

# Analysis of the Impact of Fatherlessness on Early Childhood Character Building in Gampong Tanjung Deah

Irhamna<sup>1</sup>, Faizatul Faridy<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UIN AR-RANIRY Banda Aceh; [Irhamna23@gmail.com](mailto:Irhamna23@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> UIN AR-RANIRY Banda Aceh; [faizatul.faridy@ar-rainry.ac.id](mailto:faizatul.faridy@ar-rainry.ac.id)

## Keywords:

Fatherless, Character, childhood

**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the impact of the absence of a father figure (fatherless) on the character development of early childhood in Gampong Tanjung Deah. Given the role of the father as an important figure in the psychosocial development of a child, his absence can significantly influence the formation of the child's character, particularly in the context of moral, ethical, and social values. This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method to deeply explore the experiences, perceptions, and impacts of the absence of a father on young children in this community. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with mothers, caregivers, early childhood educators, as well as direct observations of children experiencing fatherlessness. The data were analyzed thematically to identify behavioral patterns and the effects resulting from the absence of a father. The findings of this study indicate that children growing up without a father figure tend to struggle with internalizing values such as discipline, responsibility, and self-control. Additionally, the absence of a father also affects children's self-esteem and their ability to engage in social interactions. This study recommends the importance of social support and the active role of mothers and the community in assisting the character development of children experiencing fatherlessness, to ensure the development of healthy and positive character traits.

## Kata Kunci:

Ketidak hadiran ayah , Karakter, Anak usia dini

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dampak fatherless terhadap pembentukan karakter anak usia dini di Gampong Tanjung Deah. Mengingat peran ayah sebagai salah satu figur penting dalam perkembangan psikososial anak, ketidakhadirannya dapat memberikan pengaruh signifikan terhadap pembentukan karakter anak, khususnya dalam konteks nilai-nilai moral, etika, dan sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus untuk menggali secara mendalam pengalaman, persepsi, dan dampak dari ketidakhadiran ayah terhadap anak-anak usia dini di komunitas ini. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan ibu, serta observasi langsung pada anak-anak yang mengalami kondisi fatherless. Analisis data dilakukan secara tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola-pola perilaku dan dampak yang muncul dari ketidakhadiran ayah. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa anak-anak yang tumbuh tanpa figur ayah cenderung mengalami kesulitan dalam menginternalisasi nilai-nilai disiplin, tanggung jawab, dan pengendalian diri. Selain itu, ketidakhadiran ayah juga berdampak pada rendahnya rasa percaya diri dan kemampuan anak dalam berinteraksi sosial. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan pentingnya dukungan sosial dan peran aktif ibu serta komunitas dalam membantu pembentukan karakter anak-anak yang mengalami kondisi fatherless, guna memastikan perkembangan karakter yang sehat dan positif.

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## INTRODUCTION

Early childhood, which spans 0 to 8 years of age, is an important period for physical, cognitive and emotional development. Globally, this phase is seen as a crucial foundation for the formation of children's character and personality, as



well as for their future learning and well-being. According to organisations such as UNESCO, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the World Health Organization (WHO), appropriate interventions and support during this period have a major influence on child development (Amini, 2014).

At this stage, children experience rapid development in various aspects, including physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and moral. Their experiences and interactions with the environment, especially in the context of family and community, play an important role in forming the basis for future character development in line with (Purnamasari, 2021) that moral development is influenced by parental factors in educating. Likewise, the role of the family in fostering superior character and morals requires responsible nuclear family cooperation using their role as parents, so that children do not lose their parents (Purnamasari et al., 2022). Guidance from parents, especially the role of the father, has a major influence in this character building process (Arsyia Fajarrini & Umam, 2023). However, the phenomenon of fatherlessness is increasingly found in various communities, including in Gampong Tanjung Deah. Father absence can affect various aspects of child development, especially in terms of character formation, such as discipline, responsibility, and moral identity.

Previous research has focused more on the impact of father absence on children's academic and social aspects, while its influence on religious and moral development has received less attention. Studies such as those conducted by (Nurmalasari et al., 2024) show that father absence can have a negative impact on cognitive development and learning achievement while it also affects children's social and emotional development (Nurlatifah et al., 2020). However, research that deeply explores how father absence affects children's character formation in specific cultural and social contexts, particularly in relation to religious and moral values, is still very limited.

Gampong Tanjung Deah, as part of a community with strong cultural and religious values, faces its own challenges in maintaining and instilling these values in the younger generation, especially in children who grow up without a father figure. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap in the literature by analysing the impact of father absence on early childhood character building in Gampong Tanjung Deah, particularly in terms of internalising religious and moral values.

This research aims to analyse the impact of fatherlessness on early childhood character development in Gampong Tanjung Deah. Given the

importance of the early childhood period in shaping character, this research will also explore how father absence can affect children's personality development in the context of local culture and education policy.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses qualitative research using a qualitative approach to describe the problems and focus of the research (Creswell, 2017) basically aims to analyse the impact of the absence of father figures (fatherless) on early childhood character building in Gampong Tanjung Deah. To achieve this goal, this research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. The informants in this study were 10 mothers with early childhood. In this case, researchers interpret and explain the data obtained by researchers from interviews, observations, documentation, so as to get answers to problems in detail and clearly. Data were analysed through data reduction and triangulation by combining various data collection techniques and existing data sources (Lexy J. Moleong, 2007).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This study aims to analyse the impact of fatherlessness on early childhood character building in Gampong Tanjung Deah. Based on data obtained through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, the results of this study show that father absence has a significant influence on several aspects of children's character formation. The main findings of this research can be explained as follows:

### **1. Influence on Discipline and Responsibility**

Children who grow up without their fathers show difficulties in internalising the values of discipline and responsibility. Based on interviews with mothers and caregivers, many of them revealed that children tend to be less consistent in following daily rules and responsibilities, such as study routines and chores. Mothers and caregivers felt that the absence of fathers made it difficult for them to implement discipline effectively, as father figures are usually perceived as authorities who help enforce rules at home.

### **2. Impact on Self-Control and Emotions**

Observations of fatherless children suggest that they tend to have difficulties in managing their emotions, especially when faced with challenging or frustrating situations. ECD teachers interviewed reported

that these children are more prone to emotional outbursts and often find it difficult to calm down without adult help. This suggests that the presence of a father figure may play an important role in helping children learn to manage emotions and develop better self-control.

### 3. Low Self-Confidence

The absence of fathers also has an impact on children's self-confidence. Many mothers reveal that their children often show signs of a lack of confidence in themselves, especially in social interactions with peers. This is particularly evident in the school setting, where fatherless children are more likely to withdraw from group activities or feel uncomfortable when having to speak in front of the class. Lack of support and recognition from their fathers is considered a contributing factor to this lack of confidence.

### 4. Difficulties in Internalising Moral Values

Other findings suggest that children who grow up without a father have difficulty internalising moral values, such as honesty, cooperation and respect for others. Interviews with community and religious leaders in Gampong Tanjung Deah revealed that many children do not receive consistent inculcation of moral values at home, so they are often confused about the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. This is exacerbated by the lack of a father figure who can provide concrete examples of the application of these moral values in everyday life.

### 5. The Role of Community and Social Support

Although father absence has a negative impact on children's character development, this study also found that support from the community and the active role of mothers and caregivers can help mitigate this impact. In Gampong Tanjung Deah, mothers who are members of pengajian groups or other community social activities often get moral and practical support that helps them in educating their children. Preschool teachers also play an important role in providing character guidance to children at school.

### 6. Recommended Intervention

Based on these findings, the study recommends the importance of community-wide interventions to support children growing up without

fathers. This includes mentorship programmes for mothers, ECD teacher training on emotional management and child character development, and social activities that can help children develop self-confidence and strong moral values.

The results of this study show that father absence has a complex and significant impact on early childhood character formation in Gampong Tanjung Deah. Strong support from mothers, caregivers, teachers and the community is essential to ensure healthy and positive character development for children experiencing fatherless conditions. In line with (Wulandari & Shafarani, 2023) Fatherless conditions in Indonesia are caused by a patriarchal culture that assumes that the care of a child is the sole responsibility of a mother. This can affect the development of children because of the absence of a father's role in the child's soul. According to (Taufik & Amir, 2023) (Suciawati et al., 2024) father's involvement in Fostering is an active participation that involves physical, affective, and cognitive in the process of interaction between fathers and children and has the function of endowment, namely recognising children as individuals or individuals, protection, namely protection or protecting children from various dangers. Thus, the impact seen in the absence of the father causes the non-fulfilment of developmental tasks from all aspects which have an impact on the formation of children's character.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research reveals that fatherlessness has a significant impact on early childhood character development in Gampong Tanjung Deah. Children who grow up without a father show difficulties in internalising the values of discipline, responsibility and self-control, and tend to experience low self-confidence and difficulties in understanding moral values. Support from mothers, caregivers, teachers and the community play an important role in mitigating these negative impacts, but more coordinated interventions and ongoing social support are needed to ensure healthy character development for fatherless children.

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