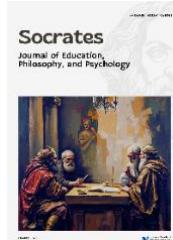




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The Role of Fathers in the Emotional Development of Early Childhood

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Abstract: Because the child struggles to manage emotions, they exhibit aggressive behavior in their teenage years. This type of behavior has been shown since early childhood because of insufficient interaction with parents. As a result, in today's world, the father figure's influence on children's emotional growth is still viewed as overlooked. This article aims to explore the significance of the fathers in the emotional growth of young children. This study consists of literature review. A literature review involved seeking out and analyzing literature by studying different journals, books, and other published materials relevant to the research subject to create a written piece about a particular topic or issue. The importance of the father figure in emotional development offers notable advantages for boys in personal growth, impulsive regulations, and social adaptation during adolescence. At the same time, girls assigned the role of a father typically do not engage in sexual promiscuity during their youth and can establish healthy relationships with men later in life. A father's role in parenting involves overseeing the child's emotions, which affects their social-emotional growth. The lack of a father can adversely affect a child's growth. Consequently, the engaged participation of fathers and solid emotional support are crucial in fostering a positive character and ensuring children's future well-being.

Keywords: Early Childhood, Father Figure, Emotional Development

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood, defined as children aged 0-6 years, possesses unique and distinctive characteristics. Early childhood is defined by specific age limits, unique characteristics, and a rapid and fundamental developmental process that will shape their future lives (Syahrul & Nurhafizah, 2021). The developmental process varies from child to child because each child possesses distinct characteristics. Early childhood is often considered a crucial period, known as the sensitive period. At this stage, a child's physical and psychological functions are mature and ready to respond to various environmental stimuli. Therefore, attention In-depth support from educators, both parents and teachers, is essential. This is because this period lays the foundation for the development of cognitive, motor, language, socio-emotional, moral, and religious skills, which will significantly impact a child's future development.

Emotional development in early childhood plays a crucial role. This is because emotional behavior is closely linked to various activities in their daily lives. As a child's emotions become more intense, the resulting stress increases, potentially disrupting the body's balance during

certain activities. If activities align with their emotions, children will feel happy, which will positively contribute to their concentration and mental activity. Psychologically, this will also have a positive impact on increasing motivation and interest in the learning process. Therefore, the development of socio-emotional aspects in early childhood is crucial.

Parents consist of two individuals: a man and a woman, known as father and mother. Their role in childcare is crucial, especially in the early stages of life when children experience rapid growth and development. They are responsible for caring for and educating their children. According to (Aisyah et al., 2019), a father's responsibility extends beyond meeting the family's overall needs; he also actively participates in monitoring the development of the child's environment. This demonstrates the importance of fathers' involvement in ensuring their children grow up in a healthy and supportive environment, both physically, emotionally, and socially.

Many problems during adolescence, such as juvenile delinquency and antisocial behavior, arise from a lack of parental understanding of emotional regulation. This is due to a child's inability to regulate emotions, leading to aggressive behavior during adolescence. This type of behavior emerges from an early age due to a lack of family education that regulates children's emotions and a lack of interaction with parents, which leads to delinquency during adolescence. A child's emotional development is a long-term process. If a child possesses strong emotional skills, their emotional management and communication skills will also improve. Therefore, not only mothers but also fathers play a crucial role in early childhood education and emotional development.

Therefore, the researcher was interested in choosing this topic because, in real life, the role of fathers in children's emotional development is still relatively neglected. With this background, the purpose of this article is to examine the role of fathers in the emotional development of early childhood.

METHOD

This research is a Literature review research. Literature review is a search and research of the library by reading and reviewing various journals, books, and various other published manuscripts related to the research topic to produce a writing related to a particular topic or issue (Marzali, 2016). The process of searching and collecting literature was carried out through electronic media, namely Google Scholar. The keywords used were "early childhood", "the role of fathers", and "emotional development". The selected articles were articles that fit the inclusion criteria; the maximum journal publication time limit is 10 years (2014-2024), using Indonesian and English, original articles (research articles), research subjects in the articles are middle adolescents and articles are available in full text form.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Early Childhood

Early childhood extends from birth to age six. This period (0-6 years) is crucial for laying the foundation for healthy social and emotional skills in children. The early years, often called the golden age, are crucial for a child's rapid growth and development. Stimulating children during this period is crucial because it forms the foundation for their future well-being and productivity.

Early childhood is also known as the "golden age" because during this period, children experience rapid development in all aspects of their development. According to Fuadia (2022), during this period, almost all of a child's potential experiences a sensitive and rapid period for proper growth and development.

According to Mansur (2005), early childhood is defined as the period from birth to primary school. Early childhood is both a golden and critical period in life that will determine a child's subsequent development. This period is the ideal time to lay the foundations for development,

including physical, language, social-emotional, self-concept, artistic, moral, and religious values.

During early childhood, children spend much of their lives surrounded by their family. The family is a child's first source of education. Children learn a great deal from their family environment, especially from their parents. The role of parents in childcare is crucial for a child's growth and development. One aspect of child development that is important for parents to pay attention to is their social and emotional development.

Emotional Development in Early Childhood

Emotion is a fundamental state or feeling within a person. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, emotion is defined as an intense mental activity or turmoil, feeling, desire, or any intense mental state. Furthermore, Goleman (1996) defines emotion as something related to specific feelings and thoughts, a biological and psychological state, and a series of tendencies to act. Emotions can be categorized into various types, such as anger, sadness, fear, pleasure, love, surprise, irritation, or embarrassment.

Emotion can refer to psychological and physiological states and reactions such as joy, sadness, compassion, affection, and anger (Khulusinniyah & Farhatin Masruroh, 2019). Emotion is how a person reacts to something they like or dislike through facial expressions.

Social and emotional development in early childhood refers to a child's ability to manage and express various emotions, both positive and negative. Children can learn actively through interactions with peers and adults around them, as well as exploring their environment. This social-emotional development process involves children learning to adapt and understand situations and emotions when interacting with others, through listening, observing, and imitating the behaviors they witness. Furthermore, social-emotional development is crucial for children to understand each other's feelings in the context of everyday interactions. Given that human development is a complex process, it can be divided into four main domains: physical development, intellectual development, which includes cognitive and language development, and emotional and social development, which also includes moral development.

The Role of a Father

A father serves as a leader in the family, tasked with guiding children to become independent and grow in a positive manner, both physically, psychologically, and socially. A father's role is crucial in educating and nurturing all family members, including his wife (mother) and children. Therefore, balanced parenting between father and mother will contribute to the development of positive behaviors in children. A father's role in educating children is as significant as that of a mother. A father's role in the family extends beyond being a breadwinner to meet the family's physical needs; he also plays a vital role in their children's education.

A child's social-emotional development is also inseparable from the role of each parent. Mothers play a crucial role in a child's development because they are the closest to their children. However, this does not make a father's role any less important than that of a mother. The Role of a Father parenting can develop children's empathy, caring, and compassion, and foster good social relationships.

The role of a father figure in emotional development benefits boys in self-development, self-control, and adolescent social adjustment. Meanwhile, girls who receive a father's affectionate role are less likely to engage in early sexual promiscuity and are more likely to have healthy relationships with men in adulthood. This is because girls who receive full affection from their fathers learn how to relate to the opposite sex healthily (Andayani, 2004).

Emotional development is crucial because it fosters the ability to manage their emotions effectively (Qodariah & Voni Pebriani, 2017). A child's behavior in the social environment is influenced by how they manage their emotions. This is because a child becomes relaxed even when simply touched. This sense of calm and relaxation influences their emotional development and social activities. Paternal involvement is positively related to a child's social competence, maturity, and ability to relate to others. A father's involvement in caring for and nurturing a child

is seen and felt by the child, and this experience can serve as a foundation for brain development (Fox et al., 2011). Children cared for and nurtured by fathers tend to have positive personality traits, such as a readiness to compete, high self-confidence, and the ability to take risks. Therefore, a father's role is crucial in helping children manage their emotions from an early age.

Mothers play a crucial role in child development, as mothers spend more time with their children than fathers. However, a father's role within the family, caring for and nurturing a child, is just as important as a mother's, and fathers can even provide time for mothers to rest and care for their children.

When a new father becomes a parent, he develops a close emotional bond with the child, sharing joys and collaborating with the mother in childcare. Since ancient times, fathers have been involved in childcare, serving as disciplinarians, sex role models, providers, playmates, and friends. However, fathers' involvement in child development remains minimal, particularly in developing emotional development.

While the father's role is generally considered to be the breadwinner, this is contradicted by scientific research, which suggests that it is crucial for fathers to be involved in raising their children. Fathers who engage in positive parenting and care for their children will feel happy when they see their children happy, thus enhancing the valuable experiences they gain (Hobson & Noyes, 2011).

The role of fathers in caring for and nurturing their children, contributing to their quality emotional development, is demonstrated by the experiences they experience during childhood, as evidenced by their parenting style. Positive and effective parenting fosters emotional development, which can help prevent behavioral problems later in life. A father's parenting style, particularly harsh on his children, can negatively impact their emotional development, particularly in boys, leading to aggression (Chang et al., 2003).

According to (Cabrera et al., 2000) the impacts of a father's absence on the family include: (1) Loss of the family economy, so that the mother will take on the father's duties as breadwinner to meet the needs of life, (2) The social environment will ostracize the child because of rejection of the mother who is single due to separation so that the mother and child will have difficulty controlling their emotions, (3) There is psychological pressure on the child and mother, (4) The child's social-emotional development is disrupted and behavioral problems arise.

In addition, the child's gender factor needs to be considered because the child's gender has an influence on the interaction between the father and his child. Fathers are more patient and affectionate with daughters than with sons because the parenting style given by fathers to sons is stricter and more authoritarian. The absence of a father in the emotional development of boys tends to show behavioral problems in sex roles, gender identity, learning outcomes in school, and difficulty controlling oneself, while the absence of a father in a girl's emotional development has an impact on withdrawal. If the experience of father absence is at a low level during the sensitive period, it is predicted that when the child becomes an adult, he or she may commit crimes (Chae & Lee, 2011).

CONCLUSION

Early childhood, spanning the period from birth to six years, is a crucial phase for the development of healthy emotional skills. During this stage, children develop rapidly in various aspects, with parents playing a crucial role in providing guidance and support for this growth. In terms of parenting, fathers play an equally important role as mothers, contributing to children's ability to manage their emotions and build healthy social relationships. Fathers' responsibilities in parenting include character formation and emotional management, which impact their socio-emotional development. A father's absence can negatively impact a child's emotional and social development, particularly related to behavioral problems. Therefore, a father's active involvement and strong emotional support are crucial for shaping a child's positive personality and future well-being.

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