in these activities, moral values will be more easily understood and applied by his child.

2. Forms of Father's Involvement in Guiding the Development of Children's Moral Intelligence

HR shows involvement through participation in social activities with his children. He explained that he often encourages his children to participate in community service activities in their neighborhood. In addition, he teaches moral values through joint activities, such as donating or sharing food with those in need. feeling that direct involvement in activities helps their children understand values such as care and cooperation more deeply.

3. Factors Influencing the Father's Role in Guiding the Development of Children's Moral Intelligence

HR stated that the family's economic condition is one of the factors influencing his role. As a retiree, he has more time to accompany his child, although his financial condition sometimes limits his participation in certain activities. He also mentioned that support from his wife is very important, especially in managing the household, so he can focus more on providing moral guidance to his child. His personal motivation to give the best for his child also serves as the main driving force in fulfilling this role.

1. The Role of Fathers in Guiding the Development of Children's Moral Intelligence

The three subjects in this study indicate that the role of fathers is very significant in supporting the development of children's moral intelligence. The first subject (SA) shows that the father functions as a moral example, teaching values of honesty and justice through daily actions. This supports Kohlberg's theory, which explains that a child's moral development occurs through observation and direct social experience.¹⁴

The second subject (AKD) shows the importance of open communication between father and child in explaining moral values. The father in the AKD subject often engages in discussions about the moral consequences of certain actions, which is a form of understanding-based teaching in parenting. This reflects Bowlby's theoretical approach regarding the deep emotional bond between parents and children that supports the development of moral values.¹⁵

The third subject (HR) emphasizes that fathers also play a role in guiding children's moral intelligence by teaching values through religious teachings. This father utilizes religious beliefs to provide a deep moral framework for the child. This type of parenting reflects Baumrind's authoritative approach, which combines strict control with empathy in child education.¹⁶

¹⁴ Kuswandi, I. (2020). Stages of moral development: Western and Islamic perspectives (a study of the ideas of Thomas Lickona, Lawrence Kohlberg and the Qur'an). *Ar-Risalah Islamic Media of Islamic Education and Law*, 18(1), 158-173

¹⁵Diananda, A. (2020). Child attachment to parents in improving cognitive development and self-esteem. *Journal Istighna*, 3(2), 141-157

¹⁶ Sapitri, A. (2023). Parenting Patterns in Early Childhood (Case Study in Karanganyar Hamlet, Ragatunjung Village, Paguyangan District).

Based on the above explanation, it can be concluded that the father's role in guiding a child's moral intelligence is diverse, ranging from providing moral examples through direct actions, engaging in deep dialogues, to teaching religious values as a moral foundation. The three subjects adapted the role of the father based on Kohlberg's theory of moral development, Bowlby's attachment theory, and Baumrind's parenting theory, which show that the father plays a central role in developing the child's moral intelligence

2. Forms of Father's Involvement in Guiding the Development of Children's Moral Intelligence

The father's involvement in guiding children's moral intelligence can take several forms, including emotional involvement, supervision, and habituation. Subject SA provides supervision over the child's moral actions, such as teaching the child to always speak honestly and respect others. This reflects the principles of Kohlberg's theory, where direct social experiences help children understand moral values¹⁷

The AKD subjects place more emphasis on moral habituation through communication. The father of this subject actively teaches the child to discuss the importance of morality and helps the child understand the impact of their actions. This is in line with Bowlby's concept of moral scaffolding, which states that the emotional bond between parents and children can enhance moral development through sustained support..¹⁸

The HR subject integrates religious teachings into parenting, often using family time to teach social and moral values based on religion. This reflects the authoritative parenting style proposed by Baumrind, which is parenting that provides clear rules but is full of love and support for the child..¹⁹

¹⁷Kuswandi, I. (2020). Stages of moral development: Western and Islamic perspectives (a study of the ideas of Thomas Lickona, Lawrence Kohlberg and the Qur'an). *Ar-Risalah Islamic Media of Islamic Education and Law*, 18(1), 158-173

¹⁸Diananda, A. (2020). Child attachment to parents in improving cognitive development and self-esteem. *Journal Istighna*, 3(2), 141-157

¹⁹Sapitri, A. (2023). Parenting Patterns in Early Childhood (Case Study in Karanganyar Hamlet, Ragatunjung Village, Paguyangan District).

Based on the above explanation, it can be concluded that the father's involvement in the moral guidance of children is evident in supervision, habituation, and emotional engagement. Fathers play the roles of role models, guides, and enforcers of children's moral values, based on the theories of Kohlberg, Bowlby, and Baumrind

3. Faktor-Factors Influencing the Role of Fathers in Guiding the Development of Children's Moral Intelligence

The factors influencing the role of fathers in guiding the development of children's moral intelligence are very diverse, including internal and external factors. Subjects SA and HR indicate that a father's personal moral awareness is very important in instilling moral values in children. Fathers who have strong moral values tend to provide clearer and more consistent examples to their children. This approach aligns with Baumrind's theory on the importance of parental moral integrity in guiding children.²⁰

External factors such as spousal support also influence how a father performs his role. The AKD subjects showed that support from the wife is very important in ensuring the consistency of parenting, especially in providing complementary moral teachings between the father and mother. This is in accordance with Bowlby's attachment theory, where emotional support between parents greatly contributes to the child's moral development.²¹

The child's social environment also plays a significant role in influencing the effectiveness of the moral guidance provided by the father. Subject HR revealed that the religious environment where the child interacts also reinforces the values taught by the father. This indicates that a supportive social environment can strengthen the moral learning provided at home..²²

Based on the above explanation, the factors that influence the father's role in guiding the development of the child's moral intelligence include the father's moral awareness, support from the partner, and the child's social environment.

²⁰Kuswandi, I. (2020). Stages of moral development: Western and Islamic perspectives (a study of the ideas of Thomas Lickona, Lawrence Kohlberg and the Qur'an). *Ar-Risalah Islamic Media of Islamic Education and Law*, 18(1), 158-173.

²¹ Diananda, A. (2020). Child attachment to parents in improving cognitive development and self-esteem. *Journal Istighna*, 3(2), 141-157

²²Sapitri, A. (2023). Parenting Patterns in Early Childhood (Case Study in Karanganyar Hamlet, Ragatunjung Village, Paguyangan District).

These three factors interact with each other to create an environment conducive to the moral development of children, in accordance with the views of Baumrind, Bowlby, and Kohlberg..

Conclusion

Overall, this study concludes that although the involvement of fathers in guiding the development of children's moral intelligence at SDN 22 Mataram is already quite good, there is still a need for improvement, especially in the aspects of emotional and moral education that are more consistent. Increased father involvement in actively guiding children in daily life will greatly assist in the formation of better character in children, allowing them to grow into individuals with strong moral intelligence and the ability to face moral challenges in the future. The conclusion of this research is that the father's role towards the child influences moral intelligence. There are roles of the father described through the dynamics of involvement with the child and the roles played by the father. In this research, there are five dynamics of the father's role that show that each dynamic contributes to the child's moral intelligence. For future research that will examine similar topics, the researcher hopes to explore the role of fathers in children's moral intelligence more deeply and to include a more diverse literature review.

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