

# THE FATHER PARENTING ROLE FOR EARLY CHILDREN IN JAVANESE CULTURE

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## ABSTRACT

*The aim of this research is to explore the role of fathers in caring for early childhood children in Javanese culture. The phenomenon of fatherlessness in parenting is increasingly widespread in Indonesia. The Javanese tribe, as one of the largest ethnic groups in Indonesia, was the sample in this research. The research method used is qualitative research with an ethnoparenting approach. The research locus was determined based on the subject's domicile who lived in the Wonolelo area, Bantul, Yogyakarta. Snowball technique was used as a method in selecting respondents. Respondents totaled 14 families. Data collection techniques were carried out through direct observation and interviews. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The research results show that the father's main role in the family is the economic provider, family decision maker, monitor and disciplinary who is not always directly involved in parenting at children daily life. Fathers play more of a role as disciplinarians, role models in carrying out religious teachings, cultural and social traditions, . The parenting role at home is dominated by the mother. It is important for fathers to increase their parenting role by interacting directly to meet children's psychological and physiological needs.*

**Keywords:** *father parenting role, early childhood, Javanese culture*



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## **INTRODUCTION (TNR, 12pt, bold , left justified, capitalized)**

Parental involvement in a child's education is a necessity that cannot be separated from the child's success in the future. The formation of a child's personality and character is influenced by congenital and environmental factors. Family is the first factor that will greatly influence a child's development (Hurlock, 1999).

The government has tried to make the family the basis of children's education. This is stated in government policy regarding empowering the role of families in the child's education process. Policies, applicable laws, climate, values and culture around children are factors in the macro system that indirectly impact their growth and development. Apart from macro factors, there are micro factors in Bronfenbrunner ecological theory. One of the most important micro systems in child development is the family (Beck, 1994).

Parenting is an educational effort carried out by parents or families, which includes activities such as: feeding or nutritional intake given to children, providing guidance, and protecting as an effort to optimize the child's growth and development ( Kurniawan & Hermawan, 2016). According to Brooks (2011) the definition of parenting is the process or the state of being a parent, while according to Morrison (1978) says that parenting is the process of developing and utilizing the knowledge and skills appropriate to planning for, creating, giving birth to, rearing and/or providing care for offspring. Based on this understanding, it can be concluded that parenting is a process of becoming a parent who can develop and utilize the right knowledge and skills to plan, create, give birth, raise and prepare care for children.

Rahmawati (2022) explains that parenting is a concept where parents as educators and caretakers of their children provide good examples for them of the behavior they are taught every day. Meanwhile, according to Fadlillah et al (2013) parenting is the process of educating children in teaching character, being able to control themselves, and forming desired behavior.

The parenting dimension is one of the ways parents carry out their role to help children's development by providing guidance and experience as well as providing supervision so that children can face life in the future successfully (Asmawati, 2015). Apart from this opinion, there are also indicators of parenting skills developed by Constantinescu (2017), namely parents' skills in developing warm interactions with children, empathetic communication skills, problem solving abilities, application of positive discipline, meeting children's physical and psychological needs. Baumrind (1991) identified two dimensions in parenting, namely: (1) Responsiveness, parents require children to be able to communicate clearly (clarity of communication) and parental care efforts (nurturance). (2) Demandingness, parents demand that children behave maturely (demand for maturity) and parents demand that children be able to control themselves.

Maccoby (1980) also identified that there are two main dimensions of parental parenting behavior, namely responsiveness and behavioral demands. Responsiveness is the attitude of parents in helping children's development by providing encouragement, adapting to the child's needs and demands. Behavioral demands are a person's effort. parents to integrate children into family and community life through demands for mature behavior, supervision, application of discipline, and confrontation with children. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that parental care for children is the role of parents in optimizing child development. There are two main dimensions of parenting, namely parents' responsiveness to their children and parents' demands to fulfill the values and norms that apply in society.

According to Allen and Daly (2007) suggest that the concept of "father involvement" is more than just having positive interactions with their children, but also paying attention to their children's development, looking comfortably close, rich father and child relationships,

and can understand and accept their children. Friedman (2003) explains that the father's role in raising children is the role of a father who provides love, attention, security, warmth to family members so as to enable children to grow and develop according to their age and needs.

According to Palkovitz (in Hedo, 2020) usually fathers and mothers share things related to rules and discipline, other things such as playing with children, emotional support and monitoring. There are three components of father involvement, namely: (1). Paternal engagement is parenting that includes direct interaction between father and child, for example through playing, teaching something, and other leisure activities carried out together.; (2). Accessibility or availability, temporal matters, namely interaction with children at a certain time; (3). Responsibilities and roles of fathers in preparing parenting plans for children.

Based on research that has been conducted, McAdoo (in Parmanti, et al, 2015: 83) there are several roles of fathers in the family, namely: (1) Provider, as a provider and provider of facilities. In the educational context, fathers work as hard as they can to meet their children's basic needs and support their children's achievements; (2) Protector, as a provider of protection. Providing protection here does not mean protecting your child, but also providing understanding and insight into what your child can or cannot do; (3) Decision Maker, as a decision maker. Here the father helps the child to overcome difficulties in learning. Provide motivation and encouragement so that children do not feel alone in fighting; (4) Educator, as an educator and turning children into social creatures. The father's role is to guide children to socialize and have a high social spirit; (5) Nurtured Mother, as a mother's companion. Father always discusses and helps mother with children's education problems.

In contrast to the results of McAdoo's research regarding the role of fathers which focuses more on physically responsibility without involving emotional attachment, Hart (2002: 19-24) emphasizes that fathers have a role in child care involvement as: (1) Economic Provider, namely the father is considered as financial support and protection for the family. Being a breadwinner can make a father stay away from his child because he is too busy or it can also make a father closer to his child because the father is able to meet the child's financial needs, the child feels safe because his needs in the growth process are guaranteed to be met; (2) Friend & Playmate, fathers are considered "fun parents" and have more play time than mothers. When spending time with children, fathers will engage in physical play activities that require more energy and enthusiasm than when children play with mother. Physical games can help children train their fine and gross motor skills, teach children about rules and encourage children to make decisions and freedom in children's social and emotional growth; (3) Caregivers, fathers, are considered to often provide affectional stimulation in various forms, thereby providing a feeling of comfort and warmth. For example, a father might show affection or hug his child. Many studies have shown that fathers can be as warm and caring towards their children as mothers; (4) Teacher & Role Model, just like mothers, fathers are also responsible for what children need for the future through training and good role models for children. Fathers teach children by being role models, for children parents are an example of ideal behavior. So what the child sees in his father's behavior will be imitated consciously or unconsciously by the child. For example, a father teaches his child independence by teaching him to dress or put away his toys independently; (5) Monitor and discipline, fathers fulfill an important role in supervising children, especially when there are early signs of deviation, then discipline can be enforced. The discipline that is enforced is more directed towards guidance and not punishment. The guidance provided is to teach good social behavior, help children to know the difference between right and wrong and enable children to understand and comprehend the

consequences of their own behavior; (6) Protector, father controls and organizes the child's environment, so that the child is free from difficulties or dangers and teaches children how to keep themselves safe, especially when the father or mother is not with him; (7) Advocate, fathers guarantee the welfare of their children in various forms, especially the needs of children when they are in institutions outside their family. A father is a place where children can consult and provide advice or solutions to problems faced by children. When fathers act as good advocates, children feel safe and protected in their lives; (8) Resources, in various ways and forms, fathers support their children's success by providing support behind the scenes. For example, providing emotional support to mothers and helping with childcare activities. More than that. Fathers are a bridge for children to get to know a wider environment, outside the nuclear family. Fathers are children's role models for behavior in the social world, and fathers can be a source of academic support for children.

The main father's role in Indonesia is a breadwinner and is responsible for providing for the family's needs. Meanwhile, household matters and childcare are completely left to the mother (Waroka, 2022). However, if in the past the role of child care was delegated to the mother, then currently there is a change in the concept of care, where motherhood care becomes parenthood (Ginanjari, 2017). The concept of parenthood emphasizes caregiving by the role of both parents or father and mother (Sari, 2017). The role of fathers in child care and development is very important (Wahyuni et al, 2021). Allen & Daly (2007) summarize various research results on the impact of father involvement in parenting. Father involvement in child care has a positive impact on all aspects of child development, namely physical, cognitive/intellectual, emotional, social and moral aspects. The presence of a father figure in child care will be able to provide a positive role model for the child's development in adulthood. The father figure will be able to provide an example as leadership, teach children to socialize around them, make children become disciplined and independent individuals, and teach children to think rationally-logically, which is one of the father's roles in the family (Parmanti & Purnamasari, 2015). The father's involvement in parenting will have a negative effect if in his parenting practices the father shows negative behavior and involves physical punishment (Aryanti, 2017).

Factors that influence father involvement in parenting include personal/father factors (including psychological well-being, personality, attitudes, religious knowledge, self-confidence/efficacy, career and family aspirations, father's legal status, personal values, personal history, motivation ), child factors (including: age, temperament, gender), maternal factors (including: mother's willingness/desire to share in raising children, wife's work status, support for husband), and socio-contextual factors (including: parental relationship , economic conditions, availability of help from others, cultural expectations (Abdullah, 2012).

In Javanese childcare culture. According to Geertz (1983), parenting is a process of continuous interaction between parents and children which aims to form an ideal "Javanese" which is usually referred to as *dadi wong* (to be somebody). Javanese family parenting is based on two important principles, namely respectful manners and harmony. This respectful attitude is subdivided into the typical Javanese terms *wedi* (afraid), *isin* (ashame), and *sungkan* (polite). The parenting model used in Javanese families is generally a neglectful or permissive parenting model. Second, a parenting model that gives detailed and unemotional orders without punishment or discrimination. Third, the *meden-medeni* (scaring) parenting style is to scare children through threats about their terrible fate at the hands of other people or spirits or authoritarian creatures.

The roles of mothers and fathers in raising children in Javanese families have similarities, namely instilling values and norms that are in line with Javanese culture. The differences in the roles of mothers and fathers are shown in cultivating an attitude of

responsibility, fulfilling recreational needs, and being a role model for the family, which is more dominant for the father, while the mother's role is more in providing attention and affection, although the mother's role can cover all areas (Nisa et al, 2020). According to the research results of Gunawan et al (2020), the role of fathers in parenting in Javanese families is to limit and punish children, so that children obey their parents. Providing the application of good manners to children in speaking softly to their elders, paying attention to children, guiding children, and communicating with children, as well as advising children to obey their parents' orders so that they are not disobedient.

According to research results from the KPAI (Indonesian Child Protection Commission), fathers' involvement in child care is still not optimal, this can be seen from the quality and quantity of fathers's time to communicate with their children, only 1 hour per day (Setyawan, 2017). In line with KPAI research results, Asy'ari and Ariyanto (2019:42) revealed that the level of father involvement in child care in Jabodetabek is still relatively low. This is because fathers do not have enough time to be involved in parenting because they work all of the day.

Preliminary research using a correlation method conducted by researcher in 2023 regarding the role of fathers in children's independence in Kotagede with 152 fathers showed that there was no significant correlation between the role of fathers and children's independence. The results of this study contradict various previous theories regarding the role of fathers.

Based on the description above, researchers are interested in conducting research on the role of fathers in caring for early childhood in Javanese culture, especially in Yogyakarta.

## **METHODS**

The research method used in this research is a qualitative research method. This is in accordance with the research objective of exploring the various roles of fathers in caring for early childhood children in Javanese culture. The approach used is an ethnographic approach where the enumerator lives with the respondent for a period of around 3 months (February-April 2023) in Wonolelo Village, Pleret District, Bantul Regency, DIY. In this research, respondents were selected using the snowball technique consisting of Wonolelo sub-district employees, posyandu cadres, and families with young children. The total number of respondents consisted of 14 parents with early childrens.

Data collection techniques use direct observation and interviews with the help of a voice recording, camera, and interview guide. In the collection of data, the participants filled the ethical permission. To increase the accuracy of data collection techniques, triangulation of techniques and sources of informants is applied. The results of data collection were analyzed using thematic analysis carried out by researchers to identify themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results of this research are explained based on the results of interviews, observations and documentation. The discussion in this chapter was obtained through the results of data collection through documentation studies, observations, interviews with informants needed in the research. The data analysis stage carried out by researchers is making a list of interview answers (verbatim) obtained from the data collection process, reduction and display the data, coding, analyzing themes, and conclusions.

The interviews conducted by the researcher were carried out in stages over the period February 2023 – April 2023. The results of this research were obtained using in-depth




interview techniques with sources as a form of data search and participant observation in the field both in the family environment and village community life. The following are a table of the interview schedule and observation conducted by the researcher:

**Table 1. Interviewer List**

<b>Family Name</b>	<b>Interveiw Time</b>	<b>Interview Place</b>
PWT	Febuari – Maret 2023	Houses, posyandu, mosques, cemeteries.
AR	Febuari – Maret 2023	Houses, posyandu, mosques, cemeteries, ricefield.
TR	Maret – April 2023	Houses, posyandu, mosques, cemeteries, village head's office.
MN	Maret – April 2023	Houses, posyandu, mosques.
LI	Maret – April 2023	Houses, posyandu, mosques, cemeteries, village head's office.
EN	Maret – April 2023	Houses, posyandu, mosques, cemeteries, village head's office.
IS	Maret – April 2023	Houses, posyandu, mosques, cemeteries, village head's office.
ST	Maret – April 2023	Houses, posyandu, mosques, cemeteries, village head's office.
IT	Maret – April 2023	Houses, posyandu, mosques, cemeteries, village head's office.
YT	Maret – April 2023	Houses, posyandu.
MN	Maret – April 2023	Houses, posyandu.
HM	Febuari – April 2023	Houses, posyandu, mosques, cemeteries, village head's office.

The data of two other participants were considered invalid because they always answered that they did not know and were not willing to be observed in their daily caregiving activities.

Table 2. Father's parenting role

FATHER ROLE	ACTIVITY
<p><i>Economic Provider</i></p>	
	
<p><i>Resource</i></p>	

	
<p><i>Caregiver</i></p>	 
<p><i>Monitor and disciplinary</i></p>	 

The purpose of this study was to know how the father's parenting role in Javanese culture is carried out. According to interview and observation result, fathers at Wonolelo,



Pleret, Bantul, DIY. In parenting activities, fathers play several roles while at home with the family. The main role that seems dominant is the father as the family breadwinner, whether by farming, craftsmen or laborers. When a father is with his child, there are several interactions that show the father's role as a provider of love, protection, and accompanying the mother to care for the child. Fathers also play a role in instilling moral and religious values that are exemplified by children, making decisions in the family, and implementing discipline for children.

Even though fathers are expected to be parents who are involved in raising children, their behavior is still not ideal. In this study on father parenting role of child care, it shows that fathers still provide relatively little care compared to mothers and fathers spend most of their time caring for children only when the mother is not present. This result similar with Abdullah (2010) finding. When fathers carry out the task of caring for children, they appear less emotionally involved, more mechanical (rigid) and less able to enjoy or relax than mothers. In line with research results from Chrismawarni (2016), fathers will show a rigid attitude, rarely give praise, and rarely communicate with their children. This condition is in line with research results which show a tendency for fathers' parenting models in Javanese families to be more neglectful or permissive, giving detailed and discriminatory orders, and scaring children through threats when enforcing discipline.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study concluded that father parenting role in Javanese culture shown that father was economic provider, resource, caregiver, monitor and disciplinary. Fathers have not shown much interaction with their children. Father need to fulfill their children's psychological needs in the form of warmth, playing time, providing physical comfort, and providing support in the form of praise. It is hoped that fathers in Javanese families can be more intensively involved with their children so that Javanese children's physical and psychological needs can be met through the father's presence.

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