



## BUILDING CHILDREN'S CHARACTER AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES IN 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY EDUCATION

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### Abstract

Education plays an important role in the progress of nation, especially in facing the global challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Strengthening character and emotional intelligence is the key to developing superior human resources. The foundation of this education starts from the family, with the role of parents as the main actors. This study uses a literature study method by analyzing literature related to the role parents in shaping children's character and emotional intelligence. The results of the study show that active parental involvement, including fulfilling children's basic needs based on Maslow's theory, has a major influence on the development of children's character and emotions. Children who grow up in a supportive environment tend to be more resilient, confident and able to adapt socially. This study contributes to strengthening understanding of the importance of the role of the family, especially parents as the main foundation in character education and children's emotional intelligence.

**Keywords:** Child Character, Parental Involvement, Emotional Intelligence, 21st Century Education

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## INTRODUCTION

## مقدمة

In the world of education, the word school is certainly familiar to all groups. School is a place where individuals can gain knowledge, school is an institution that organizes learning and teaching activities that have levels and rules in it. In addition, schools must also have facilities and infrastructure to support learning activities. Education is a fundamental aspect in national development, apart from development, economics and technology, education is the main foundation that cannot be replaced in building a positive and functional society that is able to compete in the world (Rahman & Akbar, 2021). The progress of a nation is seen from the progress or decline of education in the country, considering the importance of education for the life of a country, education needs to be implemented as well and as optimally as possible in order to achieve the goals of education itself. In addition to academic mastery, aspects of character and emotional intelligence are important components in producing an adaptive, collaborative, and competent generation in the 21st century. With education that covers all aspects, it will form good individuals, the good and bad character of individuals is based on the stage of growth and development, namely during childhood.

Education in Indonesia currently applies 21st century learning where each student adapts to various challenges and demands in the dynamics of change that exist in this century (Komara, 2018). In addition, in this century students are the main objects in learning while teachers are facilitators in learning. With the developments in the 21st century, students need to have good

character potential in themselves, besides that, good emotional management is also needed. With students having good character and emotional management, it will help them face the challenges and demands of this era.

Developing character and emotional management in students requires intervention from the family, the family is the main institution that plays an important role in the education and growth of children. Education for students starts from home or the closest environment which is usually called family, students are born and grow up in that environment and spend time with family. Many parents fail to educate their children because they forget the importance of being an example in educating children (Maza & Erianjoni, 2022). As parents, they should develop and direct their children to good things. Family parenting is very important, if students are in an unhealthy family environment and do not bring happiness, it will affect the growth and development of students (Hasbullah & Nurhasanah, 2024.). Parents play a very important role in the process of child growth both in terms of academics, psychology and character, the realization of good children cannot be separated from the important role of parents in parenting and their involvement in their child's development. Parental involvement has a big impact on their children.

Hurlock stated that children learn something and various kinds of behavior from the imitation process carried out by people around them, especially parents as the closest people (Nuraeni & Santana, 2015). In addition, Epstein provides ideas about the family, according to him the family is a foundation that must provide a balance of environmental conditions for the growth and development of children both physically, affectionally, socially and others (Rofiah & Diani, 2022). The parenting pattern given by parents will greatly affect the future of the child, because every action taken by parents influences the formation of their child's character both in the social environment and the family in the future. Parents who pay special attention to their children will have a good and positive impact. Conversely, if parents do not care about their children or restrain their children, it will have a negative impact on the child's personality.

In the modern era marked by technological developments and complex social challenges, parental involvement is not enough just as a provider of facilities, but also as a guide, companion, and role model in children's growth. The importance of parental involvement in parenting will provide positive character and personality for children. With the relationship between parental involvement and children's character, researchers refer to Maslow's theory which explains the importance of exploring how parents can contribute to meeting children's needs at various levels, so that children not only develop academically, but also as individuals with character and high emotional intelligence. This study aims to identify concrete strategies that parents can do to increase their involvement, as well as their impact on the development of children's character and emotional intelligence. Therefore, this article aims to explore how concrete strategies of parental involvement can help build children's character and emotional intelligence based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory.

## METHOD

## منهج

### ***Subsection Identification***

This type of research is qualitative descriptive, with a literature study approach. This study examines concepts and theories from various scientific literature that are relevant to the formulation of the problem. There is no manipulation of variables or experiments conducted. The purpose of this design is to compile a conceptual synthesis based on the analysis of the content

of the literature. In this method, data collection and analysis are used as described in the research design.

### ***Participant (Subject) Characteristics***

This study does not use participants in the form of individuals or groups of people, but is non-empirical because it is based on library research. The research subjects consist of various sources of scientific literature, such as: Academic reference books, National and international journal articles, Previous research results, Scientific papers and other written documents relevant to the research topic. The literature is selected based on thematic relevance to the culture, values, and norms that develop in the social context being studied.

### ***Research Design***

This study employs a qualitative approach using a literature review method, aiming to construct theoretical arguments and uncover conceptual patterns relevant to the research topic (Sugiyono, 2012).

Data were obtained through documentation—collecting written sources such as journals, books, articles, and academic records (Mirzaqon & Purwoko, 2017). The analysis utilized content analysis, involving six steps: determining the topic, formulating problems and objectives, selecting relevant literature, identifying key points, classifying and interpreting content, and systematically summarizing findings (Sari, 2020).

## **RESULT | نتائج**

From the results of the research conducted by the researcher, the results obtained are related to the problem of the role of parental involvement in building character and emotional intelligence of children. The data collection process in this study began with collecting literature studies and theories online and offline. The analysis in this study was carried out continuously and non-interactively in searching for and collecting the results of literature studies from various sources. Data analysis techniques through various stages so that data will be obtained to analyze with findings in literature sources related to the role of parental involvement in building character and emotional intelligence of children

### **1. The Role of Parents in Child Development**

The role of parental involvement from the literature collection can be concluded as follows: 1) Parental involvement is very important in keeping children from being influenced by negative environments, 2) Children need affection and attention from their parents to develop a healthy personality, 3) Being too protective or lacking attention from parents can have a negative impact on the formation of children's character.

### **2. Fulfillment of Basic Needs Based on Maslow's Theory**

In Abraham Maslow's theory, the following needs of children must be met: Five levels of children's basic needs according to Maslow: physiological needs, safety, affection, self-esteem, and self-actualization. Each level of need contributes to the process of character formation and emotional development of children.

### **3. Parental Involvement Strategies**

Here are the steps parents can take to contribute to their children: 1) Providing quality time, 2) Providing emotional support, 3) Being a good role model, 4) Providing space to express oneself, 5) Appreciating children's efforts, not just the results. These strategies have been shown

to strengthen interactions between parents and children and support the growth of children's character and emotional intelligence.

## DISCUSSION

## مناقشة

### The role of parental involvement in child development

In today's era where development is increasingly rapid in terms of technology and social, it is necessary for parental involvement in all processes of child growth to prevent them from falling into a negative environment. The future of children depends on the experiences they gain and receive from their surroundings, both the social environment and the family environment (Ardiati, 2018). Most parents in this era only focus on their children's financial needs, such as providing facilities to support their children's education, but they ignore the need for support and emotion for their children. In reality, a child's personality is formed from childhood which will cause the child to have good traits, character and behavior in the maturity of his personality in adulthood. Many of them grow up alone without guidance from their parents. In reality, children really need attention, love and comfort from their parents, but most parents do not realize that children need all that because they are too busy and do not understand what their children need. In addition to the busyness of parents, most parents are too protective and impose their wishes on their children excessively. The high expectations of parents for their children in the social environment often do not give children the authority to have an opinion on what the child needs themselves (Wiresti & Na'imah, 2020).

Maslow said that basically human needs must be met, not only in adults but children need their life needs to be met to support development. Maslow also said that humans will be driven to meet needs according to the circumstances, time and experiences that occur to them. It is also explained that in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, individuals will not be able to meet the second and subsequent needs if the first need has not been achieved (Muhibbin & Marfuatun, 2020). In Maslow's theory of basic human needs (hierarchy of needs) there are 5 depicted in the inverted pyramid which aims to explain the basic needs that can provide motivation to individuals. The 5 basic human life needs include 1) physiological needs, 2) the need for safety, 3) the need for affection and belonging, 4) the need for self-esteem, 5) the need for self-actualization (Wiresti & Na'imah, 2020).



**Figure 1.** Maslow's hierarchy of needs

#### 1. Physiological needs

Physiological needs are primary needs that are fundamental and basic, to fulfill psychological and biological needs such as eating, drinking, air, and stable body temperature.

Most people mention these primary needs as clothing, food, and shelter. These physiological needs are very important in a person's needs to seek satisfaction. In adults and children, these needs must be met, especially in children, because they are important to support their development and growth. With nutritious nutrition that comes from food and drink, it can help children in training gross motor development that requires energy. In this development, children use muscle coordination to help carry out their activities so that they have the energy to jump, run, and help children to be more concentrated at school by fulfilling nutrition through breakfast. In addition to nutrition, individual emotional management is very influential at this stage if in a hungry state the individual will tend to be easily emotional, because this primary need is not met. After this human need is met, it can be continued to the next stage, namely the need for safety.

## 2. Safety needs

At this stage is the need for a sense of security, comfort, protection, and freedom from fear. These needs must be met by parents and their surroundings. By maintaining and providing safety for children will provide a sense of security and avoid danger. In the case of children who have security (protection) from their parents will immediately express it and the role of parents is to calm the child and ensure that they are in a safe and comfortable environment with their parents. If parents cannot provide comfort for children, it is likely that they will not feel at home because they feel there is no one around them. At this stage, it is possible that when children grow up as teenagers they look for a comfortable place for themselves and fall into negative social circles. After this stage has been met, they can enter a higher level.

## 3. Social and affection needs

The need at this stage is the desire to be accepted in the community without any discrimination. In addition, at this stage it is also necessary to build social interaction in individuals, both in the peer environment and the social environment, and at this stage individuals will seek recognition around themselves. In children, they will start interacting with friends who are considered comfortable to get a proposal. At this stage, parents play an important role in providing stimulus to their children so that they can build good interaction relationships with friends. Many children are found to be unable to socialize in their peer environment and are only able to socialize with close family. There are many problems that children will encounter in this phase, so the role of parents is very important for them to prevent things that deviate from the development of children.

## 4. Self-esteem needs

This stage is a continuation of the social stage above where at this stage individuals want to have self-esteem or the desire to be recognized for their existence. In social relationships between humans, humans need to feel appreciated and respected by others. Likewise with children at this stage, children will feel considered if they are given an award for themselves or commonly called (rewards), the rewards in question are not only in terms of goods but also positive affirmations given to children including rewards in the form of awards for what they have achieved. At this stage, if children are given awards for themselves, they will not be inferior and feel inferior. In addition, at this stage, motivation will arise in children and they will feel confident with what they should do. It is important for parents at this stage to give awards that are not excessive, because if they are used to giving material awards, children will ask for more than the results they get and can trigger unstable emotions if their wishes are not followed. In addition, because they are used to being given rewards, children do everything they tend to think about the rewards that will be given and will trigger a loss of self-motivation in children.

## 5. Self-actualization needs

At this stage is the peak of all needs that have been met. Self-actualization is the process of an individual to become their true self, by utilizing existing potential and realizing their shortcomings. At this stage if someone can fulfill it will have a good impact on the individual. This stage is characterized by individuals being able to accept themselves, have clear life goals, solve problems, appreciate achievements and have a sense of compassion. At this stage it is not to compete to be perfect, but to achieve their full potential. At this stage, many individuals have not been able to fulfill the needs of human life at this stage. If in children this stage is to develop their interests and talents, where in school education today children have been freed to explore their potential at school. The role of parents at this stage is needed to support everything according to the interests and talents of their children. Parental support in terms of morals and materials, such as in terms of morals, namely providing positive motivation when children fail in a depressed and sad state. While material is by providing facilities that can support children's potential, without forcing the will of parents.

Of the five Maslow hierarchies explained by (Dzakia, 2023; Muhibbin & Marfuatun, 2020; Wiresti & Na'imah, 2020), the role of parents is very important in supporting the development and growth of children. With the involvement of parents in all child development, parents will know more about what needs are needed and will increase positive family interactions because children feel comfortable in their environment. Every parent must have a great and optimal desire for child growth without any obstacles or disturbances to the child. By fulfilling all the aspects above, children will grow up with good relationships and will become mas

### Parental strategies to be involved in child development

In 21st century education demands more than just academic ability. Character, emotional intelligence, creativity, critical thinking skills, and collaborative skills are important elements that students must have. In this context, the role of parents is not only as a provider of educational facilities, but also as an active companion in the child's learning process. The importance of parental involvement in child development cannot be underestimated. With the involvement and support of parents that covers various aspects, such as emotional support to practical support in learning. With the involvement and support of parents can trigger the enthusiasm of students in learning. Parental support and involvement in education include: motivation and emotional support, character building and habituation, and parents as teachers. With the above aspects of Maslow's theory that are able to encourage children to be better, there needs to be a deeper study related to parental involvement with concrete strategies in order to provide character education and help children manage their emotions well. The strategies needed by parents in building character and managing children's emotions are as follows:

#### 1. Providing quality time (Quality time)

Providing quality time to children can increase interaction or open communication built by parents towards children, with time to play, talk will help children relate positively to social and emotional development. Children who have regular time with their parents, they will be able to control themselves and grow empathy for children. As with research conducted by (Aini, 2021) which states that with quality time children can have increased self-confidence, in addition parents can find out their children's talents and desires through quality time.

#### 2. Providing emotional support

Emotional support is a form of support given by the family to those closest to them such as



attention, warmth and empathy. With this support, the family will feel comfortable and appreciated which can increase self-confidence, reduce stress levels, and manage emotions. This reason is reinforced by research conducted by (Pratiwi & Laksmiwati, 2012) that the results of the study showed that emotional support can help reduce stress in children and increase self-confidence.

### 3. Being a good role model

In Bandura's learning theory, it states that children tend to imitate the behavior of their parents. With imitation carried out by children, parents must provide good examples of role models from various aspects such as behaving, speaking, controlling themselves, which will have a direct impact on children, namely how they will interact with others in the future. Similarly, from research conducted by (Wahyuni & Fitriani, 2022), role models can be a solution to the many cases of juvenile delinquency and can increase good social behavior.

### 4. Provide space to express themselves

Giving children trust is one way to find out the needs that children need, by giving them trust they are able to express themselves. Expressing themselves can be done through various things such as art, sports or creative activities that children are interested in. Children who are given trust and freedom to choose will have a stronger identity and be more adaptable to various conditions and social situations.

### 5. Appreciating efforts, not just results

Many parents compete to show off their children's learning outcomes, without knowing the abilities that their children have. By involving themselves in their children's development, parents are able to see their children's efforts which are certainly maximal in everything that has been done. The need for appreciation for children's efforts, not only seeing the results, can help children to improve their mentality and ability to deal with failure in a healthy way.

The methods above can be applied by parents to involve them in their children's development, by showing that active parental involvement in their children's lives can have a very significant impact on developing children's character and emotional intelligence. Cultivating good interactions between children and parents not only fosters character and improves emotional skills, but can also develop self-confidence, strengthen mentality and control themselves in the social world.

## CONCLUSSION

## خاتمة

Education is the core of national development, becoming the main pillar in realizing an intelligent, resilient, and highly competitive society. In the 21st century era full of challenges and rapid changes, education does not only focus on academic achievement, but also emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence and character development of students. Parental involvement in this process is very important, starting from the home environment as the first educational center for children. As emphasized by Hurlock and Epstein's theory, a supportive family environment plays a major role in shaping a child's character. Parents are not only tasked with providing material needs, but must also provide emotional support and be good role models. Through Maslow's approach to basic human needs, it can be understood that active parental involvement, from fulfilling physiological needs to self-actualization, is the key to success in educating children holistically. In the context of 21st century education, parents need

to understand that developing critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication (4C) skills is a need that must be honed from an early age. With strategies such as quality time, emotional support, role models, and space for self-expression, parents can encourage the formation of adaptive, confident, and emotionally mature individuals. Thus, parental involvement in children's education is not an option, but a necessity. Parents who are active and aware of their role will create a future generation that is ready to face the complexities of modern life positively and responsibly.

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