

THE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS IN THE CHILDREN'S CARE PROCESS; A COMPARISON OF VARIOUS COUNTRIES

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Abstract. *To be a parent means to put the commitment of time and unselfish self during serving as a parent as well as spouse, part of big family, friends, and colleagues. Someone is becoming a parent because adults have been prepared to respond positively to the existing of a baby as well as strong community drive as the influence to have children. This article is aiming at describing the parental involvement in child care influenced by culture and geographical location of their living. This article is formulated using literature study on child care practices around the world. Parent is defined as individuals who provide care, protection, and guidance since the baby until growing up. During conducting their role in providing care, guidance and needs fulfillment, the parent is very much influenced by culture and geographical location. Therefore the role and parental involvement in child care practice are unique in every region/country.*

Keywords: *involvement, care, child, parent.*

Abstrak. *Menjadi orang tua berarti menempatkan komitmen waktu dan tak mementingkan diri sendiri selama berperan sebagai orang tua dan suami/istri, bagian dari keluarga besar, teman dan kolega. Seseorang yang sedang menjadi orang tua dikarenakan masa dewasa yakni sudah disediakan untuk merespon secara positif kehadiran bayi. Juga dukungan dan pengaruh kuat dari masyarakat agar memiliki anak. Artikel ini bertujuan menggambarkan keterlibatan orang tua dalam mengasuh anak yang dipengaruhi oleh kebudayaan dan lokasi geografis tempat tinggal. Artikel ini disusun menggunakan studi pustaka tentang praktik pengasuhan anak di dunia. Orang tua diartikan sebagai individu yang memberikan kepedulian, perlindungan dan arahan sejak bayi hingga tumbuh dewasa. Selama berperan memberi perawatan, arahan dan memenuhi kebutuhan anak, orang tua sangat dipengaruhi oleh budaya dan lokasi geografis. Maka dari itu, peran dan keterlibatan orang tua dalam praktik mengasuh anak bersifat unik di setiap daerah/negara.*

Kata Kunci: *keterlibatan, pengasuhan, anak, orang tua.*

Introduction

Speaking of the relationship between parents and children, will you apply for the following positions?

Wanted: Caregivers to raise one or two children from birth to adulthood. Duration of work: 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. There is no salary or bonus for illness or vacation, there is no pension plan. Caregivers must provide all expenses for themselves and for children, even if they cannot accompany a smaller child even for only a few minutes, the caregiver must provide a substitute. There is no chance to meet with the children before to get a match. The motivation for work and satisfaction must come from the caregiver themselves because both of the children and the community will not show their gratitude and appreciation regularly.

The ad above illustrates the time commitment and selflessness of work that affects the lives of parents, while at the same time they act as husband and wife and partner, part of the extended family, friends, and workers. Most parents will say that parenting never stops. They feel that throughout their lives, they will try to help their children to grow and be happy. So why is this role carried out?

A person becomes a parent for several reasons: first, adults have been prepared to respond positively to the presence of the baby (Kringelbach et al., 2008). All types of young species have baby characteristics, such as bigger head, forehead, and eyes more prominent, cheeks fatter, shorter limbs than the torso, and there are awkward traits in their movements. Nerve imaging in the adult brain obtained from research conducted by Hotz (2008) shows that adults are attracted to babies and respond positively when they see a baby. Everyone's interest in the baby is not the same and the fact that there is a biological contribution in that attraction does not mean that people have to have children. This research only shows that in addition to social guidance, there is the possibility of a biological contribution to the role of parents.

Second, the existence of strong community encouragement is the main influence to have children. The community needs children to be able to develop at the same time sustainably, so this gives positive value pressure to have children. More than a job or a marriage, the community describes the position of parents as a sign of maturity (Hoffman & Manis, 1979). Social pressure on the role of parents varies throughout history and across cultures. Recently, in several countries such as Europe and Japan, pressure has increased due to a reduced population (McNeil Jr., 2004). In our society,

most couples really hope to have children.

When we ask both men and women or parents and non-parents, they give similar reasons about why they have children and these reasons appear in similar arrangements within different ethnic groups (Hoffman & Manis, 1979). People want children for reasons, as follows:

1. To love and also feel close
2. To feel the pleasure of seeing a child's growth and also in developing new abilities
3. To feel a greater understanding of their growth, and also become more sensitive as well as more attentive
4. To satisfy people's expectations for their role as an adult and responsible person
5. To feel the creativity and achievement in helping a child's growth
6. To meet the expectations of moral or religious
7. To get a greater sense of security during illness or old age

The reasons given by couples who do not want to have children are centered on three main factors (Michaels, 1988), namely as follows:

1. Limitations (loss of freedom, loss of time for other activities, and increased workload)
2. Negative feelings related to children (worrying about children's health and well-being, discipline difficulties, fear of disappointment in the child or in themselves as parents)
3. Worried that the child did not get good attention.

Interestingly, the difficulties and limitations faced by parents to have children do not hinder closeness which is the main reason for parents to want the presence of children in their lives. When talking about parents' activities in helping their children to grow, as well as the work and effort done, it would be wise to remember that there are more satisfaction and pleasure than the problems encountered in the parenting process.

Method

This article is prepared using the literature study method as well as related documents. The literature includes books, journal articles, or other types of writing and the results of studies on various documents related to the topic of parental involvement in the process of childcare; comparison in various countries.

Results and Discussion

Parents are defined as individuals who care, protect and guide from infancy to the adult stage (Morris, 1969). In line with this view, Bornstein (2002) states that parents are those who engage in “lasting interventions and commitments throughout a long period of development in a child’s life” to provide responsibility and attention that includes:

1. Affection and ongoing relationships with children
2. Material needs such as food, clothing, and shelter
3. Access medical needs
4. Responsible discipline, avoid accidents and scathing criticism and also dangerous physical punishment
5. Intellectual and moral education
6. Preparation for responsibility as an adult
7. Responsible for children’s actions to the wider community

When the first time a woman and a man decide to become parents, that mean that they will relate to each other’s ways with their children, father and mother will do things that are different from and for their children (Thompson and Walker, 1991). It’s like a custom when a child is born into this world, then at the same time there is hope from people towards their children. The hope will then provide a variety of attitudes and actions of parents towards their children. International studies (Feinstein, L. Duckworth, K, and Sabates, 2004) show that parental education influences expectations; parents with higher education are significantly associated with higher expectations of their children’s achievements.

This is in line with the study that conducted by Gutman, L.M., and Akerman, R. (2008) which shows that: (i) parents’ perceptions of skills and abilities influence expectations in their children, (ii) parents with high expectations will be more deeply involved in children’s education, (iii) most parents have high expectations for their children, but these expectations often change as children grow up because of economic limitations, children’s abilities and available opportunities, and (iv) expectations become stronger predictors of learning outcomes than socio-economic settings.

Baumrind & Thompson in Bornstein (2002) revealed that the basic role of parents is responsible for the care of their children. Parents pay attention in direct interaction with their children, for example by feeding them, teaching them, and also playing with them. They also pay attention through indirect actions that can arise in various forms, for example parents play a role as advisors to children in life in the community by ensuring

good school and education for children, as well as determining playmates for children in their neighborhood (Bornstein; Damon & Lerner in Renninger & Sigel, 2006).

The role taken by the mother is more dominant than the father, at least indicated by the results of research conducted by Han and Jun (2013), found that mothers engage more inattention (expression) and guidance/counseling compared to fathers. In the social environment in Indonesia, in general, the role of the mother in caring for, and guiding children is more dominant, even being the main task, compared to fathers. At least the scene can be seen in plain view when the child enters the beginning of school (kindergarten/ elementary school), or when there is a the crowd of mothers in the shopping center of school clothes or stationery, or also when mothers take their children to school as if it were become a normal sight. Not only that, but what is far more important is how a mother educates her children in teaching life and helps her children who are of school age to be able to undergo additional activities because of the conditions that have entered school. For example, the role of mothers in the form of helping children to do homework assignments, as well as the role of mothers in helping to develop basic academic abilities needed in school, like reading and counting.

Parental involvement has more important functions than other aspects. The study conducted by Desforges, C. and Abouchaar, A. (2003) shows that parental involvement has a more positive effect on children's learning outcomes even when the influence of background factors such as social class and family size is taken into account. In line with this, a study conducted by Duckworth, K. (2008) shows that parents' behavior has a greater influence than school quality. Even studies conducted by Peters, M., et al. (2008) show that 66% of parents feel the need to be more involved in the school life of their children, both who feel they have been involved or not involved before.

Not only the role of delivering and providing learning facilities for children, parents especially mothers are often involved in the child's learning process, generally in the role of helping children to complete their homework and reading skills. The study conducted by Peter, M, et al. (2008) shows that almost 60% of parents feel so important to help children in doing homework even with the title 'every time' or 'most times'.

In addition to the role of the mother in her involvement in helping children in the academic field and providing facilities, a house is a place where children learn to recognize language and communicate. Mother is the first figure in introducing language and communication to children. The initial vocabulary owned by children is an important capital for children in shaping their knowledge about life.

Research conducted by Sue Roulstone, et al. (2010) concerning the role of language in the results of children's education showed 5 important findings, namely (i) the close relationship between children's social background and readiness for school which was seen from the achievement of scores in language skills, reading, mathematics, and writing, (ii) language development at the age of 2 years predicting children's ability to enter elementary school, (iii) the child's communication environment influences language development, (iv) communication environment is a more dominant predictor of language skills the beginning of the social environment, and (v) children's language and communication environment affect children's performance while at school in addition to their social setting.

How do fathers and mothers share a role in making parenting, mentoring and meeting the needs of their children is very influenced by the culture and the place where they are located. The study conducted by Finley and Schwartz (2006) on the function of fathers in Asia, shows that fathers are more involved in the instrumental dimension than the dimensions of expression (feeling). Meanwhile, the study conducted by Toth and Xu on American fathers who speak Spanish (Hispanic; Latin American) found that fathers participated more in the cognitive domain such as introducing family rules and supervising homework.

In contrast to the research conducted by Noor (1999) on the involvement of parents from Chinese and Malaysian families who are on peninsular Malaysia, it shows that in general, mothers spend more time relating to children's tasks compared to fathers.

Meanwhile, studies conducted by Han and Jun (2013) regarding children's perceptions of their parents (mothers and fathers) in families in Malaysia showed that mothers were more involved in expersive aspects (feelings) and supervision/ advice compared to fathers, while in the instrument's aspects both roles do not show significant differences.

The study conducted by Kim & Hoppe-Graff (2001) in the South Korean community found that the Confucian influence still had a strong influence on maternal responsibility for childcare and socialization, and even continued to be increasingly influential as the child's age progressed. According to Confucianism, the husband is the head of the family, so he has the main authority to decide on family matters, while the wife is a subordinate to the husband in almost all matters "to him in nearly all affairs". But, on the other hand, the wife is an "inner master", whose authority is specifically accepted in matters of household affairs and family relations. On this basis, the term

is known that the authority of the husband is based on power structures, while the authority of the wife is based on emotional competence. Therefore, the relationship between father, mother and also with their children will be fundamentally different.

Other research on family issues in 6 Asian countries, such as in India, China, Malaysia, Vietnam, Japan and the Philippines also found the fact that in all six countries, mothers remained more involved than fathers in terms of childcare and emotional support for children. Mother is a key player in mediating father-child relationships, but the role of breadwinners is still the central identity of Asian men. Culture and religion in Asia are unique aspects that shape the ideological system of fatherhood (Yeung, 2013).

Conclusion

Being a parent has endless responsibilities. The reason behind the desire of adults to become parents is the reason for biological readiness and sociological reasons, in the form of demands from the community. Being a parent means becoming individuals who provide care, protection, and guidance for their children. Parents consisting of fathers and mothers must work together to contribute in providing care for their children. Parental involvement will be influenced by the culture and geographical location of their residence, so that each location/country will have a unique value and culture in terms of childcare, such as in Asian countries, the role of fathers will be more dominant in providing physical needs of children and also for other family members, while mothers provide emotional needs. In Latin American countries, fathers will play a role in introducing rules that must be followed, while the mother will play a more active role in the dimension of feeling or expression of feelings.

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