

Fathers' parenting in women's workforces family

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Abstract

Parenting by fathers differs from parenting by mothers. Children whom their fathers raise tend to develop creative abilities to justify their behaviors. In Polan of Polanharjo District, children whose fathers educate them while their mothers work as Indonesian women migrant workers (TKW) freely organize their study activities, worship, meals, and even bedtime. Most importantly, the children do all their daily routines even though they do not match the expectations. This research aims to find out how the parenting of fathers, whose wives work as TKW, provides attention and fulfills their children's rights. The research subjects were three fathers who educated their children from 12 to 18 years old. The data collection methods used interviews, documentation, and observation. This research shows that these fathers also played a significant role in shaping their children's character. The father's role should be modified, not only as the breadwinner but also as a discussion partner regarding study planning and crucial decision-making. Parenting by fathers should not entirely ignore their children's feelings and desires. Instead, it should encourage the children to reconsider the effects of their decisions and attitudes. This research shows that these three subjects tended to use democratic parenting a whole of rules, order, and peace created in the order of values of life lived with a smile.

Keywords: Parenting, Father, Indonesian Women Migrant Workers

Abstrak

Pola asuh yang diberikan oleh seorang ayah berbeda dengan pola asuh yang diberikan oleh seorang Ibu. Anak yang sebagian waktunya dibesarkan Ayah cenderung mengembangkan daya kreativitas untuk membenarkan perilaku mereka. Di daerah Polan Kecamatan Polanharjo anak yang dididik oleh Ayah



sementara Ibunya bekerja sebagai TKW memiliki kebebasan dalam mengatur kegiatan belajar, ibadah, makan bahkan istirahat yang terpenting anak nampak melakukan semua rutinitas harian tersebut, meskipun waktunya terkadang tidak sesuai dengan harapan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana pola asuh seorang ayah yang memiliki istri sebagai TKW untuk memberikan perhatian dan mencukupi hak anak mereka. Adapun subjek penelitian berjumlah 3 orang ayah yang mendidik anaknya sejak usia 12 tahun dengan kondisi Istrinya bekerja sebagai TKW. Adapun instrumen yang digunakan wawancara, dokumentasi dan observasi. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Ayah juga berperan besar dalam membentuk karakter anak. Memodifikasi peran Ayah tidak hanya sebagai tulang punggung keluarga, melainkan sebagai partner diskusi terkait perencanaan karir dan pengambilan keputusan yang krusial. Pola asuh Ayah tidak sepenuhnya mengabaikan perasaan dan keinginan anak melainkan mengajak anak untuk memikirkan kembali konsekuensi atas pilihan dan sikap yang diambilnya. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ketiga subjek cenderung menggunakan pola asuh yang demokratis.

Kata Kunci: *Pola Asuh, Ayah, Tenaga Kerja Wanita*

INTRODUCTION

Family is an institution formed through marriage, the inner and outer bond of a man and woman as a husband and wife to create a happy family. The simple form of a family consists of a father, a mother, and children. The two most important components in the family are the father and mother, who can be said to be the ones who support children's lives and raise them from childhood to adulthood. Both father and mother have their roles in educating their children. Djamarah (2014) believes that family is a bond formed by marriage between a husband and wife so they can live together, with the goal of achieving a *sakinah* (peaceful) family under the protection and approval of Allah SWT.

A father, as the head of the family, is not only a role inherited from previous generations but also strengthened institutionally and regulated in state administration. As the head of the family, a father is obliged to meet the family's needs and ensure the child's education. The division of roles between the father and the mother in the family is a strategy to create a harmonious family. The father plays an important role in shaping the children's character

and experiences with the father's influence until the child becomes an adult (Rahmawati & Desyanty, 2016). This research does not mean ignoring the role of a mother but focuses on the role of a father whose wife works abroad.

Based on documentation studies and initial interviews with several Polan Village officials in the Polanharjo District of Klaten Regency in 2022, 134 residents in Polan Village worked as farmers, 155 people worked as construction workers, 36 people were traders, 11 people were breeders, 7 people worked as civil servants, and 3 women worked as TKW. Their daily work was going to the rice fields to farm, which was what most men did. When the harvest season arrived, their wives helped harvest rice in the fields. Every day, these married women worked as housewives who cared for and educated their children and served their husbands. Increasingly difficult economic needs made them tend to look for work outside the city or abroad as TKW, and their families, especially their husbands, supported this choice.

There have been several studies regarding fathers' parenting styles. For example, research by Wulan et al. (2018) showed that fathers play a very important role in caring for their children while their wives are leaving to work abroad. Fathers play instrumental and expressive roles when their children are still toddlers. When their children become teenagers, and problems also become more complex, they need a father figure who is more communicative, can pay attention, listens to complaints and anxieties, and can be used as a role model and in control. The integrity of a TKW's family will be created if there is a strong father figure with strength and willingness to work hard and learn more authoritative parenting.

The initial interview regarding parenting explained that educating children whose mothers left them to become TKW was difficult since the fathers had to be able to divide their time between working and teaching their children good things. Not to mention the lack of knowledge about religious education, especially reciting the Koran. Therefore, most fathers entrust formal education to schools or religious educational institutions for their children. This condition is a bit similar to single-parent parenting, and only the conditions are different; although both parents are still intact, in a sense, they still play the role of

mother and father. In one of the parenting conditions, single parents also entrust the religious education of their children to other parties; only the methods of parenting are different. Single-parent parenting conditions tend to use an authoritarian style (Desy, 2015).

Parenting, on the other hand, is an art that needs to be developed and understood by each parent. Parents must know the impact of the parenting they apply to their children. There are at least three types of parenting: authoritarian, democratic, and permissive. The impact of parenting on children is very important to understand because it is related to their mental formation in adapting to developmental tasks (Sonia & Apsari, 2020). Therefore, this research aims to find out the type of parenting, especially for fathers, in educating their children with the condition of their wives working as TKW. More specifically, this role refers to parenting fathers who educate their children when they are teenagers. In line with this, it is necessary to consider that the adolescent phase is an identity crisis phase, where children try to find out their identity through observing and experimenting with behaviors that are appropriate or inappropriate, accepted or unaccepted, in society. Furthermore, a lack of attention from the mother can affect the child's character development in the future.

METHOD

This research used the descriptive qualitative method with a case study. This method was chosen based on research objectives and data in the field that showed the total TKW working in Polan Village of Polanharjo District of Klaten Regency tended to increase since their children became adolescents. Meanwhile, the subjects or data sources were three fathers who educated their teenage children while their wives worked as TKW. This research used in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation as complementary, and then the data were analyzed using instrument and source triangulation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this research are (1) the role of fathers in the family and (2) the parenting of fathers whose wives are TKW, each of which will be discussed as follows:

1. The Father's Role in the Family

- a. Father is the breadwinner and involves children in managing family finances

The father's role as breadwinner means that they are obliged to meet their children's financial needs. Although the mother/wife also works, children tend to ask their father for pocket money since their mother also works as TKW. It is based on what Subject 1 said, "*I work as a driver and am very busy. For me, having enough pocket money for my kids is the most important thing. They will usually ask for more if they don't have enough of it. I will surely give it to them as long as I know what they will spend it for.*"

At the same time, Subjects 2 and 3 also had the same opinion, only with different methods. Subject 1 gave pocket money and met his kids' requests since he realized that it was his duty as a father. Subject 2, apart from being aware of this role, also gave some advice when giving his children pocket money. Meanwhile, Subject 3 taught his children to save pocket money and use it frugally. In other words, these fathers tried to provide enough pocket money for their children and taught them to manage it. The concept of fatherhood constructs the father as the provider (Paramitha & Basaria, 2018).

- b. Father as a role model and behavior control

The absence of mother's daily attention makes children see their father's attitude more clearly. Children imitate their father's behavior, words, and way of thinking. Should the mother be *madrasiatun ulya* (the first teacher of knowledge or school for her children), then in that case, the father should strengthen this understanding in his daily activities. The interviews with the three subjects show that fathers were aware that

advising their children was not enough to instill values and morals, but rather they should have given direct examples.

Subject 2 said, *"It's not enough just to tell my kids what to do, but I also have to give them examples and show them what to do."* This statement shows that advice is just not enough since children also need a figure to imitate. Also, Subject 3 supported what Subject 2 said, *"My kids are just like me. It's kind of hard to just tell them what to do. I have to do what I want them to do. For example, I have to wake up early if I want them to wake up early, too."* In contrast, Subject 1 said, *"Today's kids are pretty smart. So if I want to tell them what to do, first of all, I have to give them examples."*

These three subjects realized that leading by example is the right step in giving advice. Indirectly, fathers can also control or minimize the growth of deviant behaviors due to the lack of the mother's love. Directly, the absence of a mother affects their children's mental development. Often, children left behind by their mothers who work as TKW tend to be raised by their grandparents, in which such care sometimes lacks social control (Sutiana et al., n.d.).

c. Father plays the role of a friend

Directly, the close relationship between a father and his teenage children without a mother figure makes the relationship between them even closer since the father is considered an adult friend who understands many things. Although this influences the communication patterns between father and children, children, on the other hand, are more open to the father, although the father is occupied with his work.

Subject 3 said, *"Frequently, my kids want me to go with them after school, playing wherever they want. Sometimes, I go with them; other times, I don't want them to go. It depends on the situation."* At the same time, Subjects 1 and 2 realized that they needed to monitor their children's development by setting moments for discussion each night before going to bed, *"Each night, I always ask my kids about how their school was, what they learnt today, and so*

on. I do this so they want to talk to me so they have stories to tell me. Sometimes, I take them out and treat them to some snacks as well."

These three subjects strive for a close relationship between father and children to meet the love needs of parents towards children. They realized that a mother's love was irreplaceable; that is, their children became victims because they allowed their wives (the mothers of their children) to work. This awareness made them try to complement the mothers' role despite it being irreplaceable.

2. The Father's Parenting in Teaching the Children whose Mother Working as TKW

The research results show several types of parenting tendencies of fathers who are married to TKW in educating their children.

a. Democratic Parenting

There are several possibilities for a father to care for and educate his children while his wife works as TKW. First, the father raises his children on his own; Subject 1 did this. Second, the father collaborates with his closest relatives or entrusts his children to their grandparents; Subjects 2 and 3 did this. It is because the father is occupied with his work as an obligation to meet the needs of his children. In caring for and educating his children, the father frees them to play. However, there are controls and rules from the father and close relatives who help raise them.

The father and those who help care for their children give rewards for their children's achievements. This shows that, in educating his children, the father is responsible properly. The rewards given to children will make them study more diligently and try to be better so that they will be responsible for their assignments. This explanation concludes that, no matter how busy the father is at work, he still carries out his obligations to care for and educate his children. The father also continues to control his children's activities and pay attention to their learning progress.

These three subjects whose wives worked as TKW abroad tended to use democratic parenting. Democratic parenting is characterized by

encouraging and supporting every positive activity done by the children (Hasanah & Idris, 2022).

Fathers who care for and educate their children on their own appear to be more optimal in caring for them, such as providing love, meeting their needs, monitoring their learning progress, and freeing them to socialize, which, of course, remains under control. The way of caring for and educating children in forming their character of independence and responsibility, between fathers who care for their children on their own and fathers who care for their children with the help of close relatives, is not much different. In educating children whose mothers work as TKW, fathers use methods such as advising, modeling, getting them used to, and giving rewards.

In educating children to be independent and responsible, some fathers do this by giving them understanding and insight into what they can and cannot do. For example, the father gets his children used to carrying out their obligations and duties, namely as students: going to school and studying well.

b. Permissive Parenting

Subject 3 did not educate and care for his children on his own, yet other families assisted him as well: his children's grandparents. In raising children left by their mothers working as TKW, grandparents tend to pamper their grandchildren and do what they want. Weak control over children goes hand in hand with the absence of attention to the children's learning development. Although the father compensates with democratic parenting, the father's time to care for his children is very limited compared to the grandparents'.

Subject 3 very rarely rewarded his children directly in educating them in order to motivate them to develop better. In this case, the parents' busy lives and lack of time to communicate with their children cause the father's parenting, which tends to be democratic, to be taken over by the parenting of the grandparents, which tends to be permissive. In addition,

living under the same roof with grandparents limits the father's role in caring for his children. Subject 3 said, "*What else can I do? I have to go to work. The kids' grandparents can't bear to see them fussing. Instead of conflicting with them (the kids' grandparents), I'd better just obey. However, when I come home, sometimes I talk to the kids.*"

This condition makes the father's parenting, which tends to be democratic, dominated by the grandparents' parenting, which tends to be permissive. Another condition that needs to be considered, apart from the busyness of both parents who work, is that living at home with parents (children's grandparents) also puts its own pressure on educating children. Things like this cause the Subject 3's family to tend to use permissive parenting carried out by the children's grandparents as a substitute role for their parents (father and mother). Furthermore, permissive parenting tends to make children reluctant to socialize and have difficulty controlling emotions (Fadhilah et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

Basically, the nuclear family consists of a father, a mother, and children. Each member of a nuclear family has a different role. The parents are obliged to care for, teach, and educate the children. Each family's parenting is truly different, depending on their respective conditions. Children being raised while their mothers work as TKW do not mean eliminating the mother's role completely, but rather a commitment to dividing roles between father and mother to help each other in raising their children. This research concludes that fathers whose wives work as TKW tend to apply democratic parenting. However, not all fathers raise their children on their own. The involvement of parties outside the nuclear family also influences the family care model.

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