



The Role of Parents in Building Children's Character at Home During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Building a child's character is very basic in a family. However, what often happens is that parents are satisfied with sending their children to Sunday school and sending them to well-known schools or schools that have a character building curriculum. However, during the Corona Virus or Covid 19 pandemic, parents can no longer leave their children in public schools or Sunday schools. The government's decision requires schools to be online. In addition, Sunday school worship is also abolished. Now they live at home with their parents almost every day. Interaction with parents is a valuable opportunity to interact and build relationships as well as build children's character. Unfortunately, many parents are not ready to seize this opportunity. This study uses a library analysis methodology and a case approach that occurred during this pandemic. The results show that parents must be aware that educating their children is very important, and is a responsibility that cannot be transferred to other parties. Being a role model in the home cannot be done once in a while but all life in the home is an example, directing the potential of children according to their talents and interests, and providing guidance and being able to become friends for them.

Keywords: Role of Parents, Building Children's Character, COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction

Since Covid-19 was decided to become a pandemic, almost all lines of life have changed. All parties must be able to adapt to the new pattern which they call the "New Normal". The rules for maintaining distance, wearing masks and washing hands with soap using running water for at least 20 seconds, continue to be heard through television, radio, posters, banners, and through social media and other service advertisements. According to official data from the government of the republic of Indonesia, globally, Covid-19 has infected 216 countries, 7,941,791 confirmed or positive cases, and 434,796 people died. Meanwhile in Indonesia, 40,400 people have been exposed and 2,231 people have died.¹ This number will continue to grow in a race

¹ <https://covid19.go.id/>, di akses 16 Juni 2021.

against time, waiting for the results of the hard work of researchers to find a vaccine that is able to prevent the transmission of Covid-19.

The economic shock occurred due to the spread of the very impactful Covid-19 virus. Many parents working with pay cuts and even lose their jobs. During the Covid-19 pandemic, it not only had an impact on economic problems, but also had an impact on the world of education. The government prevents the spread of Covid-19 by "staying at home" or giving advice to work, study and worship at home, and avoid gatherings. Minister of Education Nadien Anwar Makarin issued circular letter Number 3 of 2020 on Education Units and Number 36962/MPK.A/HK/2020 regarding the implementation of education during the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) emergency so that the learning process can be carried out online.² Education that initially focused on school buildings, where teachers who served as teachers who directly assisted students in developing the quality of knowledge as well as mentors in character, has now turned to parents.³ The Role of Parents When Schooling From Home makes parents the key holders in the family who are central to accompanying their sons and daughters to learn online. The success of children in learning is also very dependent on the assistance and attention given by parents in conveying the lessons given by teachers from schools.⁴

The role of parents accompanying children while studying at home is very important. The role of parents initially guides children's attitudes and skills, but their role becomes wider, namely as a companion for academic education.⁵ The role of parents that emerged during the Covid-19 pandemic was as a guide, educator, guardian, and motivator for children.

²Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan,
<https://www.kemdikbud.go.id/main/blog/2020/03/se-mendikbud-pembelajaran-secara-daring-dan-bekerja-dari-rumah-untuk-mencegah-penyebaran-covid19>, diakses 14 Juni 2021.

³ Edym Bahapol and Youke Singal. "Mendidik Untuk Kehidupan Berdasarkan Kompetensi Guru Kristen Di Indonesia (Education For Life Based On Christian Teacher Competence In Indonesia)". *QUAERENS: Journal of Theology and Christianity Studies* 2, no. 1 (2020): 62-85.
<https://doi.org/10.46362/quaerens.v2i1.21>.

⁴ Euis Kurniati, Dina Kusumanita Nur Alfaeni Fitri Andriani: *Analisis Peran Orang Tua dalam Mendampingi Anak di Masa Pandemi Covid-19*, *Jurnal Obsesi : Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*,
<https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v5i1.541>; Sutrisno and Christiani Hutabarat. "Orangtua Dan Teman Bermain Terhadap Perkembangan Sosial Anak (Parents And Playing Friends Toward Children Social Development)". *QUAERENS: Journal of Theology and Christianity Studies* 1, no. 1 (2019): 28-55.
<https://doi.org/10.46362/quaerens.v1i1.15>.

⁵ N Nurlaeni, Y Juniarti, Peran Orangtua Dalam Mengembangkan Kemampuan Bahasa Pada Anak Usia 4-6 Tahun, *Jurnal Pelita PAUD* 2 (1), 51-62
<http://jurnal.upmk.ac.id/index.php/pelitapaud/article/view/196>, diakses 14 Juni 2021.

In this study the author specifically discusses the issue of the role of parents in educating children during the Covid-19 pandemic. Since March 2020 schools have started to close and have to learn from home. The Minister of Education has also confirmed that the 2020 odd semester will still start in July 2020 but will still be conducted "online". This means that there are at least 6 months left in the learning process for children from PAUD to tertiary institutions will be carried out at home.

So far, parents do not specifically have a child education program in their family. They are already comfortable with sending their children to formal educational institutions or even churches. Now it's not just formal schools that are conducted online, Sunday schools are also conducted online.

Something that is not prepared will result in something bad. While a good thing, can only happen if carefully prepared and designed. The author believes that now is the time for parents to take radical steps and be truly proactive in carrying out their roles and responsibilities in educating their children.

Methods

Library research is the method that will be used in this research. Meanwhile, in this research stage, the researcher determines the topic, then carries out research related to the theory under study. Next, systematically identify theories, find literature, analyze documents containing information related to the topic. This study uses analysis by means of descriptive analysis. Descriptive analysis is a method of collecting, compiling, classifying/grouping data, then analyzing, and interpreting it according to the context. The author uses an unstructured interview method to collect information from parents and children who attend elementary school who worship at GPI Moriah Gading Serpong, Tangerang Selatan.

Discussion

Etymologically the character comes from the Latin "character" which means Instrument of narking, from the French "charessein" which means "to engrave" (to engrave) and in Indonesian it is defined as "character." Character has the meaning of traits that affect behavior and character.⁶

⁶ Ni Kadek Santya Pratiwi, Pentingnya Peran Orang tua Dalam Pendidikan Karakter Anak usia sekolah dasar, *ADI WIDYA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Volume. 3*, Nomor 1 April 2018, ISSN: 2527-5445,

Character is a trait possessed by a person that influences his behavior and character.

The definition of character education according to Thomas Lickona is a deliberate effort to help someone to understand, pay attention to and carry out core ethical values.⁷ In line with Lickona's understanding, Wyne also focuses on character as applying the value of goodness into actions and behavior.⁸ So it can be said that character education is a conscious effort to instill ethical values that can be realized in good behavior.

Character education is something that is useful for children in the period of growth and development in the field of science. Character education based on human moral values in a strong community environment and strong ethical standards for individuals or groups is indispensable in the education process.⁹ A quality character is a character that has good moral and ethical values.

According to Lickona, there are seven reasons why character education is needed as a way to educate well, namely: 1) The best way to guarantee a child's personality is good in his environment. 2) The best way to improve the quality of children's academic achievement. 3) Not all places can form a strong child's character. 4) How to prepare students to respect others in religious and social life. 5) ways to protect children from root causes related to moral-social problems, such as impoliteness, dishonesty, violence, sexual harassment and a low learning ethic. 6) How to prepare children for good behavior when entering the workforce. 7) Learning cultural values that are part of the work of civilization.¹⁰

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the role of parents is most needed to assist children in character education. Pandemic conditions make the space for activities and

halaman 85, <http://ejournal.ihdn.ac.id/index.php/AW>, diakses pada 15 Juni 2021.

⁷ S. Wening. "Pembentukan Karakter Bangsa Melalui Pendidikan Nilai." *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter* 1 (2012): 1452, <https://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/jpka/article/view/1316/1094>, diakses 14 Juni 2021.

⁸ Sutrisno, Peni Hestiningrum, Marthin Steven Lumingkewas, and Bobby Kurnia Putrawan, "Christian Religious Education Toward The Teenagers Character Building." *EVANGELIKAL: Jurnal Teologi Injili dan Pembinaan Warga Jemaat* 5, no.2 (2021): 202-212. <https://doi.org/10.46445/ejti.v5i2.330>; <https://docplayer.info/36405508-Definisi-karakter-pengertian-karakter-menurut-para-ahli-1-maxwell.html>, diakses pada 15 Juni 2021.

⁹ Christiani Hutabarat and Bobby Kurnia Putrawan. "Pengantar Pola Asuh Orang Tua Dalam Keluarga Kristen." *PNEUMATIKOS: Jurnal Teologi Kependetaan* 11, no.2 (2021): 84-94. <https://stapin.ac.id/e-journal/index.php/pneumatikos/article/view/28>.

¹⁰ Ajat Sudrajat, "Mengapa Pendidikan Karakter?" *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter by Institute of Research and Community Service (LPPM - UNY)*, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21831/jpk.v1i1.1316>, diakses 14 Juni 2021; Sri Wahyuni and Yan Kristianus Kadang. "Mendidik Anak (Educating Children)". *QUAERENS: Journal of Theology and Christianity Studies* 1, no. 2 (2019): 122-143. <https://doi.org/10.46362/quaerens.v1i2.6>.

children's encounters with other people greatly reduced and very limited. In cases like this, the role of parents in carrying out the task of educating children's character must include the following: 1) Educating children to accept and respect themselves, 2) Educate children to be polite to others, and 3) Educating children spiritually through the teaching of Christianity, where Christ is God and savior as an example of living in love. These three things can help shape the character of a good quality child, most children's character is formed during childhood with their families. All child delinquency problems usually arise or are born from the past. Broken home families, divorce, domestic violence are accused of being the cause of juvenile delinquency to criminal acts that occur. On the other hand, the good attitude of the child, love, joy, peace, patience, generosity, kindness, loyalty, gentleness, self-control. These are the things that children must have and are taught from childhood.

The National Policy for Development of National Character 2010-2025 places the house as something very important in the development of the nation's character. In the family and community environment, efforts are made to ensure that there is a process of strengthening from parents/guardians and community leaders to the behavior of noble character developed in the education unit so that it becomes a daily activity at home and in their respective communities.¹¹ This can be done through school committees, parent meetings, parental visits/activities related to a collection of school and family activities aimed at equalizing steps in building character at school, at home, and in the community. Family is the first and foremost place of education for a person. Education in the family plays a very important role in developing character, cultural values, religious and moral values, and simple skills. In this context, the process of socialization and enculturation occurs continuously. It aims to guide children to become human beings who believe, are pious, have noble character, are tough, independent, creative, innovative, have a work ethic, are loyal friends, care about the environment, and so on.¹²

Obstacles for parents in growing their children's character have also been investigated by Unsa Sabrina and the team in their journal article "Constraints in Developing Religious Characters for Elementary School-Aged Children During the

¹¹ Republik Indonesia, Kebijakan Nasional Pembangunan Karakter Bangsa 2010-2025 (Jakarta: Kemko Kesejahteraan Rakyat, 2010), p. 32.

¹² Ibid, 37; Sutrisno, Peni Hestiningrum, Marthin Steven Lumingkewas, and Bobby Kurnia Putrawan, "Christian Religious Education Toward The Teenagers Character Building": 202-212.

Covid-19 Pandemic". This research was conducted at an elementary school in Lau Village, Dawe District, Kudus Regency and obtained information on several obstacles in growing the religious character of elementary school-age children during the Covid 19 Pandemic. This relates to the role of parents in building children's character during the COVID-19 pandemic which can be hampered due to busyness of parents at work, lack of knowledge in educating children in school lessons, lack of awareness of children about the importance of character education and problems relating to children's relationships with their environment.¹³

The development of national character is a big idea that was sparked by the founders of the nation because as a nation consisting of various ethnic groups with strong regional nuances, the Indonesian people need a common view of culture and a holistic character as a nation. This is very important because it involves a common understanding, views, and steps to realize the welfare and prosperity of all Indonesian people.¹⁴ In the context of education, efforts to pay more attention to this aspect of character are carried out by adding the phrase "morality" behind Religious Education so that it becomes Christian Religion and Character Education, as well as other religions as well.¹⁵ This means that character education is the responsibility of all parties, namely the government, schools, churches and families. The government has set a priority, as well as schools and churches, but unfortunately there are still many households that have not set and thought seriously about character education at home. In fact, children spend much of their childhood at home.

The family is the first and foremost environment where parents act as the main actors and role models for children. The process can be done in the form of education, parenting, habituation, and example. Character education within the family scope can also be carried out to the community of prospective parents by including knowledge and skills, especially in the care and guidance of children.¹⁶ Home is actually the best

¹³ Unsa Sabrina, Sekar Dwi Ardianti, Diana Ermawati, Kendala dalam Menumbuhkan Karakter Religius Anak Usia Sekolah Dasar selama Pandemi Covid 19, *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Research & Learning in Education* Volume 3 Nomor 5 Tahun 2021 Halm 3079 – 3089, DOI : <https://doi.org/10.31004/edukatif.v3i5.1233>, diakses pada 15 Juni 2021.

¹⁴ Republik Indonesia, Kebijakan Nasional Pembangunan Karakter Bangsa 2010-2025 (Jakarta: Kemko Kesejahteraan Rakyat, 2010), 1.

¹⁵ Daniel Nuhamara, "Pengutamaan Dimensi Karakter Dalam Pendidikan Agama Kristen," *Jurnal Jaffray* April 2018, no. Vol. 16, No. 1 (2018): 94.

¹⁶ Republik Indonesia, Kebijakan Nasional Pembangunan Karakter Bangsa 2010-2025 (Jakarta: Kemko Kesejahteraan Rakyat, 2010), 5.

place for children to grow. Sometimes parents are forced to provide very limited time for their children. In the end, they argued that they could only provide “quality time” or quality time. The time given to children may be short and sometimes only the remaining time is left, but the important thing is quality. In fact, quality time can only be produced by a time that is used well or "quantity time". Through relaxing time and playing with children can actually give birth to big things, which in the end is called quality time. The process of a deep relationship between parents and children cannot be forced. Relationships should be natural and should not be suspicious of each other. In addition, a beautiful relationship is also based on the sincerity of both parties and a sense of mutual need.

Home is a place to live where the most appropriate to educate children. Why is that? Children spend most of their time at home. They also directly see the example and example of their parents. This means that a great opportunity in educating children is at home, not outside. The example of parents, harmonious parental relationships and happiness in dealing with other members is an invaluable investment in educating children who are personally superior as expected by their parents. Therefore, it is very important for parents to have broad insight in educating their children.

Results

Based on the results of a review, some children aged up to 18 years in Indonesia spend 60-80% of their time with their families. Love in the family for children up to the age of 18 years is very necessary.¹⁷ The time that is owned by parents to educate children's character is very sufficient. During the current Covid-19 pandemic, children spend all their time under the supervision of their parents.

In the research conducted at this writing, the researchers focused on parents and children who were at GPI Moriah Gading Serpong Sunday school, South Tangerang. The author collects data from parents and children who attend Sunday school at GPI Moriah through unstructured interviews. Observations and data collection were carried out from December 2020 to April 2021. Researchers conducted research on 5 parents and 5 children who attend elementary school. From the results of the interview, the authors

¹⁷ Ni Kadek Santya Pratiwi, Pentingnya Peran Orang tua Dalam Pendidikan Karakter Anak usia sekolah dasar, *ADI WIDYA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar* 3, no.1 (2018): 83-90, <http://ejournal.ihtn.ac.id/index.php/AW>, halaman 88, diakses pada 15 Juni 2021.

found that there were similarities between the 5 parents who felt overwhelmed by dividing the tasks to work and supervising children learning online from home. Parents tend to be tougher on children because of the difficulty in directing children in learning and parents' weaknesses in children's educational knowledge. 3 out of 5 parents also feel overwhelmed in paying for their children's schooling and meeting their children's needs during the pandemic. Parents tend to find it difficult to direct children with calmer and kinder characters for children, so sometimes children also feel annoyed and depressed with online school conditions which make their characters more lazy and also depressed. The children interviewed also stated that studying from home during the covid-19 pandemic made them miss gathering and socializing with friends at school and worshipping together at Sunday school with other friends. Since covid-19 and having to move from home, the situation is not so pleasant because of the limited space and movement to play and worship because parents are also getting busy taking care of their work. So based on the results of the interview above, the author found that character education of children during the COVID-19 pandemic can be influenced by the role of parents in accompanying children and protecting children at home. Good examples are also difficult to give to children because of the circumstances of their parents who are also economically depressed because of work. The weakness of parents to direct their children to pray and worship regularly in the family also affects the spiritual development of the child's character. The researcher sees that parents' awareness of the importance of educating children's character during the COVID-19 pandemic must be further increased for the benefit of the nation's intelligent and virtuous children. A good child's character will enable the child to face various situations and problems that will occur in the future. Parents must be aware that educating children is very important, and it is the responsibility of parents that cannot be transferred to other parties. With such an understanding, parents will agree and really fight to be able to educate their children in their homes. Parents must have a strong desire and commitment to do all that.

The Government of the Republic of Indonesia also has a strong determination in building the character of the Indonesian nation. This is contained in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 17 of 2007, concerning the national long-term development plan for 2005-2025. Even though it has been running for 5 years, there is

no guarantee that the components of the nation have realized this movement, and that they have an adequate understanding of what character is and how to develop it.¹⁸

Doing good means that after careful and earnest consideration of all relevant circumstances and facts, we have the will to act. Our world is full of people who know the right thing, what to do, but lack the will to do it. They know what is good, but cannot lead them to do good.¹⁹ By understanding what character education is and its goals, it is clear that character education is not just the transmission of knowledge, but a deeper and complex process, which allows them to like and love what is good, for example by looking at examples and influences from the social environment (school culture, family and faith community) as well as the opportunity to familiarize these characters, such as caring for the needs of others. That is why in the school context there is a program called "service learning" where students are given the opportunity to serve and learn these habits which then become their habits (habit). This is where the character awakens and takes shape.²⁰

Being an example in the home can not be an example but the whole life in the home is an example. We can't cover up our situation. Even a very personal thing, when we are angry, disappointed, hopeless, fickle and like to change is something that can be witnessed by all family members, especially children. They are recording our lives and becoming tools to return to us when we speak out of tune with our actions.

Directing children's potential according to their talents and interests, giving choices and discussing heart to heart with children is one way to combine the two extreme things above. If the child already has a complete picture of the parents and self-confidence will be a booster for the child to become what they want.

In care theory, we are interested in the formation of caring relations, and a relation requires two parties—not just a single agent who “cares” or “has cares.” As we study the nature of caring relations, we ask what characterizes the consciousness and behavior of the carer (or one caring) and that of the cared-for (person receiving care).²¹

¹⁸ Daniel Nuhamara, Pengutamaan Dimensi Karakter Dalam Pendidikan Agama Kristen, *JURNAL JAFFRAY* Available Online at Vol. 16, No. 1 (April 2018): 93-114, <http://dx.doi.org/10.25278/jj71.v16i1.278>.

¹⁹ Ibid, 102.

²⁰ Ibid, 110.

²¹ Nel Noddings, "Caring And Moral Education," dalam *Handbook of Moral and Character Education*, ed. Larry P. Nucci, Darcia Narvaez (New York, Ny 10016: Routledge, 2008), 162.

Children, however, need parental guidance. The key word is how to be their best friend. If we parents are able to be friends with our children at the same time, we are able to enter into a deeper relationship with our children. Children's trust must be maintained and should not be disappointed. Children who are aware of their worth from the start will be able to find their calling and reach it. There are still many children who until adulthood physically do not know the direction and purpose of their lives. Imagine all the training that was given to him, it turned out not to be in line with what our children really wanted, it was very sad. The opportunity to truly serve our children is a gift. This opportunity must be used as well as possible. In addition, we must believe that all the good we do will bear good fruit. This is a hope and hope in the Lord is never in vain. That hope is a strong and secure anchor for our souls, which has been anchored behind the veil (Hebrews 6:19) And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Rom. 5:5).

Conclusion

Something good is not automatic. If parents do not have good planning in the process of educating their children, this condition is a very dangerous condition. Allowing them to grow naturally only brings in poor quality children. Yet it is clear that children do not belong to us. Children are the property of God entrusted to our families. We must be responsible for educating children to those who have children, namely God himself. The pandemic period that requires children to study from home has been decided to be extended until December 2020. If we believe that nothing happens by chance on this earth, then this is a strong warning to parents to immediately and seriously prepare for character education for children at home. Even later when this pandemic has been overcome, character education for children at home must still be a high priority. We know now that all things work together for good to those who love Him, to those who are called according to God's purpose (Rom. 8:28).

Even if we enter into temptation God never leaves us alone. The trials you experience are ordinary trials, which do not exceed human strength. For God is faithful and therefore He will not allow you to be tempted beyond your strength. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out, so that you can endure it (1 Cor 10:13).

Christ Jesus is not the only solution for all spiritual things. The Lord Jesus is the solution to all problems faced by mankind. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance. He wants us to live in it (Ephesians 2:10). So always expect the best, do the best, and believe that God has given the best. If we experience what we think is not the best, let us look at our point of view so that we adjust to the point of view of the Lord Jesus who always gives the best to us. Do not be conformed to this world, but be changed by the renewal of your mind, so that you may discern what is God's will: what is good, pleasing to God and perfect (Rom 12:2).

Doing the best, starting with good planning and with a high commitment to ensure the best results. However, we as believers must truly entrust ourselves to God. God is sovereign and trustworthy. He is a solid rock that is the basis of our faith and trust in living this life.

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