



Original Research

The Relationship Between Parenting Patterns and Moral Development of Preschool-Aged Children

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Parents have their own parenting style in educating, guiding and disciplining children which is relatively consistent from time to time, and this can affect the moral development of children. There are three types of parenting styles used, namely democratic, authoritarian, and permissive. The purpose of this study is to analyze the relationship between parenting style and the moral development of preschool-age children.

Method: The method of this study is correlation analysis with a cross-sectional approach with a population of 35 respondents. The research sample was 32 respondents from parents of preschool children aged 4-6 years with purposive sampling. The research instrument for parental parenting and children's moral development uses a questionnaire. Data analysis using the Chi-Square test.

Results: The results showed that most parents had a democratic parenting style in 19 respondents (59.4%), and the moral development of children mostly showed good moral development in as many as 17 respondents (53.2%). The results of the Chi-Square analysis of parental parenting with children's moral development showed that the p-value of $< \alpha = 0.011 < 0.05$ which means that there is a relationship between parental parenting and the moral development of preschool-aged children.

Conclusion: Parenting plays a pivotal role in shaping the moral development of preschool-aged children. The application of an appropriate parenting style is essential for effectively guiding and educating children during this critical stage of development. Given the unique characteristics and needs of early childhood, this study highlights the importance of adopting a democratic parenting style—characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and appropriate boundaries—as a means of fostering positive moral growth. This study underscores the urgency of promoting parenting approaches that support moral understanding, empathy, and pro-social behavior. Future research is encouraged to further explore and develop intervention strategies and educational programs aimed at enhancing children's moral development through supportive parenting practices.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Moral development involves thoughts, feelings, and behaviors based on rules and habits regarding what a person should do when interacting with others (Haryaningrum et al., 2023). For preschool-age children, the family is the first and main educational

environment that equips them to face the next life. Parenting is the process of educating, guiding, and disciplining children to reach adulthood by the norms that apply in society. Parenting in the family environment plays an important role in shaping how children interact at school and in the community (Simangunsong & Sihotang, 2022). Researchers make

observations regarding parents' parenting patterns towards children because some children don't want to lend their belongings when another friend needs them. Some children clean up toys, but other friends don't help tidy up and choose to leave. Some children behave rudely, like pushing against their peers; some just stay silent, just don't want to hang out with their friends; and some are too active in class.

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that 5-25% of preschool-age children experience developmental problems (Hidayati, 2022). In the United States and Canada, out of four million births each year, between 40,000 and 120,000 children experience developmental delays. Indonesia itself is among the countries with the third highest prevalence in the Southeast Asian region or South-East Asia Region (Rusmita & Sari, 2022). In addition, Badan Pusat Statistik (2018) shows that the development index of children aged 36-59 months in Indonesia is 88.3%. In East Java Province, the prevalence of developmental data for children aged 36-56 months is 91.5% (Aulia et al., 2022). The number of public and private kindergarten schools in Jombang Regency is 1,376 schools. Moral development is a change in a person's behavior, thought, and feelings related to the values of right and wrong. Currently, many children cannot distinguish between good and bad or right and wrong. In Ngoro District, the number of kindergartens is 76 schools (Kemendikbudristek, 2023). The results of a preliminary study by the researcher through observation on several children are that some children behave rudely such as pushing towards their peers, some just stay silent and do not want to get along with their friends, and some are too active in class.

Parenting is a form of interaction between parents and children that includes the fulfillment of physical and psychological needs (Rosyani et al., 2022). According to Hurlock's theory, there are three types of parenting, namely democratic, authoritarian, and permissive. Democratic parenting prioritizes the interests of children with a rational approach and mature thinking. Authoritarian parenting focuses on shaping a child's personality by setting standards that must be obeyed absolutely. Meanwhile, permissive parenting provides loose supervision and allows children to do things with little supervision (Alfiah, 2020). Parenting affects children's development, especially in terms of moral development (Wuryaningsih & Prasetyo, 2022). Moral development is an inseparable development in a child's life. Moral development is related to thoughts, feelings and behaviors that relate to the standard of right and wrong. Moral values that are embedded in children will encourage them to behave politely and politely, respect elders, obey rules, be patient, honest, and respect others (Fitri & Na'imah, 2020). Currently, moral values in children are very lacking, including those related to good manners, assessing what is good and what is not good for them.

Study involving parents and children are critical. It would give global and rapid development emphasis the urgency of moral development among school-age children, particularly in the middle-low countries with a growing population. Therefore, this study aims to determine the relationship between Parenting Patterns and the Moral Development of Preschool Children. To determine moral development and monitor regularly and as early as possible, parents must play a full role in the moral development of preschool children, namely by enquiring, guiding, educating, disciplining, and maintaining children until their maturity following the norms and values of life in the community. Based on the background, the researcher has an interest in carrying out a study entitled "The Relationship between Parenting Patterns and the Moral Development of Preschool".

2. METHODS

2.1 Design

In this study, a cross-sectional approach is applied with a descriptive method of correlation. Cross-sectional is an approach in which data from several research variables are collected at one time.

2.2 Population, Sample and Sampling

The population of this study is all parents of children aged 4-6 years at Kindergarten Genukwatu Ngoro Jombang, a total of 35 people. In this study, the purposive sampling technique (non-probability) is used as a method of sample selection, where the researcher deliberately selects samples that meet the criteria, objectives, or research problems (Nursalam, 2020) In the process of selecting samples, inclusion and exclusion criteria are used according to the characteristics to be studied. The inclusion criteria consisted of parents of students at Kindergarten Genukwatu Ngoro Jombang who were 4-6 years old and willing to be respondents. The exclusion criteria consisted of parents of students at Kindergarten Genukwatu Ngoro Jombang who were not willing to be respondents and who could not attend. In this sample selection, the researcher obtained a sample of 32 respondents.

2.3 Variable

The independent variable in this study was Parenting Patterns. The dependent variable in this study was the Moral Development of Preschool age Children.

2.4 Instruments

In this study, data was collected through a questionnaire that included parental parenting and children's moral development. The parenting questionnaire adopted from Najmi (2022) consisted of 15 statements. Each statement has a choice of always (4), often (3), rarely (2), and never (1) scores. Using a nominal scale with assessment criteria, namely democratic, authoritarian and permissive parenting. The moral development questionnaire adopted from Putri (2017) consisted of 28 statements. Each statement is given two alternative

answers, namely Yes (1) and No (0). Using ordinal scales with assessment criteria of good, sufficient and poor.

2.5 Procedure

The research procedure begins with taking care of research permits in Kindergarten Muslimat Genukwatu Ngoro Jombang. Carry out an ethical test at the health research ethics committee of STIKes Husada Jombang. After the research can be carried out, then collect respondents according to the inclusion criteria. Explain the purpose and intent of the research to respondents and if they are willing to become respondents, they are welcome to sign the informed consent form and fill out the questionnaire properly. After the research activities are completed, then all data can be collected. The next stage is data processing by editing, coding, scoring, and tabulating the data obtained.

2.6 Data Analysis

In this study, data analysis uses a computer software device, namely IBM SPSS 16 using the Chi-Square statistical test. The purpose of this test is to help identify the relationship between variables. If the p value $\alpha < (\alpha = 0.05)$ is obtained, it means that there is a relationship and vice versa, if the p value is $\alpha > (\alpha = 0.05)$, then there is no relationship between variables.

2.7 Ethical Clearance

This research received approval from the Nursing Research Ethics Commission (KEPK) of the Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Kesehatan Husada Jombang with the ethics certificate number: 0523-KEPKSHJ.

3. RESULTS

The results of the study in table 1 show that of the 32 respondents studied, most of the parents of students are 31-40 years old, namely 17 respondents (53.2%). Most of the last education of students' parents is high school/vocational school, which is as many as 21 respondents (65.6%). Almost all of the students' parents' work is as housewives, namely 27 respondents (84.4%). Almost half of the parents of students have 2 children, namely 13 respondents (40.6%). Most of the children are female as many as 17 children (53.1%). Most of the children showed the age of 5 years as many as 19 children (59.4%).

The data from the research results in table 2 shows that of the 32 respondents studied, the percentage of parental parenting is mostly in the democratic category as many as 19 respondents (59.4%), a small part in the authoritarian category as many as 5 respondents (15.6%), and a small part in the permissive category as many as 8 respondents (25.0%).

The research results in Table 3 show that of the 32 respondents studied, 17 children (53.2%) showed good children's moral development, almost half showed sufficient children's moral development, 10 children (31.2%), and a small number, as many as 5

children (15.6%), showed poor children's moral development.

Based on table 4, it is known that of the 32 respondents studied, most of them applied democratic parenting as many as 19 respondents (59.4%), a small part applied authoritarian parenting as many as 5 respondents (15.6%), and a small part applied permissive parenting as many as 8 respondents (25.0%).

Based on the results of the Chi-Square test using IBM SPSS 16, the Asymptotic Significance (2-sides) value $< \alpha$ was obtained which was $0.011 < 0.05$, meaning that H1 was accepted, so it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between parental parenting and the moral development of preschool-age children at Muslimat Genukwatu Ngoro Jombang Kindergarten.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondent Characteristics

Respondent Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
< 20 years	0	0%
20-30 years	13	40,6%
31-40 years	17	53,2 %
41-50 years	2	6,2%
Education		
Elementary School	2	6,2 %
Junior High School	3	9,4%
Senior High School	21	65,6 %
Collage	6	18,8 %
Employment		
Housewife	27	84,4 %
Self-employed	3	9,4 %
Government employees	0	0 %
Etc.	2	6,2%
Number of Children		
1	12	37,5 %
2	13	40,6 %
>2	7	21,9 %
Gender		
Man	15	46,9 %
Woman	17	53,1 %
Child age		
4 year	10	31,2 %
5 year	19	59,4 %
6 year	3	9,4 %

Source: Primary data, 2024

4. DISCUSSION

This study shows that most early childhood parents apply democratic parenting which is influenced by the parent's last education factor. The results of cross-tabulation indicated that parents who implemented democratic parenting generally had a high school/vocational education background with a total of 14 respondents (73.7%). According to Suherman

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Respondent Characteristics Based on Parenting Patterns

Parenting Patterns	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Democratic	19	59,4 %
Authoritarian	5	15,6%
Permissive	8	25 %
Total	32	100 %

Source: Primary data, 2024

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Respondent Characteristics Based on Children's Moral Development

Category of Children's Moral Development	Frequency	Presentation (%)
Good	17	53,2 %
Enough	10	31,2 %
Less	5	15,6 %
Total	32	100 %

Source: Primary data, 2024

Table 4. Cross Table of The Relationship between Parenting Style and Moral Development of Preschool-Age Children at Kindergarten Genukwatu Ngoro Jombang"

Parenting Patterns	Moral Development							
	Good		Enough		Less		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Democratic	12	37,5%	5	15,6%	2	6,2%	19	59,4%
Authoritarian	2	6,2%	0	0	3	9,4%	5	15,6%
Permissive	3	9,4%	5	15,6%	0	0	8	25,0%
Total	17	53,1 %	10	31,2 %	5	15,6 %	32	100%

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Table 5. Analysis of the Results of the Study "Parenting Patterns and Moral Development of Preschool-Age Children at Kindergarten Genukwatu Ngoro Jombang"

<i>p-value</i>	α	<i>Correlation coefisien</i>
0,011	0,05	0,537

Source: Primary data, 2024

(Suherman, 2019), parents' educational background can affect their mindset in educating children. Parents with higher education tend to adopt democratic parenting. Another factor that affects the implementation of democratic parenting is the work of parents. The results of cross-tabulation showed that almost half of parents with jobs as housewives as many as 15 respondents (46.9%) applied democratic parenting. This may be because housewives have more time at home, allowing them to guide and educate their children more.

The identification results summarized in Table 2 reveal that out of the 32 respondents, the majority—19 individuals (59.4%)—reported using a democratic parenting style in their daily interactions with their children. This finding indicates a significant preference for democratic parenting among the study participants. According to Putri et al (2023) the democratic parenting style is characterised by a balance between parental authority and child autonomy, where parents allow freedom for children to engage in activities while maintaining clear

boundaries and guidance. This approach encourages children to explore their environment and partake in self-directed learning activities, thereby fostering independence, self-regulation, and decision-making skills. Supporting this perspective, Debitiya (2020) asserts that democratic parenting promotes the development of moral reasoning by enabling children to make choices within a supportive and structured framework. These findings align with the broader literature, which connects democratic parenting with positive moral, emotional, and cognitive outcomes in early childhood.

In this study, the results also indicated that a small number of respondents applied an authoritarian parenting style. Authoritarian parenting is characterized by strict control over children's activities, where parents tend to restrict autonomy and are often reluctant to grant children the freedom to make their own choices (Debitiya, 2020). This style is marked by rigid enforcement of rules and a preference for obedience, often at the expense of the child's independence. Consistent with

the view of (Suherman, 2019), authoritarian parenting involves a lack of open, two-way communication between parents and children. Instead, it is typified by unilateral decision-making, where rules are imposed without explanation or consideration of the child's perspective. Such interactions can hinder the development of moral reasoning and emotional security, as children are discouraged from expressing opinions, questioning authority, or engaging in independent decision-making.

According to Hurlock's theory, permissive parenting is a style in which parents grant children complete freedom and allow them to make their own decisions regarding their actions and behavior. In this approach, parents generally do not provide direction, structure, or explanations, and there is a noticeable lack of consistent control over the child's activities. As a result, children raised in permissive households often experience minimal guidance in terms of boundaries and expectations. Debitiya (2020) supports this characterization by noting that parents who adopt permissive parenting styles may also exhibit low tolerance and a tendency to neglect essential rules and the child's developmental needs. Hurlock further explains that permissive parenting is influenced by several factors, including parental personality traits, situational contexts, and family conditions such as marital harmony and socioeconomic status. For instance, parents with higher income levels may be better positioned to provide material comforts and fulfill their children's wants. However, this may lead to permissive behaviors where children are overindulged, potentially resulting in spoiled behavior and difficulty meeting age-appropriate developmental tasks.

Several factors contribute to the adoption of an authoritarian parenting style, one of the most significant being the individual personality traits of the parents. Each parent differs in levels of energy, patience, intelligence, emotional maturity, and attitude, all of which influence their capacity to effectively fulfill their parenting role and respond sensitively to their child's needs. A parent's ability to regulate emotions and practice empathy, for instance, can significantly impact their choice of discipline and communication strategies. Another key factor is the intergenerational transmission of parenting practices. Parents often draw upon their own childhood experiences when shaping their parenting approach. If individuals perceive the parenting style used by their own parents as effective, they may be inclined to replicate those same methods, even if they are authoritarian in nature. This continuation of past practices can occur subconsciously and may be reinforced by cultural or societal norms. Furthermore, the findings of the present study revealed that a small proportion of respondents applied a permissive parenting style, indicating variation in how parenting approaches are adopted within different family contexts. This underscores the

complexity of parenting behaviors, which are shaped by a combination of personal, historical, and situational factors.

In addition, the age of the parents causes the implementation of permissive parenting styles. The age of parents affects their characteristics and parenting styles, as well as the way they communicate with children. Parents who have a significant age gap with their children may face challenges in understanding the world and the experiences that their children face. This requires extra effort from parents to explore and adapt to their child's context and needs. Based on this result study, a good parenting style that is often applied by parents to educate and guide early childhood is a democratic parenting style. In this parenting style, parents serve as role models, as children tend to imitate and follow the behavior of their immediate environment. In addition, openness and two-way communication between parents and children are very important, so that they can ensure healthy interaction and support optimal child development.

Moral development involves aspects of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that are based on rules and habits regarding interaction with others. This development includes changes in children's behaviour related to the ordinances, habits, or value standards that apply to social groups (Haryaningrum et al., 2023). In line with Halimatul (Halimatul, 2020), moral development is a generally accepted teaching about good and bad, including deeds, attitudes, and obligations. Morality is a system of beliefs, awards, and stipulations about right and wrong deeds, which are formed based on the habits of social standards that are influenced by the expectations of a certain society or social group.

According to Michele Borba's theory, moral development in children encompasses seven core aspects that act as protective factors against deviant behaviors that may be harmful to the child. These aspects include empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance, and fairness (Halimatul, 2020). These elements form the foundation of a child's ethical understanding and behavior and are essential in nurturing well-rounded, socially responsible individuals. Based on the data obtained in this study, one of the notable factors influencing children's moral development is parental occupation. As presented in Table 3, nearly half of the parents in the study—specifically 27 respondents (84.4%)—were housewives whose children demonstrated good moral development. This may be attributed to the greater amount of time housewives spend at home, which allows for more consistent and direct guidance, supervision, and moral instruction during critical stages of the child's early development.

Complementing Borba's framework, Kohlberg's theory of moral development identifies individual and social factors as key influences. Among the individual factors, temperament plays a significant role, as a child's innate disposition shapes their

sensitivity to experiences and responsiveness to social interactions. Additionally, self-control—the capacity to regulate impulses, emotions, and behavior—emerges as a critical factor. Age is also a determining element, as moral reasoning evolves alongside cognitive development; as children mature, they progress through increasingly complex stages of moral thought. Furthermore, educational has been study to have exposure further contributes to this progression by fostering critical thinking and ethical reflection, particularly when children are encouraged to engage in dialogue and discussion. Lastly, social interaction provides a dynamic context in which children learn to communicate openly, express their views, and negotiate moral norms, further enhancing their moral development (Purba, 2022).

In addition, there is a social factor, namely the first family where moral culture is often built at home, where morality is instilled through the love and affection of parents. The second factor is peers, children who participate in peer groups can further develop their reasoning and moral behavior. Peers can add knowledge, values, and skills that may differ from those given by parents. The third is school, where children undergo a moral socialization process through learning and activities related to religion and moral behavior (Purba, 2022). Factors that affect children's moral development are not only influenced by parental parenting, but children's morals are also influenced by parents' work factors. To support children's moral development optimally, a conducive environment is needed, which can facilitate children to master morality at a higher level. When children succeed in developing one virtue, their moral development will increase, and they will reach a higher level of moral development according to their stages.

Based on the results study, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between parental parenting and the moral development of preschool-age children at Kindergarten Genukwatu Ngoro Jombang. The results of this study are in accordance with research conducted by Tompo (Tompo, 2023) which shows the relationship between parental parenting and the development of children's religious and moral values in Group B of Lilian Kindergarten, Kulawi District. The same thing with Damayanti (2022) shows that there is a relationship between parental parenting and the level of moral intelligence of children aged 4-5 years in Bagan Deli Village, Medan Belawan District.

The results of the study show that parents who implement democratic parenting can support children's moral development well. Of the 19 parents who implemented democratic parenting, there were 12 children with good moral development. However, not all children of parents who adopt democratic parenting show optimal moral development. There are still 2 children whose moral development is lacking even though their parents apply a democratic parenting style. This can be caused because children's

moral development is not only influenced by parental parenting, but children's morals are also influenced by individual factors and social factors. Where individual factors consist of individual temperament, self-control, children's age, education and social interaction. Meanwhile, social factors are family, peers and school. After democratic parenting, the permissive parenting style applied to children showed good moral development as much as 3 parents, while the one with the smallest influence on children's moral development was the authoritarian parenting style.

Of the 5 parents (15.6%) who applied authoritarian parenting, there were 2 children (6.2%) whose moral development was good. Authoritarian parenting is a parenting style where children's activities are always controlled by parents and parents tend to be reluctant to free children to do their own activities (Debitiya, 2020). The results of the study show that parents with authoritarian parenting have children with good moral development. This is due to the peer factor. Children who have the opportunity to participate in peer groups can develop their reasoning and moral behavior better. Interaction with peers provides a different source of knowledge and skills than what parents teach. Although authoritarian parents limit and set various rules for children, children can still develop their reasoning and moral behavior through interaction with peers.

In addition, the results of the study also show that parents with authoritarian parenting have children with poor moral development. This is due to the application of the same parenting style that was applied by their parents in the past. Parents feel that the authoritarian parenting style applied by their parents is successful, so they also apply similar techniques in parenting their children. As a result, parents who are too restrained and limit children make children unable to develop optimally. The results of this study also show that the application of permissive parenting is less effective for children who are in the developmental stage. Of the 8 parents (25%) who applied permissive parenting, there were 5 children (15.6%) who experienced sufficient moral development.

According to Hurlock's theory, permissive parenting is a parenting style in which parents give children complete freedom to make their own decisions without providing direction or explanation of what the child should do. In this parenting style, parents are not active in providing guidance or guidance to children (Debitiya, 2020). In accordance with the opinion of Fatmawati (Fatmawati, 2021) who explained that the type of permissive parenting is not based on clear rules and gives children a very wide range of freedom. As a result, children feel that they do not have a clear direction or goal to achieve. Parents who apply this parenting style tend to let their children do things without imposing or demanding their authority.

In addition, there were 3 children (9.4%) whose moral development was good, even though their parents applied a permissive parenting style. Meanwhile, the results of the study show that children with good moral development with permissive parenting tend to be the first child. Parents who adopt permissive parenting generally give their children freedom and act only as facility providers. First children often have characteristics such as responsibility, keeping rules, trying to please others, especially parents, and loving the family, although permissive parents tend to provide freedom. So that of the three parenting styles applied by parents, the parenting style that has the most influence on children's cognitive development is democratic parenting. Democratic parenting showed the most significant and positive relationship compared to authoritarian and permissive parenting. Democratic parenting focuses on the interests of the child without causing the child to feel pressured or too free to do anything.

This study has certain limitations that should be acknowledged. One limitation is the potential lack of honesty in respondents' answers when completing the questionnaire, which may have affected the accuracy of the data. Additionally, the study relied on respondents' memory recall, which may be subject to recall bias and affect the reliability of the information provided.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents applied a democratic parenting style, and correspondingly, most of the children exhibited good moral development. The results indicate a significant relationship between parenting style and the moral development of preschool-aged children. This underscores the importance of adopting positive and supportive parenting approaches, particularly the democratic style, which fosters autonomy, empathy, and moral reasoning in young children. It is therefore encouraged that parents implement effective parenting strategies, as these play a crucial role in shaping a child's moral foundation. Democratic parenting, characterized by open communication, clear boundaries, and emotional support, emerges as a valuable option in guiding and educating children during early developmental stages. For future research, it is recommended to employ additional data collection methods, such as observations and interviews, to gain deeper insights into parenting behaviors and child development outcomes. Furthermore, researchers are encouraged to explore other contributing factors to children's moral development beyond parenting style, such as peer influence, educational environments, media exposure, and cultural or socioeconomic contexts.

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