Building the Confident Character of Children Aged 5-6 Years Through Single Parent (Mother) Parenting at Ra Fahlevi

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Abstract

This study aims to describe how single parenting (mother) can shape self-confidence in children aged 5-6 years. The method used is a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. The research subjects consisted of two families with single parent status (mother) who have children aged 5-6 years at RA Fahlevi. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. This study is expected to demonstrate that the role of single parents is very necessary in shaping the self-confidence of children aged 5-6 years. The results of the study indicate that loving, consistent parenting, and open communication from single mothers play an important role in fostering children's self-confidence.

Keywords: Single-parent; Parenting; Character; Self Confident.

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Introduction

Children are a gift from Allah SWT and a mandate that must be maintained so that their growth and development are optimal (Habiburrahman, 2024). Early childhood is at an important phase in character formation and requires the guidance of parents and teachers. Character education from an early age helps children have a good attitude and be ready to face the times. One of the important aspects is self-confidence, which affects children's mental, social, and success (Rohma, 2018).

Parents play a major role in shaping children's confidence through proper parenting. Early life (5–6 years) is a sensitive period that requires special attention. At this time, symptoms of delinquency appear. Parents need to provide proper parenting during this period, because this is a period of formation for children. Parental parenting for children is actually a form of communication or interaction between children and parents during parenting, which means that is where the role of parents is in educating, guiding, and disciplining children to reach maturity in accordance with the norms that apply in the community. Parenting is a form of parental interaction in educating, guiding, and disciplining children (Suryameng et al., 2020). Being a single parent, especially for a mother, is a big challenge because she has to bear the dual responsibility of caring for and meeting the needs of the family.

These challenges often cause pressure both physically and mentally. It is not uncommon for a single mother to have to sacrifice her personal time, endure fatigue, and still display stubbornness in front of her children so that they feel that everything is under control. However, behind all these difficulties, many single mothers show incredible resilience. They are clear proof that a mother's affection and determination are able to transcend various limitations.

One of the main inhibiting factors in the decision to become a single parent is economic factors. Caring for children, especially at the age of 5-6 years, requires a lot of costs ranging from health needs, education, to daily needs. This condition becomes even more difficult when all these responsibilities must be borne by only one parent. Not infrequently, economic limitations make parents rethink making the decision to separate, because they are worried that they will not be able to meet their children's needs optimally.

Some of the effects that are feared can arise include children becoming less confident, having difficulty interacting socially, or showing regressive behavior, such as re-wetting the bed, irritability, or tantrums. This concern is very natural, because at an early age, children still need emotional stability and the presence of a complete parent figure as the basis for character formation and a sense of security.

Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2018, as many as 15.7% of households in Indonesia are headed by women. Most of them became heads of families due to the death of their husbands, with a percentage of 67.17%. In addition, in August 2020, the divorce rate was recorded at 306,688% of cases (Prihatin, 2020), which indicates that the number of single mothers in Indonesia has increased from year to year.

The parenting style applied by single parents has a significant influence on the development of children's character, including the aspect of self-confidence. Children who grow up in families with single parents tend to be more susceptible to various emotional and social problems (Ramanda, Rini, & Oktaria, 2020). In this context, self-confidence plays an important role in helping children become more independent individuals. Therefore, comprehensive support from parents, teachers, and the surrounding environment is needed to help children develop confidence, so that they can grow into individuals who are confident in their abilities and the results of every effort they make (Rozana et al., 2021).

There are three main things that parents need to have in parenting, namely: attention, control and development. Attention, for example, is related to a number of activities aimed at supporting the sustainability of children's development such as the provision of physical facilities, emotional support such as love and social needs such as a sense of responsibility. Control, for example, is related to the activity of maintaining boundaries to the child while still considering the age and personality characteristics of the child. Meanwhile, development,

referring to activities carried out by parents encourages children to discover their potential and abilities and develop them (Widya, 2020). Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of the role of single parents in building early childhood confidence in order to grow into independent and confident individuals.

Literature Review

The theory used in this study discusses building the confident character of children aged 5-6 years through single-parent parenting.

2.1.Early Childhood

According to Hurlock **(**in Munisa, 2020) Early childhood is a child who is in a unique process of growth and development, in the sense that it has a growth and development pattern (fine and gross motor coordination), intelligence (thinking, creativity, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence), social-emotional (attitudes and behaviors as well as religion), language and communication specifically according to the child's growth and development level.

Early childhood is known as the golden age period, because in this age range children experience very rapid and rapid growth and development, both in terms of physical, cognitive, linguistic, social-emotional, and spiritual (Suryana, 2016). This period is very important because it is the main foundation for the formation of children's personality, attitudes, and intellectual potential. All stimulation given to children in this phase will greatly affect their readiness to face the next stage of education, as well as in forming character and intelligence as a whole. Therefore, proper education and care in early childhood is crucial so that children can grow and develop optimally according to their developmental stages.

2.2.Confident Character

Increasing children's confidence is important in their developmental process, especially at the age of 5-6 years. Early Childhood Education (PAUD) has a crucial role in shaping children's character and social skills, including self-confidence. Referring to Permendikbud 137 of 2014 which means self-confidence, which is to show one's ability to adjust to the situation, show enthusiasm in doing competitive games positively, know one's own feelings and manage them reasonably and express emotions in accordance with existing conditions.

Confidence is a form of a supportive environment except in certain cases due to genetic deviations. The confidence that your little one has has a huge influence on various joints of his life and thoughts. Confidence will produce the courage to act and take initiative, so that your little one's creativity will increase. Creativity that is manifested in social patterns and in the social environment will provide a whole new atmosphere. Confidence is a belief or belief in the abilities that are possessed, interpreted and expressed in their lives. Children can be said to be confident if children can dare to appear in front of them, children are able to do their own tasks, children are proud of their homemade works, and children can express and defend their opinions. (Wahyuni, 2017)

2.3.Parenting

Parenting is a form of interaction between parents and children during parenting activities that take place, parents guide, educate, lead and discipline children to reach maturity and be able to adapt to the existing environment and understand applicable norms. Parents have a very important role in the development of moral behavior in children, because the first basis of moral behavior is obtained by children from within the home. The development process through education in schools only continues existing developments.

Single parent parenting caused by death causes children to have different social development compared to children raised from intact families. Parents with a living divorce status cause the child to be traumatized because the child finds out how his parents can no longer be together. This will have consequences for children's development, because children know what problems exist in their families (Erlina Setyani, 2019).

According to Baumrind (in Kurniawan, 2017), it is explained that there are three types of parenting, namely authoritarian, permissive, and democratic. First, authoritarian parenting, has characteristics such as the power of dominant parents, children are not recognized as individuals, control over children's behavior is very strict, parents will often punish if children do not obey. Second, permissive parenting, has characteristics such as parents giving full freedom to the child to act, dominance in the child, loose attitude or freedom from parents, no guidance and direction from parents, parental control and attention to the child is very lacking or even non-existent. Third, democratic parenting has characteristics, parents encourage children to talk about what they want, there is cooperation between parents and children, children are recognized as individuals, there is guidance and direction from parents and there is control from parents who are not rigid.

2.4.Single Parents (Single Parents)

According to Hurlock (in Apriani, 2020), a single parent is a parent who has been widowed or widowed, either a father or a mother who assumes responsibility for raising children due to separation due to the death of a spouse and the occurrence of divorce. Based on Hurlock's theory, it is explained that the existence of a single parent or commonly referred to as "Single Parent" means a child who is taken care of by a single mother, loses his father figure due to divorce, or death which results in the loss of a protective figure for his family and a reduction in the rights that should be obtained by the child.

Single parents who have knowledge and experience about good parenting in raising and guiding their children are certainly different from parents who lack knowledge and experience in raising their children, single parents usually have to go extra or take the trouble to take care of their children, especially if they are done alone without the help of others. Single parents must choose a specific parenting style for their child because parenting affects the child's development, both biological and psychological. Raising children is completely the responsibility of parents. According to Sary (2021), being a single parent is more difficult for a mother than for a father.

Research Methodology

This research from building the confident character of 5-6 year old children through single parents at RA Fahlevi is very important to identify the role of single parents in building early childhood confidence through parenting and emotional support. By understanding the role of single parents in building children's confident character, it is hoped that effective strategies can be found to support children's development optimally.

This study uses a qualitative methodology with a descriptive approach to build early childhood confidence through single parents and find out whether or not there are factors that are obstacles in parents to foster confidence in children. This research was carried out at RA Fahlevi Jl.Gaharu No.91, Jati Makmur, North Binjai District, Binjai City

The main source of data in this study was 2 single parents. In addition, the study also involved two teachers as supporting informants to strengthen the findings. The data collection technique was obtained through in-depth interview techniques with informants, while secondary data or complementary data were obtained through searching journal articles, documentation and direct observation of children in the school environment. The data was analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model through the stages of data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions.

Discussion

Early childhood has its own characteristics, namely having an egocentric nature, considerable curiosity, social beings, having uniqueness, having the power of concentration, having imagination and fantasy, having the potential to learn Early childhood characteristics are

very important to be formed, so that children can know and learn good values, so that educational goals can be achieved optimally. Quality characters need to be formed from an early age, because early age is an important period for the formation of a person's character. Failure to instill character in a person will form problematic characters in the future (Utami, 2022)

One of the character formation needed by early childhood is confidence. According to Lauster (in Widjaya, 2017) several aspects of self-confidence such as believing in one's own abilities, acting independently in making decisions, having a positive sense of oneself, and daring to express opinions. Early childhood confidence is not only formed in the child itself, but also helped to be developed at home with the right and effective parenting style. This is because parents are a place for children to develop what they have in themselves according to their age before they get to know early childhood education. Therefore, it is important for parents to understand a good and suitable parenting style for children that has a positive impact on children.

However, basically not all children have complete parents. This can happen due to several factors, one of which is divorce. Divorce can change the family structure to be incomplete with the loss of one of the parental figures. Divorce can interfere with childcare because parents have difficulty monitoring and supervising children in implementing confidence and diminishing parental affection. Divorce can increase depression, anxiety and stress thereby lowering the ability of parents to be good parents in the family.

Based on the results of interviews with a mother who plays the role of a single parent and several teachers at RA Fahlevi, it was obtained that there were two children who showed a low level of confidence. Both children tend to be hesitant to express opinions, reluctant to perform in front of their peers, and often seem dependent on others to complete simple tasks in class. This condition is suspected to not appear suddenly, but is influenced by various interrelated and quite complex factors. One of the main factors identified is the child's social environment. Based on the teacher's account, these children often experience unpleasant treatment from peers, such as being underestimated, ostracized, or even ignored when playing or studying together. This kind of social situation can slowly form feelings of inferiority and fear of interacting, thus hindering the development of their confidence.

In addition to social factors, the family's status as a child of a single parent also has the potential to have its own influence on the child's psychological condition. Changes in family structure, limited parental time, and emotional stress that children may experience can reinforce feelings of insecurity and lower confidence. Therefore, attention and a more empathetic approach are needed from teachers and the surrounding environment so that these children can grow up in a supportive atmosphere, full of acceptance, and provide space for the development of their confidence.

There are several types of parenting styles that can be applied by single parents and mothers in building children's confidence. In general, parenting (Parenting Style) is the way parents educate, guide, and interact with children in their daily lives. Experts like Diana Baumrind (2010) grouping three main types of parenting, which were later further developed by several experts.

1. Authoritarian Parenting

   Authoritarian parenting is a way of educating children that emphasizes complete obedience, discipline, and control from parents. In this pattern, parents have clear and strict rules, and expect the child to obey them without asking many questions. For some parents, this parenting style is born not from a desire to pressure their children, but from a sense of responsibility and concern for their future. Parents want their children to grow up to be polite, disciplined, and strong individuals to face life's challenges, especially if they have to live life in difficult conditions, like single mothers struggling alone.

2. Authoritative Parenting

Democratic parenting is often considered the most balanced form of parenting in which affection, discipline, and freedom go hand in hand. In this pattern, parents not only become regulators, but also companions who provide space for children to learn to think, choose, and take responsibility for their actions. For many parents, including single mothers, democratic parenting is a way to raise children who are brave, confident, and have high empathy.

3. Permissive Parenting

Permissive parenting is a parenting style in which parents give the child wide freedom, with few rules and supervision. Permissive parents are usually very gentle, loving, and do not like to scold or reprimand children. They prefer to understand rather than reprimand, and often try to avoid conflict in order to maintain a harmonious relationship with the child. For some single mothers, this pattern appears not because of a lack of attention, but because of a strong desire for the child to feel happy and not lack affection.

In the interviews that have been conducted, it can be seen that single parents, especially mothers at RA Fahlevi, apply democratic parenting in forming confident characters in children. For them, democratic parenting is not just about providing clear rules or directed freedom, but also an approach that prioritizes two-way communication, respect for children's opinions, and warm but firm mentoring.

The two mothers who became informants explained that they tried to present an emotionally safe home atmosphere, where children felt heard and appreciated. They invite children to discuss when making simple decisions such as choosing clothes, setting study times, or resolving small conflicts. Through this active involvement, children learn to recognize themselves, understand their needs, and dare to express their opinions without fear. In addition, mothers also emphasized the importance of giving space for children to try and take roles according to their abilities. Although children may still make mistakes frequently, mothers try to be patient and provide explanations, not harsh punishments. This way, children can learn from their experiences without losing confidence. Overall, the democratic parenting style applied by single parents is an important foundation in shaping children's independence, responsibility, and confidence from an early age. This approach helps children grow as individuals who are confident in their abilities and are able to face challenges with a positive attitude.

According to the results of the interview with Mrs. B, since her son was 5 years old, he emphasized small daily discussions as a means to build children's confidence. When the child faces a mistake or failure, Mrs. B does not scold, but talks about it gently so that the child understands the experience as a lesson.

"What is important to me is that he feels his opinion is valued. When children feel heard, they become more courageous to try new things," she added. She always invites her children to express their opinions and desires, for example choosing their own clothes or deciding on games at home. "I always tell him, 'You can choose, but let's think together if it's safe and good.' That way, my child learns to make his own decisions while feeling supported," said Mrs. B.

According to Mrs. I, she tries to combine democratic parenting with an interactive play and learning routine at home.

"We often role-play or read books together. After that, I usually ask her opinion, for example, what the character in the story should do. From there, he learned to dare to express his thoughts and feel that his opinion was appreciated," said Mrs. I.

He also emphasized the importance of a balance between giving direction and giving freedom. She lets her son try new things, such as drawing or crafting, while still providing gentle guidance when needed. "My son has learned that he can try anything, but he still has

responsibilities. With this pattern, he grows more confident, but still understands the limits," he explained.

What Mrs. I means by understanding boundaries is the child's ability to recognize which behaviors are allowed and which are not, without always having to be reminded. For example, your child knows that he can explore and try new things, but he still has to tidy up the toy when he's done, ask permission before using certain items, or stop when an activity starts to harm him. By understanding boundaries, children learn that freedom goes hand in hand with responsibility. He feels trusted, but also understands the rules that help him stay safe, respect others, and take care of his surroundings.

The story of Mother B and Mother I shows that democratic parenting is very effective for single parents who want to build their child's confidence from the age of 5-6. Children who are raised with this pattern will feel appreciated, heard, learn to be responsible, dare to express themselves and be able to face challenges with confidence. Ultimately, democratic parenting is not just about rules or freedom, but how parents express love, support, and direction wisely, so that children grow up to be independent, confident, and empathetic individuals.

Results

At an early age, children are in a golden age that greatly determines the direction of their development. This is the phase when they begin to recognize various emotions, understand the surrounding environment, as well as build an initial image of who they are. From the way they play, speak, and express their desires, it is evident that children are trying to understand their role in the small world they are just exploring. Therefore, every form of attention, response, and assistance from parents becomes so meaningful and leaves a strong mark on children's emotional memory.

For single parents, especially mothers who have to juggle dual roles as fathers and mothers at the same time, this challenge feels more complex. They not only manage the physical needs of the family, but also become a place that provides a sense of security, love, and value for children. In the time constraints that are sometimes rushed, exhaustion from work, to the emotional pressure that arises from great responsibility, they still try to provide a warm and supportive parenting.

Even though they have to bear many things themselves, single parents still try to keep the atmosphere of the house warm and loving. They took the time, even if it was briefly, to listen to the children's stories about the day's activities. In between, they give small, sincere compliments when children tidy up toys or try new things. They also encourage children to dare to ask questions, try, and not be afraid of being wrong. From all those simple efforts, it can be seen how they slowly and consistently build children's confidence.

When children show doubts or fears, for example when facing new tasks, getting acquainted with friends, or having to appear in front of the class, parents are present to give encouragement. They say that it's okay if the child fails, because the most important thing is the courage to try. This attitude helps children understand that mistakes are not something to be ashamed of, but rather part of the learning process that makes them stronger.

Over time, the impact of this warm and caring parenting style begins to be seen in children's development. They are more courageous to speak up, believe more in their own ideas, and are more open about expressing what they feel. Children also show increased independence, they try to solve small problems on their own before asking for help, dare to make simple decisions, and show the ability to interact with peers more confidently.

Not only that, but these children also tend to adapt more easily to new environments and are better prepared to face challenges. This happens because they grow up in a supportive atmosphere, where their opinions are valued, their feelings are acknowledged, and their efforts are appreciated. All of this builds a strong emotional foundation in children, so that they can develop into individuals who are confident in their own abilities.

Although the journey of becoming a single parent is never easy, the results of this loving parenting style show that they are able to become key figures in the process of forming a child's character. With close emotional connections, open communication, and constant support, single parents manage to create an environment that makes children grow up with a strong sense of self-confidence. In the end, the sincerity, patience, and love they give every day become the greatest gift that positively shapes a child's future.

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