

The Role of Parents in Early Childhood Character Development in RA Tgk in Panteue Pidie Jaya Regency

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ABSTRAK

Early childhood character development is a crucial aspect of their personality growth. This study aims to analyze the role of parents in shaping children's character at RA Tgk Di Panteue, Pidie Jaya Regency. The research employs a qualitative approach with observations, interviews, and questionnaires to collect data from parents of students. The findings indicate that parents play a significant role in character formation through positive role modeling, the application of moral and religious values, and the creation of a safe and loving environment. They teach values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and mutual respect through daily activities such as performing religious rituals together, speaking politely, and maintaining cleanliness. Based on questionnaire analysis, the level of parental participation in character development reached 82.9%, demonstrating active involvement in the process. However, several challenges hinder character development, including inconsistency in implementing values at home and school, as well as differences in parenting methods within families. Additionally, social environmental influences pose a challenge in maintaining the values taught. Despite these challenges, parents continue to provide the best guidance to ensure that children grow with strong and confident character. This study emphasizes that active parental involvement is essential in establishing a solid foundation for children's character development from an early age.

INTRODUCTION

Character education is a concept instilled in an individual that can shape their personality to become more courteous, civilized, and physically and mentally healthy, thus enabling them to develop better character in life (Asih, 2024). The more advanced a society becomes, the more important education becomes for the growth and development of children. This concept of education embodies the hope that every individual will have the ability to manage themselves, whether in the learning environment, family environment, or social environment. Character can also be understood as something



inherent in a person and therefore it is important to begin the process of introduction and cultivation from an early age (Annisa et al., 2025).

Character education in early childhood aims to instill positive values that will shape their personality in the future (Zannatunnisya et al., 2024). This concept is highly relevant in today's era of globalization, where children face various social and cultural challenges that may influence their mindset and behavior. With proper guidance from parents, children can grow into individuals with integrity, strong morals, and the ability to adapt to their social environment. Character education provided from an early age becomes the foundation for a child's personality development so that they are capable of facing life's challenges effectively (Syifa & Ridwan, 2024).

The role of parents in shaping early childhood character is highly relevant in the context of child development. One of the duties of being a parent is to provide guidance services for early childhood (Pradita et al., 2024). The family is the first and foremost institution for early childhood to receive education. Parents are the child's first source of education, as the first communication a child builds is with their parents. Early childhood is a critical period for character formation and moral values that will serve as the foundation for their future personality. Early childhood is considered the "golden age" a highly strategic period in the development of human resources (Achmad, 2024).

In Islam, the importance of character education for children is also emphasized in the Qur'an and Hadith. For instance, in Allah's commands that stress the importance of fulfilling trusts with justice and responsibility. This indicates that character education is not merely worldly in nature but also has a spiritual dimension that supports the holistic development of a child. Therefore, parents have a great responsibility to set a good example and guide their children to live a life filled with noble values. Moreover, Islamic teachings also stress the importance of early education, as mentioned in the Hadith of the Prophet which states that a child's education should begin from the womb until they reach adulthood. Allah SWT says in the Qur'an:

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا لَا نَسْأَلُكَ رِزْقًا نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ
لِلتَّقْوَى ﴿١٣٢﴾

"And command your household to (observe) the prayer and constantly (endure) patiently in it. We do not ask of you (any) provision. We are the ones who provide for you, and the end is for those who are mindful of God."

This verse teaches that children's education from an early age must include religious and moral aspects so that they grow up with an awareness of the importance of worship and living a life based on principles of goodness. Early childhood is a stage of rapid cognitive and emotional development, so children need guidance and direction from their parents in terms of faith and piety. In the context of this verse, Allah commands parents to teach their children to pray, as it is one of the main acts of worship in Islam. Teaching children to perform prayer from an early age not only develops a habit of worship but also instills discipline, responsibility, and strong spiritual awareness within them.

Moreover, the command to be patient in performing prayer emphasizes that fostering a habit of worship in children requires a consistent and patient process. Parents are not only instructed to tell their children to worship but also to set an example by practicing worship with patience and sincerity. Children tend to imitate their parents' behavior, so being a role model in worship is a key factor in developing religious character in children. By habituating children to worship from an early age, they will grow with the understanding that worship is an essential part of daily life that must be carried out earnestly and sincerely.

The understanding of a good outcome for those who are righteous, as stated in this verse, teaches that every effort to instill Islamic values in children will result in good outcomes in the future. A child raised in an environment that nurtures Islamic values will have strong life principles and be able to face various life challenges with a more positive attitude. Therefore, parents must realize how crucial their role is in guiding their children toward a better life, both in this world and in the hereafter. Hence, this verse carries a profound message regarding early childhood education. Parents have a great responsibility to guide their children so they grow into individuals who are faithful, pious, and have noble character. By instilling Islamic values from an early age, children will have a strong moral and spiritual foundation to face life with confidence and wisdom.

Character education in early childhood is also influenced by environmental factors and the surrounding social conditions (Cahya & Siregar, 2024). Children who grow up in

a harmonious and loving environment tend to have better character than those who receive less attention and guidance. Therefore, parents must actively build positive relationships with their children and create a home environment conducive to their growth and development. The role of parents in providing motivation and support to their children also plays a significant part in shaping their confidence and independence (Suhartono et al., 2024).

Apart from the family, the role of educational institutions is also crucial in shaping the character of early childhood. Collaboration between parents and schools or educational institutions can strengthen character development through various learning methods that instill positive values (Zain et al., 2024). Programs such as character-based education, the introduction of local culture, and habituation of good behavior in daily life can help children understand and apply the moral values they learn at home. Parents also need to actively participate in school activities related to character development to strengthen their children's emotional and social bonds.

The role of parents in shaping a child's character is also related to the parenting style applied at home. A democratic parenting style, where parents give children the freedom to express themselves within clear boundaries, tends to produce more independent, confident, and responsible children (Wahyuni & Simamora, 2024). On the other hand, overly authoritarian or permissive parenting styles can negatively impact a child's character development (Amelindha & Pratama, 2025). Therefore, it is important for parents to find a balance in raising their children so they grow with a strong and emotionally healthy character.

In addition to providing character education at home, parents must also ensure that their children gain healthy social experiences outside the family environment. Interactions with peers, teachers, and the broader community will help children understand social values such as empathy, cooperation, and respect (Quratul'Aini et al., 2024). Parents can support their children by encouraging participation in social activities, such as joining playgroups, religious activities, or community groups that support positive character development.

RA TGK in Panteue is also an important environment for children to gain social experiences and learn to interact with their surroundings. The role of parents in supporting children to build healthy social relationships, manage conflict, and learn to

cooperate with others is vital in shaping children's character in early childhood. Early childhood education is a form of education that emphasizes laying the foundation for six areas of development: religious and moral values, physical-motor, cognitive, language, social-emotional, and art, in accordance with the uniqueness and developmental stages of the child's age group.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that character education is a very important concept in shaping individuals to become more civilized, courteous, and healthy in both body and mind, which will have a positive impact on their overall lives. The role of parents in guiding the character of early childhood is crucial in the child's development process, as they are the primary source of education for their children. Early childhood is a critical period in the formation of character and morals, thus parents have a significant role in providing examples and guidance to help their children understand important values such as simplicity, honesty, and respect for others. Early childhood education aims to lay a solid foundation for the holistic growth and development of the child, tailored to their needs and developmental stage.

The preliminary observations conducted by the researcher with parents regarding the role of parents in character development of early childhood at RA TGK in Panteue, Pidie Jaya Regency, revealed several important findings. In general, parents recognize the importance of their role in shaping their children's character, especially in early childhood. They stated that character education is not only the school's responsibility but also the responsibility of parents as the first agents in shaping the child's personality. However, some parents also acknowledged challenges in fulfilling their role in character development. Some face difficulties balancing work and time spent with their children. In addition, some parents also feel a lack of knowledge and skills in providing character education to their children.

Given the importance of this issue for detailed study, this research seeks to explore the role of parents in the character development of early childhood at RA TGK in Panteue, the strategies parents employ for character development at RA TGK in Panteue, and the challenges faced in the character development of early childhood at RA TGK in Panteue. The objective of this research is to identify the role of parents in character development of early childhood at RA TGK in Panteue, analyze the strategies they use, and understand the obstacles in the process.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach aimed at naturally describing a phenomenon without testing hypotheses. The qualitative method was chosen for its flexibility in adapting to complex facts, allowing direct interaction between the researcher and research subjects, and providing sensitivity to various value patterns that develop in the research environment (Handoko et al., 2024). This study was conducted to explore and obtain data regarding the role of parents in character education for early childhood at RA Tgk di Panteue, emphasizing an inductive thinking process in analyzing the relationships between observed phenomena.

The research location was chosen at RA Tgk di Panteue, located in Kampung Meugit Sagoe, Bandar Dua Subdistrict, Pidie Jaya Regency. This location was selected based on several key considerations, including the institution's focus on character building in early childhood through religious and local cultural approaches. RA Tgk di Panteue is a relevant setting to examine the extent of parental involvement in supporting early character education, especially within a social and cultural environment that is highly engaged in the educational process. Additionally, the location was selected due to its accessibility, which facilitated the researcher in conducting observations and interviews with parents, teachers, and institution administrators. The surrounding environment also presents its own challenges in early childhood education, such as limited resources and social influences, further strengthening the urgency of this study in providing insights into the dynamics of character development in children.

Data in this study were obtained from two main sources: primary and secondary data. Primary data were gathered through direct observation of learning activities and interviews with parents of students. A total of 20 parents served as the main subjects of this study, with varied age backgrounds. Below is the data on the parents:

Table 1. Primary Data Sources

No.	Parent's Name	Age
1.	Siti Aisyah	29 years
2.	Nurul Hidayah	32 years
3.	Rahmawati Hasanah	30 years
4.	Fitriani Dewi	28 years
5.	Halimatus Sa'diyah	31 years

No.	Parent's Name	Age
6.	Marlina Sari	33 years
7.	Yuniarti Rahmah	30 years
8.	Nurliana Putri	27 years
9.	Rosnawati Khalidah	34 years
10.	Siti Khadijah	29 years
11.	Aisyah Fauziah	35 years
12.	Faridah Latifah	36 years
13.	Khairunisa Zahra	33 years
14.	Zainab Mahmudah	37 years
15.	Maryam Nuraini	30 years
16.	Fatimah Az-Zahra	28 years
17.	Kartini Hasanah	32 years
18.	Salamah Hafsah	31 years
19.	Lailatul Qadriah	30 years
20.	Ummu Kalsum	34 years

Additionally, secondary data were collected from various related documents, such as interview transcripts with educators, documentation of learning activities in the form of photos, and relevant scientific works to support and enrich the research findings. The data collection techniques used in this study include several methods: observation, questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to directly observe how children's character is formed within the school environment and the role of parents in the process. The questionnaire used in this study was a closed-ended Likert scale, allowing respondents to select from predefined answers, thereby facilitating data analysis.

Table 2. Likert Scale Questionnaire Scores

Category	Score
Always (A)	5
Often (O)	4
Sometimes (S)	3
Rarely (R)	2
Never (N)	1

Meanwhile, interviews were conducted using an unstructured approach, which provides flexibility to delve deeper into the informants' perspectives. Documentation also played an important role in this study, with various written data and school records collected to complement other sources of information. The validity of the data in this study was tested using triangulation techniques, which involve comparing various sources of information to ensure the validity of the findings (Husnullail & Jailani, 2024). Two types of triangulation were used: source triangulation and method triangulation. Source triangulation was performed by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and related documents to ensure consistency in the collected data. The data analysis technique in this study involved several stages. First, the analysis of the questionnaire data was conducted by calculating the percentage of respondents' answers using the Likert scale formula. The resulting percentages were then interpreted into specific categories to gain clearer insight into the response patterns.

Table 3. Percentage Interval Interpretation

Percentage Interval (%)	Interpretation
0.0–0.5	None at all
0.6–39.5	A small portion
39.5–50.5	Half
50.5–89.5	A large portion
89.6–99.5	Nearly all
99.6–100	Entirely

Second, data reduction was carried out by filtering and simplifying the data to focus on aspects relevant to the research. Irrelevant or non-supportive data were eliminated to sharpen the research focus. Third, data display was performed by organizing the information systematically to make it easier to understand and further analyze. A well-structured data presentation aids in interpretation and decision-making processes. Finally, conclusion drawing was conducted by compiling key findings based on the analysis results. The conclusions in this study are not only descriptive but also provide an overview of the achievement of research objectives and recommendations for strengthening the role of parents in early childhood character education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The school environment plays a crucial role in shaping children's character. A positive, safe, and supportive school provides a conducive learning experience for children to develop socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Caring teachers who set a good example teach values such as discipline, honesty, hard work, and respect. Interaction with peers also helps children learn cooperation, empathy, and social skills.

School programs and activities, such as extracurriculars, character education, and social projects, offer opportunities for children to develop leadership, responsibility, and independence. In addition, clear school rules and culture help children understand boundaries and consequences, shaping good behavior and a sense of responsibility. The following are the results of observations conducted by the researcher at the school regarding the character of early childhood students:

Table 3. Observation Results

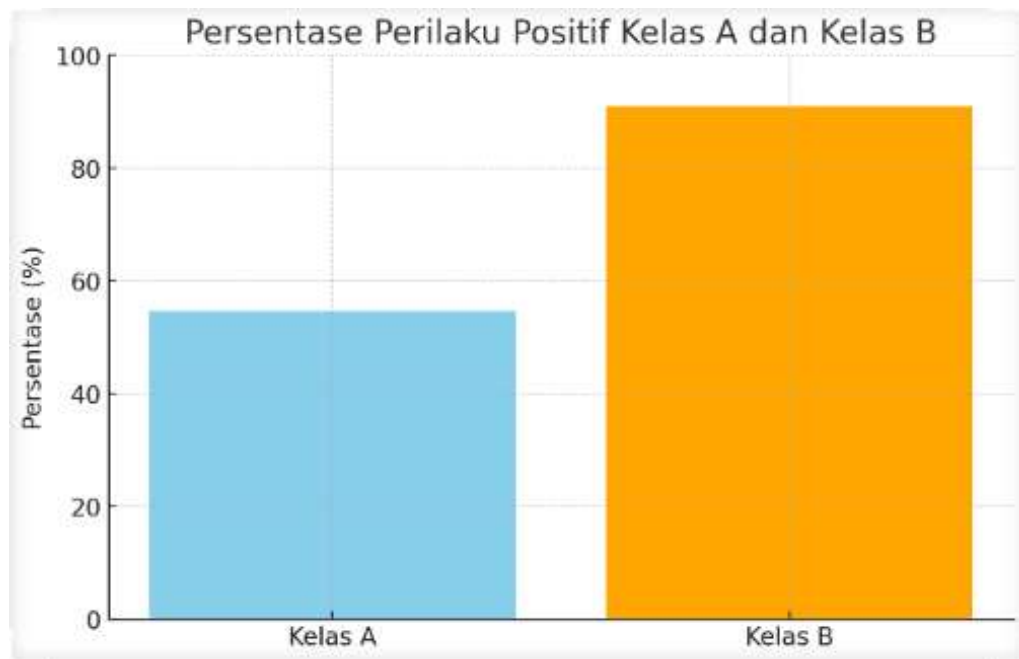
No	Behavior Indicator	Question Item	Class A	Class B
1	Telling the truth	Does the child tell the truth in certain situations?	√	√
	Returning items that don't belong to them	Does the child return a friend's belongings?	-	√
2	Arriving on time	Is the child present in class according to the schedule?	√	√
	Following class rules	Does the child follow the rules set?	√	√
3	Completing tasks independently	Does the child complete tasks on their own?	-	-
4	Completing assigned tasks	Is the child responsible for their tasks?	-	√
5	Playing or cooperating with friends	Does the child interact and cooperate with peers?	-	√
6	Saying greetings and thank you	Does the child use polite words?	√	√
	Respecting teachers and friends	Does the child show respect to teachers and friends?	√	√
7	Maintaining a clean environment	Does the child keep the surrounding clean?	-	√
	Helping friends in need	Does the child help peers in difficulty?	√	√

Based on the behavioral indicator table, children in both Class A and Class B demonstrated positive behavior in various aspects. In terms of honesty, both classes showed that the children told the truth in certain situations. However, only the children in Class B returned items that did not belong to them. Punctuality in attending class according to the schedule, as well as compliance with classroom rules, were demonstrated by both classes.

In terms of independence, none of the children in Class A completed tasks without assistance, while Class B students showed responsibility in completing the tasks assigned to them. Children in Class B also demonstrated the ability to play and collaborate with their peers, a behavior not yet observed in Class A.

Both classes showed politeness by greeting others and saying thank you, as well as respecting teachers and peers. However, in maintaining environmental cleanliness, only Class B appeared to be active. On the other hand, children in Class A stood out more in helping friends in need, which was also demonstrated by children in Class B. Overall, both classes have strengths and areas that can be improved in shaping children's character.

The role of parents in character development for early childhood at RA Tgk Di Panteue, Pidie Jaya Regency, is crucial in building the foundation of a child's personality. At this age, children are in a critical phase of developing core values. Parents serve as the primary role models, so attitudes such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility that they display will be imitated by the child. In addition, parents teach moral and religious values, strengthening children's understanding of kindness, empathy, and social norms through religious practices and continuous guidance at home. Based on the table, the data can be presented in the form of a chart as follows:



Graph 1. Percentage of Early Childhood Character

Based on the graph of positive behavior percentages, Class B shows a higher result compared to Class A. Class A achieved a percentage of around 54.5%, reflecting that more than half of the positive behavior indicators have been demonstrated by the students. Meanwhile, Class B reached a percentage of 90.9%, indicating that almost all indicators of positive behavior have been fulfilled by students in that class. This difference shows that students in Class B are more consistent in displaying positive behaviors such as honesty, punctuality, obedience to rules, responsibility, cooperation, politeness, and cleanliness compared to students in Class A.

A safe and loving home environment is crucial for supporting a child's emotional development. By listening to the child's feelings and views, parents create open communication, helping the child learn to manage emotions and understand others. In addition, parents provide rewards for good behavior and supportive corrections when children make mistakes, which helps build a confident character. Through cooperation with the school, this support is further strengthened, ensuring that the child grows with a positive character, courage, and readiness to face challenges.

Based on the analyzed questionnaire, the following results were obtained:

Table 3. Recapitulation of Questionnaire Data

Research Subject	Total
1	96
2	74
3	93
4	69
5	65
6	99
7	96
8	90
9	84
10	62
11	90
12	80
13	92
14	73
15	100
16	75
17	84
18	67
19	78
20	91
Total	1658

Then, the percentage is calculated using the formula below:

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100\%$$

$$P = \frac{1658}{20} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 82,9 \%$$

The result obtained using the formula is 82.9%. According to the interval, this falls under the category of "most," meaning that the majority of research subjects, namely the parents of RA TKG students in Panteue, have played a role in early childhood character development. This is supported by the interview results with parents, which were analyzed as follows:

1. The Role of Parents in Shaping Children's Character

Parents play an essential role in shaping children's character by providing positive examples in daily life. They teach moral values such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility through direct examples and by involving children in activities that support their social and emotional development. Daily interactions, such as playing, chatting, and open, warm communication, help strengthen emotional bonds and boost children's self-confidence. In addition, the implementation of rules and daily routines—such as maintaining cleanliness, time discipline, and responsibility for personal belongings—helps form consistent behavior patterns. Parents also create a safe and loving home environment to ensure children grow up in a comfortable atmosphere that supports their mental development.

Disciplinary approaches are carried out with consistency and empathy, avoiding threats and emphasizing clear communication about rules and consequences. Parents also instill moral values through stories, real-life examples, and involving children in daily activities that teach fairness, politeness, humility, and concern for others.

By being good role models in various aspects of life such as worship, cleanliness, and honesty parents help children understand the importance of good character. This overall approach shapes children into disciplined, responsible individuals who can interact well in their social environment.

2. Children's Character

Children's character is a pattern of behavior that reflects moral and social values such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy. Character formation is influenced by the environment, family, and education, where children learn through observation and interaction with adults as well as peers. Moral development theories, such as those

proposed by Piaget and Kohlberg, indicate that children's understanding of morality develops through specific stages.

Honesty is the attitude of telling the truth without hiding or manipulating facts. Parents serve as role models by demonstrating honesty in daily life, such as admitting mistakes and taking responsibility for their actions. In addition, providing an understanding of the consequences of dishonesty helps children develop integrity. Respecting others can be taught through the use of polite language, listening when others speak, and understanding the rights and opinions of others. Parental examples, such as speaking politely, practicing queuing culture, and giving play opportunities to friends, help children understand the concept of respecting others.

Children need to learn to complete tasks and follow rules properly. Parents can train children by giving them simple tasks and accompanying them in daily activities. Consistency in applying rules and providing educational sanctions when needed will help children understand the importance of discipline and obedience. Empathy can be developed by encouraging children to help without being asked, such as comforting a crying sibling or sharing food. A friendly attitude is also important in building good social interactions, for example by greeting friends, smiling, and communicating politely.

The formation of character in early childhood is strongly influenced by the role of parents as role models in daily life. Values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and mutual respect need to be taught consistently through real behavior and interaction. In addition, cooperation between parents and educational institutions can strengthen the internalization of positive values, so that children grow into responsible individuals who interact well in society.

DISCUSSION

A safe and loving home environment plays a crucial role in supporting a child's emotional development. When parents listen to their children's feelings and perspectives, they create open communication that greatly helps children learn to manage emotions and understand others. Appreciation for positive behavior and supportive correction when the child makes mistakes also play an important role in building a confident character (Yudiyanto et al., 2024). Cooperation with schools strengthens this support, ensuring children grow up with a positive character, courage, and readiness to face life's

challenges.

Based on the results of the questionnaire analyzed, it is known that most parents of RA Tgk students in Panteue have actively participated in the character development of early childhood, with a participation rate of 82.9%. This shows that parents consistently support character development in children, as reflected in their habit of providing positive role models in daily life. Parents teach values such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility through direct examples, as well as involve children in religious activities to instill moral and religious values.

Moreover, effective and warm communication between parents and children is one of the key aspects in building a healthy relationship (Destri et al., 2025). In this way, children feel valued and learn to be good listeners. The implementation of rules and routines at home also provides a clear structure, enabling children to develop self-discipline and responsibility from an early age. For instance, parents teach children to maintain cleanliness and tidy up their belongings after use, as well as consistently use polite expressions such as “please” and “thank you.”

Parents also play a role in creating a safe and comfortable home environment for their children (Alfira & Siregar, 2024). Physical safety and a private space for studying and playing without disturbances are essential for child development. In addition, being a good role model by demonstrating positive behaviors such as honesty, patience, and discipline will strengthen a child's character development. Consistency in educating children through fair rules and structured discipline provides a sense of security, allowing children to grow with confidence and be ready to face life's challenges.

By giving praise for positive behavior and setting a good example, parents can shape their children's character and foster self-respect (Ayub et al., 2024). Educating children through real actions, such as inviting them to pray together or teaching them how to care for the environment, helps them internalize positive values. This aligns with parents' efforts to teach children to be honest, polite, and responsible, as well as to maintain cleanliness and respect others.

A child's character reflects behavior based on moral and social values, such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy. The formation of this character is influenced by the environment, family, and education, with childhood being a very critical period (Alfira &

Siregar, 2024). Children learn these values through interactions with adults and their peers. Psychological theories, such as those proposed by Piaget and Kohlberg, indicate that children develop through stages in understanding morality. A consistent approach, such as modeling and encouraging good behavior, is essential in character development.

Honesty is one of the core values that must be taught to children. This includes speaking truthfully and acting in accordance with moral values. Honesty helps build trust and good relationships with others. Parents can set examples in everyday life, such as performing prayers together, returning borrowed items, and maintaining cleanliness. Through direct examples, children learn responsibility and discipline. Teaching honesty also involves explaining the importance of truthfulness and the consequences of lying.

In addition, mutual respect is a value that should be instilled from an early age. Children need to learn to speak politely, listen to others, and appreciate differences. This can be taught by example, such as speaking kindly, inviting friends to play politely, and respecting turns during play. Respecting others also involves basic etiquette, such as greeting and saying thank you when interacting with others.

Responsibility is another important attitude that must be taught to children. A responsible child will complete tasks attentively and according to instructions. This can be trained by giving small tasks that the child can accomplish well, along with clear guidance. This helps build the habit of completing tasks with discipline and efficiency. Empathy also needs to be nurtured within the family. Teaching children to understand others' feelings and help family members without being asked will strengthen family bonds. Children learn to show care by comforting a crying sibling or sharing food with other family members.

Friendliness, shown by greeting others with a smile and speaking politely, is also important to instill. A friendly child will find it easier to build good relationships with others. This can be taught by setting an example, such as cheerfully and politely greeting parents or friends. Obedience to rules is also very important in the development of a child's character. A child who obeys rules understands that rules are made for the common good—at home, at school, and in society. Parents can provide clear rules and ensure that children understand the consequences of breaking them.

Overall, the role of parents in shaping a child's character is significant. Parents must be good role models by teaching values such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy

through daily examples. This will help children grow into individuals who are responsible, empathetic, and able to interact well within society.

CONCLUSION

The role of parents in shaping the character of early childhood students at RA Tgk Di Panteue is highly significant, particularly in providing positive role models, teaching moral and religious values, and creating a loving environment. They implement consistent rules, support discipline, and develop children's social skills through effective communication. Parents also instill values such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy by setting examples in their daily lives. Based on the survey results, the level of parental participation in character development reaches 82.9%. However, there are challenges such as a lack of consistency in applying values, differences in educational methods within families, and the influence of the social environment. Nevertheless, parents continue to strive to provide the best guidance so that children grow up with good and positive character.

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