

Parenting Practices and Religious Character Development in Early Childhood: A Study of Tanjung Morawa Village

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Religious character development is a coaching effort provided by parents to their children, typically initiated at an early age to instill religion and its values as a means of training and developing children to possess good morals, obedience in worship, and noble attitudes and traits both in the present and future. This research aims to investigate the parenting or parenting practices employed in children's lives to foster religious character. The focus of this study is to describe the nurturing and coaching provided by parents to their children as educators in a family setting to form a religious character. This research utilizes a qualitative method with a descriptive approach and is conducted in Tanjung Morawa-A Village. The subjects of the research are parents of early childhood aged 4-6 years. The data collection techniques employed include interviews, observation, and documentation. The data analysis employs Miles and Huberman's method, which involves data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of this study indicate that parents in Tanjung Morawa-A Village utilize democratic parenting practices in fostering their children's religious character from an early age. Parents employ various strategies to foster their children's religious character, including providing religious education, incorporating religious values in everyday life, setting good examples, and offering advice. The success of the parenting strategies implemented by parents in Tanjung Morawa Village is evidenced by their children's development of noble character traits, such as politeness, honesty, good behavior, and good words, as well as their knowledge of Allah SWT, His Messenger, and His teachings.

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Public Interest Statement

This study addresses the issue of many parents being negligent and unaware of how to educate and shape their children's character, especially during early childhood, resulting in many children today having a less religious character. Early childhood is the most receptive age for learning and instilling value. Effective parenting is crucial because children are considered an investment in both this world and the hereafter; their future character and behavior depend significantly on how their parents raise them. This study aimed to provide essential information and guidance to parents, or those planning to become parents, on applying good parenting practices to cultivate a strong religious character in their children from an early age. By understanding and implementing effective parenting techniques, parents can ensure that their children grow up with a solid foundation in religious and moral values that will benefit them throughout their lives.



Introduction

Parenting concerns what parents or guardians should do in carrying out all duties and responsibilities for the growth and development of their children. For the growth and development of a child, one of the major roles that is very influential is the role of parents because parents can be said to be the closest people to children. Children learn almost everything within the scope of the family; they learn about the norms, attitudes, values, beliefs, culture, and customs of the family, so that the growth and development of children becomes positive, and children become noble in acting in a wider environment. All the values introduced and instilled in children at an early age must affect them. Inculcating positive norms and values in children from a tender age can contribute to the development of their character and instill a sense of nobility and virtue, which will benefit them both in the present and in the years to come (Utami, 2021).

According to Foerster, a character qualifies as an individual. A character can be used as a characteristic, identity, and fixed trait that overcomes all forms of contingent experiences that often change (Ahsanulhaq 2019). A character is a character or behavior, personality, and individual essence formed by internalizing various habits that are expected to influence the way people see, behave, think, and act (Utami, 2021). Character includes the attitude of wanting to do everything well, honest behavior, and responsible intellectual skills such as critical thinking and moral reasoning (Andriati et al., 2020). Religiosity is the attitude and behavior of devout worship that is full of devotion and tolerance in carrying out religious orders and always living in harmony with people of other religions. The existence of religious values can be addressed through human thoughts, words, and actions, which are always based on religious teachings and divine values (Sari and Handayani 2022).

Based on the above understanding, it can be concluded that religious character is the behavior and attitude of obeying religious teachings, respecting people of other religions, and being able to live in harmony. All characters who have a relationship between individuals and God are said to be religious. Religious characters include all actions, words, and thoughts of a person that are based on religious teachings and divine values. Character building can integrate all aspects through the processes of imitation, internalization, and identification, where children can learn to act and behave on themselves and those around them (Mutiawati, 2019).

Based on the phenomena found today, many children are not introduced to religion because, at an early age, they have been given gadgets, inappropriate shows, parents are busy with their world, and children are left or cared for by others. At this age, parents play an important role in shaping children's religious character. At an early age, children are more easily influenced because at this age, they are more dominant in imitating the habits of what they see. According to Purwaningsih, the main factor influencing the formation of children's religious character is their family environment. Early age is the right period or phase to provide a foundation for a developmental perspective for children. One aspect of child development is the way moral and religious values are viewed (Purwaningsih and Syamsudin 2022). The age range called early childhood is the phase when humans are between 0 and 6 years of age. Development is rapid in this age range (Devianti et al., 2020).

Religious characters can be formed by instilling religious values and fostering children to be virtuous. Religious values that emphasize the importance of Islamic teaching. Islamic teachings include faith (belief), the value of devotion to worship, and the value of good morals (akhlakul karimah), which are achieved through good words and behavior (Mutiawati, 2019). Character creation starts from the smallest environment, namely the family, which is the main example and role model for children's character development so that children can realize themselves as social, cultural, intelligent, and religious beings. In the process of child growth and development, parents as educators around them should provide examples worthy of imitation (Salsabila and Lessy, 2022). This is where the responsibility lies as parents in educating their children, in essence, children are God's commandments entrusted to both parents, who are then asked to be responsible for educating their children (Akhyar and Sutrawati, 2021).

Every parent must have hope that their children will develop into useful, moral, and intelligent individuals. Praiseworthy morals such as honesty, courage, kindness, discipline, cooperation, strength, kindness, patience, independence, responsibility, love, and care can develop in the family. Thus, the family is the most important initial environment for the formation of religious characters. Character development can occur because of daily parenting and habituation. Essentially, education involves habituation and practicing good habits. The presence or absence of role models that can be used as role models in children's lives can be a factor that supports the formation of children's habits, which can be mentioned as the closest environment, namely parents in the family sphere (Hidayati et al., 2021).

This discussion describes the role of parents in fostering religious character in early childhood. To provide a comprehensive explanation, the author identifies several previous studies relevant to this discussion. Many previous studies have highlighted the importance of parents' role in the formation of children's religious character. For example, research conducted by Lidiawati and Purnama (2023) found that children's religious character is formed

through the role of parents who provide examples of behavior, implement early education, habituation systems, a culture of dialogue with children, and the principle of justice in managing time. Another study by Masriah et al. (2023) states that families play an important role in shaping character, morals, and religious understanding in children from an early age, which can be achieved through behavioral models, active learning, open communication, family environment, and collaboration with religious communities.

Furthermore, research by Jura and Naray (2023) found that religious education is important to be taught by parents to children from an early age, so that children grow well and parents must practice the religious principles taught to their children. Similarly, research conducted by Tan and Yasin (2020) emphasized that parents must be responsible for shaping children's religious character and that parents must also be flexible in choosing parenting styles. Another study by Adilham (2023) found that through interaction, instilling moral and ethical values, education, and emotional support provided by parents, children can develop a healthy, responsible, and positive personality.

In addition, Niyonizeye et al. (2024) showed that character development in children is strongly influenced by strong parental spiritual influence and relationships with God. Tamjidnor (2022) also found that, to strengthen religious character in children, parents and schools must coordinate with each other because parental management in strengthening religious character in children can provide significant stimulation, which is directly supervised by teachers and assisted by parents at home. Research by Anfi et al. (2023) found that the role of parents is very important in shaping children's *akhlakul karimah* from an early age, namely the involvement of parents in children's moral education from an early age leads to the success of children to have *akhlakul karimah*.

Previous research has predominantly concentrated on communities or regions with extensive access to religious instructions. However, prior investigations have frequently disregarded the context of occupied working parents, who can impart religious values to their offspring. This study addresses this deficiency by concentrating on Tanjung Morawa Village, a community with distinct parental characteristics, thereby providing a fresh vantage point for the development of religious traits in early childhood.

In terms of childcare, Tanjung Morawa Village has characteristics that distinguish it from other places. This study offers a new perspective on early childhood religious character development in Tanjung Morawa Village, specifically on how busy working parents can effectively instill religious values in their children's daily lives. The purpose of this study was to determine how parenting fosters children's religious character in Tanjung Morawa Village. This study is expected to provide practical guidance on how parents and communities can help their children shape their religious character in various ways.

Literature Review

2.1 Parenting

Parenting is a process undertaken by couples with children. The couple consists of a father and mother who will provide examples, guidance, direction, advice, and positive attitudes toward their children (Baumrind, 1998; Kurniati et al., 2023). Thus, the first form of education is found in family life. The mother was the first *madrasah* for her children. According to Armai Arief in Mulianah, parents are the first educators for children because it is from them that children begin to receive education. Thus, family members, especially parents, provide the first education for a child.

Character formation is first provided by parents, and proper parenting can shape a child's character well. However, many parents pay little attention to the development and growth of their children. Parenting has the root word *parent*, which means parent (Safitri et al., 2023). According to Nafiah in Lasmini, parenting is *parenthood*, which is defined as the process of interaction between parents and children. According to Ratna Megawangi in Yani et al. (2017) parenting refers to learning and teaching activities that emphasize warmth rather than one-way or emotionless education (Nafiah et al., 2021). In accordance with Baumrind (1998), there is a parenting style comprising four distinct approaches to educating children. These include:

Authoritarian parenting involves imposing one's will on the child without being open to input or suggestions. Parents who employ this method may have an inflated sense of confidence, which can lead to lack of communication and a closed deliberation valve within the family unit.

Democratic parenting is considered to be the best parenting pattern. Democratic parenting prioritizes common interests over individual ones. This parenting style does not excessively restrain or control children. This parenting style applies treatment to children that shapes their personality and prioritizes the interests or rational thinking of children.

Third, permissive parenting can be defined as parenting carried out by giving freedom to children in acting and fulfilling their needs and desires. However, the effect of permissive parenting is that children can become people who behave according to what they want; children can also feel that they are not important to their parents. This can be attributed to the absence of good self-control among children (Baumrind 1998; Kusnadi and Agustin 2019).

2.2 Fostering religious character

Personality is closely related to human attitudes, behaviors, feelings, words, and behavior in daily life, including God, other people, the self, and the environment, in the context of the nation and state. Etymologically, the word "character" comes from the Greek word "mark" and refers to the application of values in practical daily activities. Therefore, people who are polite, honest, and helpful are considered to be kind or noble. The word "religion" comes from the word "religion" religion, which refers to religious devotion and obedience. Faith refers to belief and trust in supernatural powers; therefore, from an Islamic point of view, religious characters act in accordance with religious teachings and become more moral. Being religious means making faith a guide in all aspects of life, including speech, behavior, and actions, as well as obeying Allah's commands and staying away from His prohibitions (Novia et al., 2022)

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that religion is the attitude or behavior of a person who listens to and follows the teachings of the religion he adheres to. According to Zuchdi et al. (2012), character refers to qualities that are suggested as indicators of a person's morality, intelligence, and moral perfection. Character education aims to instill widely recognized traditional values that emphasize moral character, such as respect, responsibility, compassion, discipline, loyalty, impartiality, tolerance, openness, work ethics, and love of God. In fostering a religious character, there is a need for approach, education, and habituation from parents. Family acts as the basis for the formation of religious and sociocultural characters, a place to foster compassion, and a place to learn. Family strategies in shaping children's religious character include teaching, motivation, modeling, habituation, and rule enforcement (Akhyar & Sutrawati, 2021)

2.3 Early childhood

Early childhood is a very important age group for human development. Based on several opinions, this period occurs across various age ranges. According to Desmita (2009), early childhood is defined as a child aged between 0 and 6 years. The National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC) states that early childhood lasts from zero to eight years (Priyanto, 2014). According to Schunk (2012), early childhood is also referred to as a critical developmental period or golden age, when children begin to develop sensory, visual, and auditory motor skills through stimulation from the environment.

In early childhood, children experience rapid development, with approximately 40% of the total human development occurring during this period. Therefore, this period is the right time to provide stimulation from an environment that encourages various aspects of child development. This is important so that children can achieve the developmental tasks that they are supposed to achieve (Kusnadi & Agustin, 2019). In addition, early childhood can also be understood as a group of children who have not entered formal education levels, such as elementary school, and are still educated at home by parents or in pre-school educational institutions, such as playgroups, kindergartens, or daycare centers. These preschool educational institutions play a role in preparing children to enter the world of learning in primary schools, so that they will be more prepared and mature in learning activities from their developmental aspects (Kusnadi & Agustin, 2019).

Materials and Methods

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. Descriptive research entails examining occurrences and phenomena in the field, where the collected data comprise words and images. The aim of this study was to present a comprehensive depiction of an event or uncover and elucidate the phenomena that occur. Primary and secondary data sources were used. Fathers and mothers constituted the primary data source, whereas secondary data were sourced from journals, books, theses, and other relevant documents.

The data collection techniques employed in this study were in-depth interviews in which researchers delved into information without a predetermined question guide. Each interview session lasted between 30 and 60 min per participant. Observations involved visiting the field twice for a total of two observation sessions. Finally, documentation was conducted using instruments, such as books, question sheets, audio recording devices, and cameras. This research was conducted in the Tanjung Morawa Sub-district, particularly in Tanjung Morawa-A Village. This location was chosen because the village has a wealth of human resources that aligns with the issues under investigation. The parents in this village mostly work, but utilize their free time to educate their children on religious matters. Five parents participated in the study, according to the criteria outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Participant Demographics of Tanjung Morawa-A Village

No.	Name	Age	Religion	Jobs	Address
1	FLB	32	Islam	Entrepreneurship	Tanjung Morawa-A
2	ET	42	Islam	Civil Servant	Tanjung Morawa-A
3	NJ	33	Islam	Teacher	Tanjung Morawa-A
4	DP	37	Islam	Entrepreneurship	Tanjung Morawa-A
5	NS	43	Islam	Teacher	Tanjung Morawa-A

For this research using Miles et al. (2013) analysis, namely data reduction, the data obtained from the field are summarized by sorting and focusing on the main problem by summarizing them in books or notes. Data are presented by writing narratively on notes in the form of tables or graphs. and a conclusion can be drawn. The conclusions obtained were initially tentative, vague, and doubtful, but with increasing data from both interviews and observations, and with the acquisition of all research data. The conclusions of this study must be clarified and verified.

Results

The findings from interviews with four mothers and one father, aged 32-43, reveal various strategies for fostering religious character in children aged 4-6 years. Table 2.

Table 1. Parent Themes and Superordinate Themes

No.	Parent Theme	Super-ordinate Theme
1	Parenting parents shape children's religious character	Democratic parenting
2	Parents' parenting strategies in fostering children's religious character	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Religious education 2. Practicing religious values in everyday life 3. Setting a good example 4. Giving advice
3	Indicators of Success	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a noble character that is shown by courtesy, honesty, good behavior, and good words. 2. Know Allah SWT, His Messenger, and His teachings.

The results of this study were obtained from interviews conducted with five informants, including four mothers and one father, aged 32–43 years. This study was conducted on parents of children aged 4–6 years in fostering religious character in children classified at an early age. Parenting in Tanjung Morawa Village involves a variety of ways to teach their respective children. From the results of the interviews with the five informants, it is known that they use a democratic parenting style, which remains under parental control and supervision.

The process of fostering religious characters in early childhood by parents in Tanjung Morawa Village is carried out using various strategies. These include teaching religious education, such as introducing Allah SWT and His Messenger; teaching short prayers that are commonly used daily, such as prayers before and after meals or prayers before bed; teaching akhlakul karimah to children; teaching them to be kind to parents and peers; teaching honesty; and most importantly, teaching prayer procedures and praying after prayer. For parents in Tanjung Morawa Village, this must be done from an early age, so that what they learn is embedded as a religious character.

Another effective parenting strategy is integrating religious values into daily life. By providing religious education, parents can instill these values as habits and make them a part of their children's daily routines. In addition to teaching, parents should model these values according to their own behavior. This approach is exemplified by parents in Tanjung Morawa Village who regularly invite their children to participate in congregational prayers. The goal is for children to internalize and understand these values. With consistent reinforcement, children develop a strong foundation in religious moral values from a young age.

Another effective parenting strategy is to provide advice in a compassionate and nonjudgmental manner. This approach is intended to encourage open communication and reduce children's feelings of burden. By offering guidance with empathy and understanding, parents can foster a sense of trust and cooperation between themselves and their child.

The success of these parenting strategies is evident in the positive character traits exhibited by the children in Tanjung Morawa Village. These traits include politeness, honesty, good behavior, and good words. Moreover, the integration of religious values during the character-building process in early childhood is reflected in their knowledge of Islam, such as their understanding of the Allah SWT as the Messenger of Allah and other Islamic teachings.

Discussion

4.1 Parenting in Tanjung Morawa Village in Shaping Children's Religious Character

Parenting for children's character building at an early age begins with parenting patterns that parents instill in their children. Every family has a different way of educating their children. Communication and interaction are also important in parenting. How a child's character develops in the future is influenced by the way parents interact with and nurture their children. The way families educate children on certain parenting patterns can also affect their overall development and behavior, especially for children who are still responsible for their parents and need more guidance for their development (Fauziah and Salik, 2021). Based on the research results obtained, parenting or care from parents to their children in fostering a religious character is carried out with a democratic parenting style.

Democratic parenting prioritizes common interests over individual interests, which does not excessively restrain and control children. This parenting style applies treatment to children that shapes their personality and prioritizes the interests or rational thinking of children. This is in line with the expression of NS (43 years old), which states that to form children's religious character, they give freedom, whether it is playing or doing what children like, but under supervision.

The democratic parenting used by parents in Tanjung Morawa Village can be analyzed as giving children the freedom to play or do what they like while still under parental supervision, which is an important factor in the formation of religious character. This suggests that if children are given strict freedom, they have the opportunity to learn and understand religious values in a more natural and profound way. Children are also given the opportunity to develop internal control, which, in turn, will teach them to take responsibility for their own actions (Putri et al., 2022). However, there are aspects of democratic parenting that must also be considered. If it is not balanced with a clear direction, children who are given unsupervised freedom may experience confusion or indecision. Children may find it difficult to understand the boundaries and rules to follow, especially when it comes to religious principles, which often require special discipline and obedience. Therefore, parents should be mindful of the repercussions and ensure that freedom is balanced with guidance and emphasis on the desired values.

In balancing freedom defined by democratic parenting, parents in Tanjung Morawa Village accompany it by implementing several parenting strategies to foster religious character in early childhood. It is important to do so so so that children do not feel confused, especially since early childhood is in the stage of needing clear religious education from parents. Clear guidance on religious values, consistent supervision, and the application of discipline balanced by affection are some of the tactics used in this effort. When applied correctly, democratic parenting can help children develop into responsible, religious, and rational people.

According to previous research, democratic parenting is positively and significantly correlated with children's character-building (Yusra et al., 2024).. Parenting helps children become more tolerant of others, independent, responsible, moral, and humble. In addition, democratic parenting affects the way adolescents interact with others through the use of smartphones, which helps them become more disciplined, independent, and self-controlled, in turn resulting in good relationships with their families and surrounding communities. Democratic parenting can affect children's social and emotional development. This includes the child's ability to make friends easily, be willing to cooperate, show independence, and want to share.

Other studies have also shown that democratic parenting has a positive impact on children's social-emotional development (Amanda et al., 2023). By giving children the opportunity and freedom to choose actions and a friendly approach, democratic care can help develop good, careful, and responsible attitudes and habits; the desire to be loved and appreciated; feelings of well-being; and a sense of security (Amanda et al., 2023).

4.2 Parenting Strategies in Tanjung Morawa Village in Fostering Children's Religious Character

Parents in Tanjung Morawa Village use various effective parenting techniques to build their children's religious character. In Tanjung Morawa Village, parents carry out religious character development in their children in a variety of ways. It begins with parenting, which provides the attention, care, and affection that the child needs. This was done to ensure that religious values were instilled into their children. The following are some of the approaches used:

4.2.1 Religious Education

According to Helmawati (2017) children must be educated to become faithful and pious. Religious education must be provided at home, school, in the community, in groups and assemblies, and wherever they are. Parents in Tanjung Morawa Village provide religious education to their children at an early age. The religious education provided by parents in Tanjung Morawa Village is as follows:

1. Introducing children to Allah SWT

Parents teach children about the concept of divinity and faith in God, about God's greatness and compassion, and about His names and attributes. This teaching helps children build strong relationships with God from an early age. This strategy is carried out by FLB, NS, and DP, who consider that introducing children to Allah SWT must be done early so that children know who their creator is. Even though they do not know God perfectly, at least children know about it.

2. Teaching short daily prayers

Parents teach children prayers that are recited daily, such as before meals, before bed, and when to start something. These prayers help children remember and rely on God in every aspect of their lives. According to the field findings, this strategy or approach is carried out by parents in Tanjung Morawa Village. This is done so that the desired religious character is truly formed, and prayer must become a habit every day. In addition, children must be informed about the purpose of prayer. They should know that praying is not only asking Allah to fulfill their wishes but also expecting that their actions will get blessings and pleasure from the creator (Sinta et al., 2024).

3. Teaching akhlakul karimah

In language, morals can be interpreted as characters (Rahayu et al., 2023). According to the field findings, this strategy or approach is carried out by parents in Tanjung Morawa Village. This is because parents know how important it is to be a good and noble person. They teach children principles, such as helping, patience, honesty, and friendliness. Acting and interacting with others in daily life is based on akhlakul Karimah. In addition, the value of akhlakul karimah must be taught from a young age so that it is embedded into the character of their children.

4. Teaching kindness to parents and peers

Parents set a good example of respecting and being kind to others, both at home and outside home. They also teach their children to be kind and fair to their peers. According to the field findings, this strategy or approach is carried out by parents in Tanjung Morawa Village. This is as revealed by DP, who said that being kind to anyone must be applied to children from an early age because, with such attitudes, it will become a habit for their children.

5. Teaching honesty

Honesty is one of the main values taught by parents in Tanjung Morawa Village. Honesty itself is a behavior that makes a person trustworthy in his work, words, and deeds by speaking according to what happened without adding or subtracting what happened. (Patimah, 2016). Children are constantly educated to act honestly and faithfully. Parents understand that honesty is one of the characteristics of a believer.

6. Teaching prayer and prayers

Instilling the importance of prayer is the responsibility of parents (Fadel & Rivauzi, 2022). Religious behavior in early childhood can be formed by inviting children to worship, according to Islam (Muliana & Fakhriah, 2017). Children in Tanjung Morawa Village were introduced to and familiarized with the five daily prayers of their parents. Children are taught how to pray, from ablutions to movements and recitations used during prayer. They are also taught how to pray, asking Allah for goodness, and protection after praying. Through this teaching, the children gained a better understanding of the importance of worship and building a relationship with Allah.

4.2.2 Familiarizing Religious Values in Daily Life

Repetitive habituation is an effective educational technique (Munirah et al., 2022). Children in Tanjung Morawa Village are familiarized with their parents to apply religious principles in their daily lives. For example, thank you, help others, pray before eating, and be honest and polite. Thus, it can be concluded that getting used to these practices teaches children how to make religious values an important part of their lives, which helps them build a strong and noble character. Instilling habits, however, are difficult and sometimes take a long time. Therefore, good things must be familiarized as early as possible so that later adulthood becomes a habit (Munirah et al., 2022).

4.2.3 Setting a Good Example

Parents in Tanjung Morawa Village tried to set a good example for their children. They behave in a way that is in accordance with religious teachings such as worshipping regularly, being kind to others, and remaining honest. Children tend to imitate what their parents do; therefore, setting a good example is a good way to teach religious values. According to the findings, it can be seen that children basically imitate what they see and experience more often. Therefore, parents should provide a good example of training them to practice these religious values. They develop into people who understand strict values and apply them in their lives, instilling a strong foundation for a religious and virtuous character. The basis of a person's personality is also the result of a combination of hereditary traits, parental abilities, environment, and development. Children take examples from the attitudes, opinions, views of their parents and family members, and things that they observe will then be applied in themselves. (Fauziah and Salik, 2021).

4.2.3 Giving Advice

Giving advice is an important way for parents to foster their children's religious character. Parents often provide guidance and direction on the importance of practicing religion and overcoming moral challenges in life. Therefore, according to the findings, parents in Tanjung Morawa Village apply this to foster a religious character in their children. It can be seen that the advice they convey to their children is done in a wise and loving way, so that children feel supported and well directed and understand the importance of religious values in daily decision-making. Children must also be taught to be open with what they feel, what they see, and what they hear so that parents can explain what is good and what is not so that children can better understand and so parents can more easily take steps in the process of forming religious characters in children.

4.3 The Success of Parenting Parents in Tanjung Morawa Village in Fostering Children's Religious Character

The success in fostering children's religious character in Tanjung Morawa Village can be seen from various aspects that reflect the religious values instilled by parents. The following are some indicators of success that can be identified:

4.3.1 Noble Character

Children raised with good parenting in Tanjung Morawa Village show noble morals. This can be observed in their politeness. Children are accustomed to being polite by their parents and the people around them. They used polite language and respected their elders. This attitude is important for building harmonious relationships and mutual respect during daily interactions. In addition, the honest perspective teaches children to act honestly and to tell the truth at all times. Honesty becomes a strong value in them, both in words and daily deeds, so that when children face difficult situations, it helps them make correct and fair decisions and build a good reputation in the eyes of others.

The good behavior and words of the children of parents in Tanjung Morawa Village are further proof of success. Caring for others, helping others, and avoiding actions that harm others are examples of good behaviors aimed at children. They grow into people who care about what others need, and are always ready to help. This concept of caring and empathy results in a stronger, more supportive community for which every member feels valued and cared. Children use kind words and do not hurt others. They spoke softly and avoided using harsh or offensive words. The important social skills of communicating well and with respect help children build positive and healthy relationships with others.

4.3.2 Know Allah SWT, His Messenger, and His teachings

According to the results of research conducted by the children of parents in Tanjung Morawa Village, who became informants, the children managed to identify and understand the basic concepts of Islam. This shows that their children have a good understanding of Allah SWT as the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe. From this, they gain knowledge about loving and fearing God and the realization that he is in every aspect of their lives. They strengthen their spiritual connection with God through their daily worship practices, such as prayers and supplications, which shows that this knowledge is more than just a theory.

Those who have children who recognize the Prophet Muhammad as the last prophet and the example to follow show that they know the Messenger of God well. This shows that parents in Tanjung Morawa Village teach about the Messenger of Allah, his life, his traits, and his struggles. This is done to ensure that their children will emulate and follow the traits of the messenger and apply them in their daily lives in the future. Children's understanding of the teachings of Islam taught by their parents is another proof of success. In instilling religious characters in early childhood, parents in Tanjung Morawa Village certainly teach religious values as well as Islamic teachings, as the findings have been described previously. From this, it can be seen that their children understand that the purpose of prayer taught by their parents is also the recitation of the prayers taught.

Children's understanding of religious teachings and the application of these values in everyday life show that parenting parents in Tanjung Morawa Village have succeeded in fostering their religious character. This success is supported by several factors, one of which is parental consistency. Parents can be a good example of their children if they worship regularly and behave in accordance with the teachings of their religion. Through this example, children gain a better understanding of religion and can imitate good behavior. In addition, this success is influenced by good communication and interactions between parents and children. Parents who actively communicate with their children about the importance of religious principles and listen to and answer children's questions thoughtfully help children understand and internalize religious teachings better, coupled with loving parenting from parents. Parents in Tanjung Morawa Village also give their children the freedom to study and worship, while still being supervised and monitored. This directed freedom helps children better understand religious teachings and make a strong connection with God.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the parenting practices of parents in fostering their children from an early age are carried out with democratic parenting, in which parents give freedom to their children but remain under control and supervision. Parents' parenting strategies in fostering the religious character of early childhood in Tanjung Morawa-A Village are carried out in various ways, including religious education, familiarizing themselves with religious values in everyday life, providing good examples, and giving advice. The success of the parenting strategy implemented by parents in Tanjung Morawa Village is as follows: children's noble character, which is shown by politeness, honesty, good behavior, and good words; knowing Allah SWT, His Messenger, and His teachings. The implications of the results of this study are expected to be used as reference material, especially for parents in their efforts to form and teach children's religious character from an early age. In addition, further researchers are expected to be able to examine the shortcomings and weaknesses that exist in this study more deeply.

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