



The Role of Parents in Enhancing Children's Religious Behavior

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the role of parents in enhancing religious behavior, with a specific focus on worship discipline at home, and to examine their contribution to improving children's religious behavior, particularly in fostering commendable character (akhlaq). The research employs a qualitative approach using a descriptive case study methodology, which involves the detailed and in-depth collection of data concerning a particular individual or group. Data were gathered through observations, interviews, and documentation, and analyzed through the processes of data collection, reduction, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that the role of parents in enhancing religious behavior, particularly in promoting worship discipline, has been effectively implemented. Parents serve as both educators and supervisors, guiding their children in fulfilling religious obligations. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of the family as a key environment for the development of religious behavior, with parents acting as role models in instilling religious values. The research emphasizes that the active involvement of parents in nurturing worship discipline and good character contributes significantly to shaping children's religious behavior, ensuring that these values are embedded both at home and in their daily lives. This study underscores the critical role of parents in the religious and moral development of their children, particularly in the formative years.

Keywords: The Role Of Parents, Religious Behavior.



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INTRODUCTION

Sawahan Village, located in the Lengkong Subdistrict of Nganjuk Regency, is a predominantly agrarian community comprising three hamlets: Sawahan, Banjaranyar, and Jati. The primary occupations of the residents are farming and trading, although challenges such as low agricultural productivity and harvest yields persist.



In recent years, the community's participation in both formal and non-formal education has seen a marked increase. This trend is supported by the presence of formal educational institutions, including early childhood education centers (Paud/TK), religious schools (RA), elementary schools (SD, MI), junior high schools (MTsN), and senior high schools (MA) in Jati Hamlet. Additionally, non-formal education is provided through institutions like the Quranic study groups (TPQ) and Madrasah Diniyah. These institutions, which are based on the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) model, place a strong emphasis on character formation and the inculcation of moral values, with the goal of developing students who exhibit good behavior and are beneficial to both the nation and religion. This educational philosophy is evidenced by the comprehensive learning activities that extend beyond the classroom, encompassing character-building exercises and the development of attitudes and values as part of the curriculum through extracurricular activities (Ali, 2017).

Islamic education is a conscious and planned effort to prepare students to recognize, understand, appreciate, believe in, and practice Islamic teachings based on the primary sources, namely the Qur'an and Hadith. This is achieved through guidance, teaching, training, and experience, with the aim of fostering respect for followers of other religions to promote unity and brotherhood. Islamic education can be conducted in both formal settings, such as schools, and non-formal environments, primarily within the family, where parents play a crucial role as the child's first and most important educators (Hasanah, 2018).

The family plays a vital role in shaping the personality and character of a child. Before a child enters school, they receive their initial education and various forms of knowledge from family members, particularly parents and relatives. This early education significantly influences the child's development. The family's role is considered one of the three pillars of education, with the family being the primary determinant of an individual's character. The effectiveness of parental involvement in a child's education greatly impacts the child's development, though it must be supported by social institutions such as schools and the broader community. The success of a child is largely determined by their family, which provides the foundational education from which their character and behavior are shaped (Murtadho, 2017).

Moreover, parents play a critical role in developing a child's potential. As the first and foremost educators within the family environment, parents guide the growth and development of their children from birth, shaping them according to parental direction and the surrounding environment. Despite the influence of external factors, parents hold significant responsibility for their children's education and supervision.



Given the importance of instilling religious behavior in children, there must be a collaborative effort between parents who serve as the child's primary educators and supervisors at home and teachers, who are responsible for guiding students towards good behavior in accordance with Islamic teachings. Teachers, however, cannot directly oversee the daily activities of students; therefore, the role of parents in supervising and monitoring their children's daily behavior is crucial. Nonetheless, real-world observations reveal that despite parents' best efforts to educate their children at home, some children still display rebellious behavior and resist parental authority. This indicates that the family, particularly parents, plays a pivotal role in shaping students' religious behavior. While schools provide an essential framework for education, the family remains the most influential factor in a child's upbringing. A well-functioning family will offer a solid educational foundation for the child, and vice versa. Thus, the involvement of all elements, particularly the family, is essential in fostering religious behavior in students, through consistent guidance and supervision to monitor their progress.

METHOD

The research employed a qualitative approach, specifically utilizing descriptive research methods. A qualitative approach allows for a comprehensive examination of the research subject, where events are studied holistically to uncover key insights. The findings are expressed descriptively, often in the form of words. In this study, the qualitative approach was applied to thoroughly investigate the causes behind the religious behavior problems among children in Sawahan Village, Lengkong District.

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research is a method used to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. This approach involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This approach aligns with the objective of this research, which is to delve deeply into the context and experiences of the participants.

This study is a descriptive case study, which involves an in-depth investigation of an individual or group. The purpose of this type of research is to reveal detailed descriptions of the background, characteristics, and distinctive features of a particular case.

In this context, the study aims to describe how parents in Sawahan Village, Lengkong District, contribute to enhancing their children's religious behavior,



focusing on aspects such as worship practices and commendable moral behavior. The findings are presented descriptively to offer a comprehensive understanding of these phenomena (Yin, 2018).

Researcher's Role

In qualitative research, the researcher's presence in the field is essential, as the researcher serves as the primary instrument for data collection. This method necessitates the researcher's direct engagement with the study site to conduct observations and interviews, either individually or in groups. Such involvement is critical for obtaining detailed and clear information (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this study, the researcher will be directly involved in fieldwork conducted in Sawahan Village, Lengkong District, Nganjuk Regency.

Data Sources

1. *Primary Data*: Primary data is obtained directly from the field and involves data from individuals who have experienced or are knowledgeable about the events in question. For this study, primary data will be collected from parents with children attending elementary (SD/MI), middle schools (SMP/MTs), and high school (Aliyah) levels (Patton, 2017).
2. *Secondary Data*: Secondary data serves as supplementary information that supports the research. This includes village profiles, resident data, information about the children in question, and other relevant supporting data.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection is a crucial phase in the research process. The methods employed in this study include:

1. *Observation*: Observation is a systematic method of collecting data by watching and recording phenomena as they occur. The researcher will conduct direct observations at the research site in Sawahan Village. The focus will be on observing how parents contribute to shaping their children's religious behavior at home, particularly regarding their prayer practices and honesty towards parents (Flick, 2018).
2. *Interview*: Interviews involve face-to-face meetings between two individuals to exchange information and ideas through a question-and-answer format, creating meaning about a specific topic. Interviews are conducted to verify and reinforce data obtained from observations. In this study, interviews will be conducted with approximately ten families in Sawahan Village, Lengkong District, focusing on the role of parents in instilling discipline in worship (prayer) and commendable moral behavior in their children (Seidman, 2019).

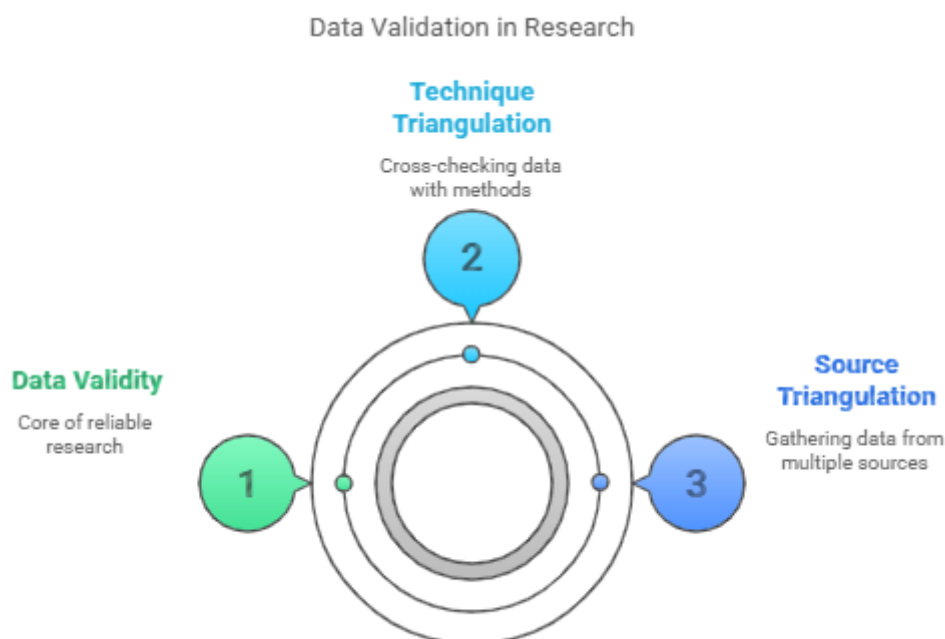


3. *Documentation*: Documentation is used to supplement data obtained from observations and interviews, drawing from documents related to the research subject. This includes the collection of images, recordings, and written notes during the interviews (Bowen, 2009).

Data Validation

The validity of the data in this research is verified through data triangulation techniques. The types of triangulation employed include:

1. *Source Triangulation*: This involves obtaining data from multiple sources or informants using the same method, typically through interviews. Several informants related to the research theme will be interviewed to ensure the accuracy of the data (Denzin, 2017).
2. *Technique Triangulation*: This involves rechecking data obtained from informants using different methods, such as observation and cross-referencing it with field documentation. This process ensures that the information gathered is consistent and reliable (Fusch, Fusch, & Ness, 2018).



Gambar 1: *Data Validation in Research*

Research Stages

The research followed these stages:

1. *Pre-Field Stage*: Includes research design, site selection, and obtaining research permits.



2. *Field Activities Stage*: Involves entering the research site, observing the field, and collecting data.
3. *Data Analysis Stage*: Consists of reviewing the field data, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.
4. *Reporting Stage*: Involves documenting the research results and incorporating feedback from research consultations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Role of Parents in Enhancing Children's Religious Behavior in the Aspect of Worship Discipline

Parents play a crucial role in shaping the religious attitudes of their children to ensure that they do not deviate from the right path. Therefore, parents must make the maximum effort by guiding, teaching, habituating, and instilling the values of worship in their children from an early age (Rahman et al., 2020). Every parent desires their child to grow and develop with strong religious beliefs. However, parents employ different methods and forms of application in this upbringing, tailored to their individual needs, abilities, and circumstances. Based on the research and interviews conducted, it was found that parents play a significant role in the formation of children's religious behavior in the following ways:

Parents in Sawahan Village, Lengkong District, play a vital role as educators in shaping their children's religious behavior, particularly in fostering worship discipline. As educators, parents in this village have effectively fulfilled their roles by consistently providing religious guidance in daily life (Nisa, 2019). Their efforts include instilling religious values, such as faith, by teaching the pillars of Islam and Iman, ensuring the practice of obligatory prayers, and promoting Qur'anic education both at home and through enrollment in Quranic schools (TPA). Additionally, parents encourage their children to act kindly towards others, set positive examples, and involve them in communal religious activities like recitations, supplications, and Islamic studies in the village. These practices demonstrate the parents' active involvement in cultivating a religious and disciplined environment for their children.

In addition to their role as educators, parents also serve as supervisors in guiding their children's religious behavior. This supervisory role ensures that children's actions align with religious teachings while also protecting them from negative influences. According to Halim et al. (2021), children are highly susceptible to environmental factors, and it is essential for parents to monitor these influences, particularly in the social environments their children engage with. The findings suggest that parents must actively supervise their children's social interactions to



ensure that they are exposed to positive influences that support their religious upbringing. This role of supervision emphasizes the parents' responsibility in safeguarding their children's moral and religious development, as outlined in the theoretical framework that stresses the duty of parents to guide and protect their children from harmful external factors.

The Role of Parents in Enhancing Children's Religious Behavior in the Aspect of Good Morals

Parents in Sawahan Village, Lengkong District, employ various approaches to instill good morals in their children, with some opting to explain moral concepts, others demonstrating them through actions, and some combining both methods. The interviews conducted with community leaders and parents revealed significant insights into these practices. One key finding is that the family serves as the primary environment for shaping children's behavior. It is within the family that children first learn values and behaviors that will influence their future actions. Parents play a crucial role in this process, as the manner in which they educate their children—whether with patience, firmness, or a balance of both—directly impacts the child's personality and future behavior (Latifah, 2020). For example, harsh parenting may lead to children who are more difficult to manage, while nurturing and gentle approaches tend to foster kindness and respect in children.

Moreover, parents also serve as role models, influencing their children's behavior through their own actions. Children are likely to emulate the behaviors of their parents, particularly in terms of speaking politely, behaving respectfully, and engaging in religious practices. By embodying good morals, parents provide their children with the tools necessary to live harmoniously within society, socialize effectively, and consistently apply moral values in their daily lives. As Fauziah and Rahman (2019) emphasize, the role of parents as role models is pivotal in guiding children toward a future where they contribute positively to society through their well-developed moral character.

Evaluation of the Role of Parents in Enhancing Children's Religious Behavior.

The study found that the success rate in improving children's religious behavior reached nearly 70%, a significant increase from the initial 40% observed through preliminary observations of both children and parents.

Table 1. *Results of Achievement of Children Behaving Religiously*

Month	Description
April	In the first month, children were generally indifferent to their surroundings and lacked discipline in performing the five daily prayers or other forms of worship.



May	Children began participating in group prayers and reciting Asmaul Husna, and they started attending Quranic studies, learning about Fiqh, Aqidah Akhlaq, and memorizing Juz 'Amma.
June	Children showed noticeable improvement in their religious behavior, became more disciplined in worship, and were increasingly respectful and courteous in social interactions.

From these findings, it can be concluded that parents play a vital role in enhancing the religious behavior of children in daily life, helping children to develop the habit of performing good deeds as directed by their parents (Syahidah & Arifin, 2021).

DISCUSSION

The role of parents in shaping their children's religious behavior, particularly in the aspect of worship discipline, is crucial in guiding children toward the right path and ensuring they grow up with strong religious values. As found in this study, parents in Sawahan Village, Lengkong District, play a pivotal role in fostering both worship discipline and good moral character. The findings indicate that parents' active involvement in their children's religious education significantly contributes to the development of their religious behavior. This aligns with Rahman et al. (2020), who assert that parents must guide, teach, and instill the values of worship from an early age to effectively shape their children's religious identity.

In the case of Sawahan Village, parents demonstrate their role as educators by consistently providing religious guidance in everyday life. They instill key religious values, including the importance of faith and performing the five daily prayers. In addition to ensuring religious practices are followed, parents also prioritize Qur'anic education, both at home and through Quranic schools (TPA). Furthermore, parents encourage their children to practice kindness, set positive examples, and participate in communal religious activities, fostering a disciplined and supportive religious environment. These practices, which reflect the active involvement of parents, have proven essential in shaping children's religious behaviors and moral values.

Beyond their role as educators, parents also serve as supervisors. This supervisory role is integral in ensuring that children's actions align with religious teachings while protecting them from negative external influences. Halim et al. (2021) emphasize that children are highly influenced by their environment, making



it essential for parents to actively monitor and guide their children's social interactions. This approach helps safeguard their children from harmful influences and ensures that they are exposed to positive interactions that reinforce religious and moral values. The findings confirm the importance of parental supervision in shaping religious behavior and maintaining a strong moral foundation for children.

Furthermore, the study revealed that parents in Sawahan Village employ a variety of approaches to instill good morals in their children. These approaches include explaining moral concepts, demonstrating behaviors through actions, and combining both methods. Latifah (2020) highlights the importance of the family environment in shaping children's behavior, emphasizing that the parenting style—whether patient, firm, or a combination of both—directly impacts the child's moral development. Harsh parenting may result in children who are more difficult to manage, whereas nurturing and gentle approaches are likely to cultivate kindness and respect in children.

Parents also serve as role models, with their actions being a significant influence on their children's behavior. By embodying good morals, such as speaking politely, behaving respectfully, and engaging in religious practices, parents provide their children with the tools needed to live harmoniously within society. As Fauziah and Rahman (2019) state, parents' behavior is instrumental in guiding their children toward becoming responsible and moral individuals who contribute positively to society.

The evaluation of the role of parents in enhancing children's religious behavior showed a significant improvement, with the success rate increasing from 40% to nearly 70%. The observations made in April, May, and June highlight this progress, with children showing increasing participation in religious activities, such as group prayers, reciting Asmaul Husna, attending Quranic studies, and improving their discipline in worship. By June, children not only demonstrated greater religious commitment but also became more respectful and courteous in their social interactions.

In conclusion, the findings of this study reinforce the critical role of parents in shaping their children's religious behavior and good morals. The combination of consistent guidance, setting positive examples, and supervising children's actions contributes significantly to their religious and moral development. As the research shows, parents' active involvement helps children develop the habits of worship and good deeds, laying the foundation for a well-rounded and morally grounded future (Syahidah & Arifin, 2021).



CONCLUSION

The role of parents in enhancing children's religious behavior, particularly in the aspect of worship discipline, has been effectively implemented. Parents fulfill this role as educators by providing religious education, instilling the importance of worship, and acting as positive role models for their children. Additionally, as supervisors, parents diligently monitor their children's social interactions to ensure they are not influenced by negative environmental factors. Moreover, parents have also successfully contributed to their children's moral development. Through the family as the primary environment for behavior formation, parents employ various methods, including patience and gentle guidance, to instill good morals in their children. The nurturing approach adopted by parents promotes kindness and respect in children, shaping their character positively. Furthermore, parents serve as the first role models for their children, with their actions significantly influencing their children's behavior and serving as the foundation for their social lives. The combination of these roles demonstrates the integral influence of parents in fostering both religious discipline and good moral character in their children..

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