

Democratic Parenting Policies in Building Responsibility Characters of Early Children

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the role of democratic parenting in building the character of responsibility in 5-6-year-old children at Strada Kindergarten. Using a qualitative approach, the study involved parents who practiced democratic parenting and their children, as well as early childhood teachers, to gain an in-depth understanding of their experiences and interactions. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, behavioral observations, and questionnaires measuring parents' perceptions of parenting and children's character development. The results showed that democratic parenting, characterized by open communication, granting freedom with limits, and respecting children's opinions, contributed significantly to the development of children's responsible character. Children raised in this supportive environment tend to exhibit higher levels of responsibility, as they are taught to understand the consequences of their actions and are involved in decision-making. In addition, the study revealed that inconsistencies in parenting styles can affect the internalization of responsibility in children, making it important for parents and teachers to work together to create a stable and supportive environment. The study also highlighted the challenges faced in implementing democratic parenting, especially in the context of different cultures and family dynamics. As such, the findings provide valuable insights for parents and educators in their efforts to shape the character of early childhood responsibility, as well as emphasizing the importance of a balanced approach between freedom and guidance in parenting.

Keywords: *Democratic Parenting, Responsibility Character, Early Childhood*

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INTRODUCTION

Parenting is one of the important components that influence children's character development. At the age of five to six, children enter a very important developmental phase where they begin to learn to understand their role in society, responsibility, and independence. Parenting can influence children's attitudes and behaviors, including their ability to take responsibility. Democratic parenting is considered effective in teaching children responsibility. Parents in this parenting style tend to listen to their children, explain the rules, and support them in understanding the consequences of what they do while still providing space for children to voice their opinions and make decisions. It balances control

with freedom. Children are educated on the principle of responsibility early on through democratic parenting. Democratic parents will assign simple, age-appropriate tasks, such as tidying up toys and putting them back where they belong. They will also teach children to take responsibility for their decisions, provide opportunities to correct their mistakes, and praise good behavior.

Parenting patterns applied by parents in early childhood vary. Direct observation allows the author to see the patterns, behaviors, and outcomes that arise from interactions between parents and children. This experience encourages the author to make observations to obtain information about the behavior of children who are addicted to gadgets. So that parents have difficulty in parenting them. Children aged 5-6 years already show some deviant behaviors that differ from the expected developmental norms. These behaviors vary depending on the environment, culture, and upbringing; some common deviant behaviors among children of this age include gadget addiction and lack of physical activity, difficulty interacting socially, aggressive behavior, lack of independence, impaired concentration and attention, lying and manipulative habits, and not following rules.

Democratic Parenting

Democratic parenting plays an important role in shaping the responsibility and character of 5-6-year-old children. This parenting style fosters independence, social skills, and moral values through active engagement and open communication between parents and children. According to (Yusra et al., 2024), the role of democratic parents in character development is a positive character trait. Democratic parenting encourages traits such as tolerance, independence, and respect for others, which are important for responsible behavior. According to (Nasution & P, 2023), modeling behavior, children learn responsibility by observing their parents' actions, especially when parents consistently demonstrate honesty and good behavior. Early childhood is the most important period in which all aspects of development that need to develop can be achieved properly. Providing the right stimulus in early childhood is very important because it can shape development optimally. According to (Elan & Handayani, 2023), early childhood is a golden age period where they become very sensitive to what they see, hear, and feel. Early childhood education is an important developmental phase that a child must go through.

Democratic parenting is a parenting approach that emphasizes a balance between freedom and guidance. Parents who use this parenting approach tend to give their children purposeful freedom while still setting limits and providing necessary support. At the age of 5-6 years, children are at a crucial stage of development where they begin to form character, including a sense of responsibility. (Brown & Lewis, 2023) showed that democratic parenting is very effective in developing the character of responsibility in young children. Children raised with this approach tend to show higher levels of responsibility as they are taught to understand the consequences of their actions. This parenting allows children to make their own decisions in a supportive environment, which in turn helps them develop a sense of responsibility. According to a study conducted by Thompson and Walker

(2019), democratic parenting accompanied by positive discipline plays an important role in building a sense of responsibility in children aged 5-6 years.

Positive discipline refers to an approach that prioritizes understanding and explanation over harsh punishment. Children are taught to understand why certain rules should be followed and how their actions affect others, which ultimately strengthens their sense of responsibility. To shape the character of responsibility of children aged 5 to 6 years, democratic parenting can be defined in general. In democratic parenting, parents set clear rules and boundaries and allow children to speak up and be involved in decision-making. Democratic parenting encourages children at the age of five to six to understand and appreciate the consequences of their choices. At this age, children begin to learn about responsibility through everyday activities such as tidying up toys, choosing clothes, or completing chores. In a democratic approach, parents not only give instructions but also give children the opportunity to choose and learn from their own experiences. Parents provide clear guidelines, explain the reasons for rules, and provide emotional support so that children feel valued and listened to.

Responsibility

Responsibility is doing tasks with courage and being ready to bear one's own risks according to (Hasbi & Ganesh, 2020). Its benefits include completing tasks well, being careful and planned, and facing problems firmly and solving them. Responsibility is a behavior that needs to be instilled for daily goodness, such as honesty, obeying rules, being dedicated, and taking risks. Responsible behavior is the attitude of individual behavior that carries out tasks with values and dares to bear risks. In this case, it includes being on time in collecting assignments, following the rules, and not copying other people's assignments without permission. According to (Fadlillah, 2013), responsibility is a person's behavior to fulfill duties towards oneself, society, the environment, social culture, the nation, and God. Responsibility develops as the child develops. Responsibility comes from the heart and self-will and has benefits with a responsible attitude that a person will be trusted, respected, appreciated, and liked by others (Sukiman et al., 2016). The attitude of admitting mistakes and being willing to change is the key to success.

Responsibility makes children successfully complete tasks. An attitude of responsibility makes children careful. In planning and strong in facing problems. Responsible behavior includes being serious, trying your best, sacrificing trust, obeying the rules, being honest, and daring to face risks. Responsibility in children aged 5-6 years reveals various dimensions, including parental influence, educational methods, and social interaction. Research shows that responsibility begins to develop during this critical period, shaped by family and social factors. The role of parents, especially mothers, plays an important role in fostering responsibility through their interactions, acting as facilitators and motivators (Rohita et al., 2024).

Inconsistencies in parenting styles can affect how responsibility is internalized by children, highlighting the need for a stable and supportive environment (Rohita et al., 2024). Through project-based learning, educational approaches enhance self-regulation and

responsibility in children, allowing them to manage tasks and make decisions independently (Kamtini et al., 2020). Engaging children with moral literature can also increase responsibility by encouraging ethical discussion and reflection on behavior (Chepil et al., 2023), explaining that children show a sense of responsibility towards their group and feel guilt and the need to repair the damage caused by group members, showing an early understanding of social responsibility. Responsibility in children aged 5-6 is formed through social interaction, moral discussions, and fostering initiative and executive responsibility.

In addition, responsibility as a basic concept is raised through interaction with the environment and school activities, which shape their areas of responsibility (Gol-Guven, 2016). Children aged 5-6 years have the potential to develop leadership skills that are important for later education (Nagle-Baranova, 2024). These skills can be enhanced through educational approaches that take into account the child's individual strengths. A scale developed for children's responsible growth behavior showed good validity and reliability, covering ten relevant factors (Polat & Dagal., 2013). This assessment helps parents and students understand children's responsibility development. Project- and drama-based activities have been shown to be effective in promoting the concept of responsibility and other skills, such as math skills (Honcharenko, 2023) (Çiftci et al., 2018). Although Curriculum 2013 emphasizes responsibility, challenges remain in its implementation, especially in ensuring that all children have learning experiences that suit their needs and interests.

The Importance of Democratic Parenting in Shaping Responsible Character

Democratic parenting plays an important role in shaping responsible character traits in children, fostering independence, critical thinking, and social skills. This parenting style emphasizes open communication, mutual respect, and collaborative decision-making, which are important for character development. (Yusra et al., 2024) explain that the impact on character formation has positive features; namely, democratic parenting encourages tolerance, independence, and respect for diversity, which leads to a well-rounded personality. According to the social skills of children raised in a democratic environment, they tend to make friends easily, collaborate effectively, and share with willingness. According to (Helmi et al., 2024), the role of parents in the digital age in the use of technology is that they can help children navigate digital challenges by setting limits and promoting healthy digital habits, which foster responsible behavior. As well as in honesty and integrity, parents who practice democratic parenting instill values such as honesty by modeling these behaviors, which children tend to imitate (Nasution & P, 2023). While democratic parenting has many benefits, it is important to balance freedom with appropriate boundaries to prevent potential negative outcomes, such as lack of discipline or overindulgence. Thus, a nuanced approach is necessary for effective character development.

Parenting is one of the important components that influence children's character development. At the age of five to six, children enter a very important phase of development where they begin to learn to understand their role in society, responsibility,

and independence. Parenting can influence children's attitudes and behaviors, including their ability to take responsibility. In this context, democratic parenting is considered effective in teaching children responsibility. Parents in this parenting style tend to listen to their children, explain the rules, and support them in understanding the consequences of what they do while still providing space for children to voice their opinions and make decisions. It balances control with freedom, so children are educated on the principles of responsibility early on through democratic parenting.

Democratic parenting focuses not only on setting rules but also on developing a healthy relationship between parents and children. In this approach, parents act as facilitators who help children understand moral and ethical values. By giving children the opportunity to participate in decision-making, parents teach them about the consequences of their actions. This is very important, as children who feel valued and listened to tend to be more motivated to take responsibility for their actions. Research shows that children raised in a democratic environment have better social skills and are better able to interact with their peers. In addition, democratic parenting also contributes to the development of children's independence. In a supportive environment, children are taught to make choices and take decisions on their own, which in turn helps them develop self-confidence. This independence is crucial for character development, as independent children tend to be better able to face challenges and take responsibility for their actions.

However, the implementation of democratic parenting does not always go smoothly. Some parents may face challenges in applying these principles, especially in different cultural and social contexts. For example, in some cultures, authoritarian approaches are still dominant, and parents may find it difficult to shift to more democratic parenting. Therefore, it is important to understand the broader context in which this parenting is applied. This research aims to explore how democratic parenting can be effectively applied in different contexts, as well as its impact on children's character development.

In this research, I will use a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of parents, children, and teachers regarding democratic parenting. Through in-depth interviews and observations, the author will collect data on how interactions between parents and children can influence the formation of responsible character. In addition, this research will also involve PAUD teachers to gain a broader perspective on early childhood care and education. By understanding more about democratic parenting and its impact on children's character development, it is hoped that this research can make a meaningful contribution to parents, educators, and researchers in the field of early childhood education. This research is also expected to provide practical recommendations for parents in implementing democratic parenting, as well as help them overcome challenges that may be faced in the parenting process.

Overall, democratic parenting has great potential in shaping the character of early childhood responsibility. With the right approach, parents can help their children develop social skills, independence, and moral values that are essential for their future lives. Therefore, it is important to continue to explore and understand more about this parenting

style, as well as its impact on children's development, so that we can create a generation with more responsibility and character.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of parents', children's, and teachers' experiences of democratic parenting and how it affects children's responsibility. The research procedure with the selection of research subjects was parents who applied democratic parenting and had children aged 5 to 6 years old. They also involved PAUD teachers to get a broader view. The data was collected through in-depth interviews with parents and teachers. Observation by looking at how parents and children interact in daily activities. Note behaviors that show democratic parenting and the child's reaction to this parenting. Questionnaires can also be used to collect data on parents' perceptions of parenting and children's character development. The researcher used a qualitative approach to describe the results of data collection obtained in the field. This research, which is a type of field research, was conducted at Strada Kindergarten to explore the improvement of Democratic Parenting Policies in Building Responsibility Characters of Early Children. This approach is based on the philosophy of postpositivism and is designed to study natural object conditions. Data collection techniques involve triangulation or combination with inductive or qualitative data analysis and focus on meaning rather than generalization. This research aims to understand the reality that occurs in society related to certain problems (Mahmud, 2011). Based on the data sources obtained, this research is field research that targets the community, both in general and specifically (Marzuki, 2011). The purpose of this research is to study the background, current status, and environmental interactions in the context of social units such as individuals, groups, institutions, or communities (Muhadjir, 1996).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH RESULT

Research on democratic parenting shows that it is crucial for building responsible character in children aged five to six in kindergarten. This method emphasizes teamwork, communication, and modeling positive behavior. This is especially important for spreading principles such as honesty and environmental care. The role of parents in shaping children's character is indispensable. Parents serve as mentors and educators, and through observation and imitation, they influence their children's character (Sjamsir et al., 2024).

Democratic caregivers help children learn to be honest by seeing how their parents act and talk about rules (Nasution & P, 2023). The impact of parenting styles also affects children's personality and character development. Diverse parenting styles can produce different outcomes in character formation (Syam et al., 2022). As demonstrated by the environmental care initiative, incorporating character education into education programs further supports character development in early childhood settings (Sidiq et al., 2023). While democratic parenting can be successful, it is important to consider the broader

context, such as cultural and socioeconomic factors. These factors can influence the way children are raised and their character development.

Research shows that democratic parenting fosters important traits such as independence, honesty, and social skills, which are crucial for early childhood development. Positive impact on character building of independence and social skills. Children raised in a democratic environment have greater independence and social interaction as they learn to make decisions and cooperate with peers. Honesty and ethical behavior are democratic parenting encourages open discussions about rules and behaviors that help instill honesty in children. Parents set a moral example for their children, which they tend to follow (Nasution & P, 2023). Emotional and social development, i.e., emotional support for children from democratic families, tends to have healthier conflict management skills, which increases their emotional intelligence and resilience (Putri et al., 2023). While democratic parenting has many benefits, it is important to remember that outcomes may vary depending on the cultural context and dynamics of each family. Some families may have difficulty implementing these practices regularly, which may affect the desired outcomes in character building.

DISCUSSION

From the results of the study, it was found that children raised with parental democratic parenting had a positive relationship with their responsible character development at the age of 5-6 years. Parental democratic parenting, which is characterized by open communication, granting freedom with limits, and respecting children's opinions, helps children feel more responsible. Children are more motivated to assume responsibility because they feel valued and supported. The positive impact of democratic parenting on children's responsibility development is reinforced by a supportive school environment, such as teachers who apply democratic parenting and create a pleasant classroom atmosphere. To ensure consistency in parenting, parents and teachers should work together. Age, gender, and family background can also affect how effective democratic parenting is in building the character of responsibility.

From the results of interviews with three informants regarding democratic parenting in building the character of responsibility of children aged 5-6 at Strada Kindergarten, it was found that all three had the same opinion, namely that democratic parenting is beneficial for the formation of the character of responsibility of early childhood. As expressed by MM, "Very aware, it can affect children's responsibility, and if not the right parenting is given, it can affect their development." The same thing was conveyed by ME, "realizing the impact of wrong parenting." MM said, "Yes, it means that when the child is spoiled, they will be more irresponsible." MM said, "Yes, that's right. The role of parents in childcare is very important.

Based on the interview data above, it can be concluded that parents realize that democratic parenting not only helps in building the character of responsibility but also supports children's overall social and emotional development. Based on the findings of this study, democratic parents at Strada Kindergarten play an important role in building the

character of children aged 5-6 years. This method fosters responsibility and positive traits through active interaction and supportive interactions between parents and children.

CONCLUSION

Children aged 5-6 years in kindergarten are strongly influenced by democratic caregivers in instilling responsibility and social behavior. Some important elements of how democratic parenting influences character development. The influence is very good because the role of parents in shaping children's character has a great impact on their children. Parents serve as educators and role models by teaching discipline and responsibility through communication and good examples set in everyday life. Parental attention and affection are important to provide in order to create a good atmosphere for learning honesty and other character traits.

Democratic parenting encourages children to participate in prosocial behavior because they learn to imitate what their parents do. Children raised in a democratic environment show higher levels of resilience and better social skills, which are important for coping with issues such as abuse. Democratic parenting not only affects child development but also shapes parents' views on responsibility. Parents who practice this parenting style tend to be more aware of their duties in helping their children become independent people and reinforce a sense of responsibility in their family relationships.

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