



## FAMILY TRANSFORMATION AS A SOURCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CHARACTER EDUCATION: BANDURA'S SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY PERSPECTIVE

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this research is to describe the shift of the family in its function as the main pillar in instilling character values in early childhood. The method used in this research is a focused interview method with a qualitative approach. The stages of instilling children's character in the family today are (1) knowledge (knowing), where children are given an understanding of the values, norms, and principles expected in the family. (2) acting, where children need to practice these values in real actions, and (3) habit, where the expected positive characteristics have been internalized in children so that they automatically and unconsciously act by these values. Later, this development can be integrated and directed into every school activity. Thus, character education can be well integrated into the school curriculum and extracurricular activities. Through this approach, it is hoped that the goal of character development in children can be achieved more effectively and sustainably.*

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**Keywords:** Transformation, Character Education, Early Childhood, Bandura theory

## A. Introduction

To build the character of learners, the education system should further increase its contribution to nation-building, which if we look closely at this time has not contributed optimally. For students not only to master science and technology but also to have a strong character that upholds the culture of the Indonesian nation, early childhood education, which is the basic education of all learning, requires an effort to strengthen the character that is the foundation of learning (Adelina Yuristia, 2018). The ability of the system and also the learning approach must run according to the rules of the development of its learning citizens. Especially in PAUD services where the stages of development will greatly determine the future of children in the future.

Early Childhood Education is the initial stage in the learning process which is an important basis for the development of children's character. Therefore, the role of the education system in making an optimal contribution to nation-building must start from early childhood education. In addition to strengthening academic aspects, early childhood education must also pay attention to character aspects which are an important foundation in the life of an individual (Sumartias et al., 2020). Early childhood education is the initial stage in the learning process which is an important basis for the development of children's character. Therefore, the role of the education system in making an optimal contribution to nation-building must start from early childhood education. In addition to strengthening academic aspects, early childhood education must also pay attention to character aspects which are an important foundation in the life of an individual (Sumartias et al., 2020). Research by (Shubert et al., 2019) (2019) shows that many early childhood education institutions in Indonesia have not yet instilled character values thoroughly and integrated them into daily activities. The problem is reinforced by research conducted (Saptatiningsih & Permana, 2019), that technological developments have changed children's social interaction patterns, reducing opportunities to build healthy social and emotional character.

The abilities and skills that children must acquire can be acquired at the most basic level, namely the family. This level not only transforms culture for the younger generation but also helps determine the way of life, values, and character. Character

building has been encouraged since long ago long before the existence of modern civilization, this is intended to prepare young generations to face the era of globalization in the 21st Century (Muali & Rohmatika, 2019). During this period, all major human instruments are formed, not only intelligence but all psychological skills. Experts call this period the golden age of development (Rolina, 2016). At this point, it can be understood that character education must be implemented from an early age because early childhood is a very important period of development in human life.

In the face of accelerating digitalization, educators must also pay attention to the use of technology in early childhood learning. Technology can be an effective tool to improve the quality of learning and help children acquire new skills, but its use must be tailored to the age and stage of development of the child. Overall, strengthening character in early childhood is an important foundation for sustainable nation-building (Wiwin Mistiani, Edi Istiyono, 2022). The education system must take this into account and develop learning approaches that are appropriate to the stages of child development and strengthen the integration of Indonesian culture. By doing so, it is hoped that Indonesia's young generation can develop into individuals with strong character and be able to make a positive contribution to the nation and state.

Bandura in (Baehr, 2017) believes that children's characteristics that are formed early on will be able to color children's lives in the future. In addition, they will also be able to adjust to the surrounding environment because the adaptation process will run well. Bandura also argues that the process of imitation and self-adjustment to the environment is an important part of the process of strengthening character in children because it involves various forms of intelligence (emotional, cognitive, and language and culture) which are the foundation of children in stabilizing a character.

Bandura suggests that children's characteristics formed early on can affect their lives in the future. Therefore, the process of character building in children must be well-considered by parents, teachers, and the surrounding environment. One way that can be done is by setting a good example and showing positive behavior for children (Munawwarah, 2021). The process of imitation and adjustment to the environment is also considered important by

Bandura in the process of strengthening character in children. Bandura also emphasized that emotional, cognitive, language and cultural intelligence are important foundations in strengthening children's character. Therefore, parents and teachers need to provide the right experiences and stimulation for children to develop this intelligence.

In addition, Bandura also suggests that a good adaptation process in children can help them adjust to the surrounding environment, which will then help in the process of positive character building. By adjusting to the surrounding environment, children will find it easier to face challenges and changes that occur in the future. In this case, the role of parents and teachers is very important in helping children to develop intelligence and adjust to the surrounding environment (Rolina, 2016). Thus, children will have a strong foundation in forming a positive character and become independent individuals who can adapt to a changing environment.

At an early age, parental behavior motivates children to imitate. For this reason, parents should be able to become role models for children's lives in the family environment and transform the good values upheld in society (Adams, 2011). According to Bandura, the process of imitation in children runs very naturally by looking at the situations and conditions that exist in the family. According to (White & Warfa, 2011), the transformation of character cultivation in the family always involves the dominance of parents in providing daily examples. Society also takes part in creating an educational ecosystem in which it distributes every element of existing social institutions so that the transformation can be seen in patterns and behaviors that children can understand. In various studies, it is also mentioned that a conducive community situation plays a significant role in the process of transforming the cultivation of character values. A conducive community situation can help in the transformation process of cultivating early childhood character values. These factors have a significant influence on the formation of children's character and how interactions between children, families, social environments, communities, culture, and media can contribute to holistic character education (Jones & Prinz, 2005).

The integration built by schools and families will have a

significant impact on the process of instilling character values in children. In social life in the community, children will always imitate the behavior of parents that they often see when the interaction process occurs at home (Setiawan, 2014). Bandura also stated that children's cognitive social will grow well as experiences are formed from the family, school, and community environment. These aspects must go hand in hand to provide maximum service in the process of instilling character in early childhood (Gunawan, 2017). Exemplary is an important key in dealing with the social dynamics of the community that occurs.

The importance of integration between school and family in instilling character values in children cannot be doubted. When both parties work together, children will get a richer experience in character building. At home, children will be influenced by the behavior of parents and other family members that they often see. Therefore, parents need to set a good example for their children in behavior and attitude. Parents should demonstrate desirable values to their children, such as honesty, hard work, and respect for others. On the other hand, at school children will also be influenced by their teachers and peers. Therefore, schools need to provide holistic education to children, not only focusing on academic aspects but also on the development of character values. Schools should be able to create an environment that supports children's optimal growth and development and provide examples of good behavior.

In this integration process, parents and schools must communicate with each other and work together to achieve a common goal, which is to shape children's good character. Parents should recognize the education program implemented by the school and support their children in applying the character values learned at school at home. Meanwhile, schools should involve parents in the learning process and provide information related to children's character development. With the integration between school and family, children will have a consistent and integrated experience in character building. This will have a significant impact on children's growth and development, and help them become good and qualified individuals in the future.

The family environment can play a full role in instilling children's character by providing an adequate support system while still paying attention to aspects of child development

(Mahendra et al., 2019). The problem that occurs today in the era of Globalization and technology requires parents to work to meet basic needs, then they will neglect their main task as educators who must transform character values to children not only limited to reasoning learning (Mei-Ju et al., 2014). This is inseparable from changing times where the role of parents is reduced by the demands of life. The transformation of family services in character education patterns will be the focus of this research problem. This research tries to address the changing role of parents in providing character education to their children. In the era of globalization and technology, where parents often work to make ends meet, their role as character educators can be neglected. This research aims to identify and understand the transformation of family services in character education patterns as a response to these changes.

## **B. Method**

This type of research is descriptive qualitative research. This research can be classified as field research. According to Abudin (2000: 125), field research is research in which data collection is carried out in the field using qualitative research which produces data in the form of written or spoken words from the people studied and all kinds of behavior can also be observed. The interview itself is explained by Suwendra (2018), namely an interview is a conversation that is carried out to obtain accurate information from the person who is the source, then the information is reconstructed and connected to past experiences. According to Rijali (2019), interviews are divided into several methods, but this research will be carried out using a semi-structured interview method. So that researchers can play an active role in carrying out research, this is because when carrying out the interview the researcher can ask the interviewee about things that he wants to know in depth. To analyze data in descriptive qualitative research using the semi-structured interview method, this research was carried out using parents as respondents. The implementation time was in October 2022 in Wirobrajan Village Yogyakarta. Before carrying out the interview, the researcher will first contact the parents whether they are willing to be interviewed and when is the right time to interview the parents so that later the interview will run well.

## C. Result and Discussion

### Result

The changing social structure in society due to changing times has an impact on the education model given by parents to their children. The convenience that comes with the advancement of technology makes parents often forget an important aspect of children, namely the cultivation of character education as early as possible. They often leave their obligations as adults who must provide examples and role models for children in various aspects of life. They think that the faster children master new knowledge such as counting, reading, and using technology is an achievement to be proud of. This approach needs to be corrected if we don't want our children to become anti-social, individualistic, and ignorant of their cultural roots. There are still many aspects of child development that must also be prioritized at an early age such as the formation and cultivation of character values. The family as the earliest educational institution has begun to experience a paradigm shift as parents are busy outside the home as the backbone of the family.

Parents can teach daily character values to their children. For example, by modeling good behavior, praising children when they do good things, and sanctioning them when they do wrong. This will help children to understand character values and internalize them as part of themselves. In addition, families can also utilize technology to help in the formation of children's character. For example, by choosing television programs or video games that match the desired values, or inviting children to play educational games that can help develop skills and positive values. In this case, the role of teachers at school is also very important. Teachers can help parents in character building by providing holistic education and introducing character values to children. In addition, teachers can also provide support and advice for parents in terms of children's character building.

The pattern of character education according to Bandura should always require ideal family conditions and environment with an emphasis on emotional and cognitive development. How children speak to their elders, how they respect the meal by not talking during mealtime, and how they behave with courtesy are attitudes that are developed when they interact in the family

and community. Families must play an active role by providing role models and also learning models that can be integrated into children's daily activities (Zafi, 2018). The transformation process of character cultivation in the family always goes hand in hand with cognitive learning and logical development so that the examples of behavior given by parents can be lived by children both when they are in the school environment and the place of residence.

Adults must begin to change their perspective toward children by not seeing them as "small" adults but as more than that, namely, they have intelligence, the ability to remember and modify the stimulus given (Syabab et al., 2017). With a humane, humanist, and fun approach, children will become individuals who are more respectful of the surrounding conditions. Parents do not need to burden children with various demands that they think are something that must be achieved. Even though what parents demand is not necessarily a necessity that must be obtained by children. Often children become burdened, stressed, and feel depressed because of the wishes of parents who unwittingly burden the child's psychological condition. When children feel unhappy, then the various character education models to be achieved will not be able to be implemented properly.

Adults must begin to change their perspective towards children and see them as individuals who have intelligence and the ability to modify the stimulus given. This can help us to provide a more humane and humane approach to children so that they can become individuals who are more appreciative of their surroundings. However, unfortunately, there are still many parents who have too high expectations and demands for their children (Agboola & Chen, 2012). Parents often think that what they want is the best thing for their children, even though what parents want is not necessarily the needs that children should get. This can burden children and cause them to feel depressed and stressed. When children feel unhappy, then the various character education models that want to be achieved will not be able to be implemented properly.

It is important to create a fun and positive environment for the child. We should build a good relationship with children by listening to them, valuing their opinions, and providing positive encouragement. In this regard, a humanistic and humane approach will go a long way in shaping a child's good character



(Singh, 2019). We should treat children in a friendly, respectful, and empathetic manner. We should provide education that is fun and beneficial to children so that they feel happy and motivated to learn. In conclusion, as adults, we must understand and appreciate children as individuals who have unique potential and intelligence. We must provide space and opportunities for children to explore and discover their potential. In addition, we also need to create a positive and fun environment for children and provide a humane and humanist approach. Thus, we can help children to grow and develop into good and noble individuals.

It becomes a note for us together related to children's psychological problems due to inappropriate stimuli. The basis and foothold in instilling character values according to Bandura must also prioritize humanist and humane aspects. The goal is that children are not disturbed in other aspects of development. According to (Subianto, 2013) parents who do not fully understand the various dynamics of learning models can ask teachers at school to monitor children's development specifically related to their behavior patterns. This can help the process of transforming children's learning to instill character education so that it has a strong foundation based on the development of children's cognitive and psychological aspects. The family also has a function as a social institution that can fortify children from various influences of spectacles and associations that are not by the norms that apply in society (Jailani, 2014).

The conditions of the times should be able to be anticipated by parents by changing various learning approaches according to the characteristics of children. According to (Muali & Rohmatika, 2019) children's characteristics include: every child is a unique person, play is a child's world, every child's work and idea is something valuable to them, children are free to express every idea they have (originality), and every child needs a sense of comfort and security in their daily activities. The task of parents is then more to be a facilitator in various children's activities by providing space for freedom of expression and also presenting a sense of appreciation so that self-confidence arises in children so that they feel their existence is recognized. Character values will emerge slowly along with the stimulus given by parents to children by paying attention to the above aspects. The family

as the smallest manifestation of social institutions in society (according to Bandura's theory) is a real role model for children. As explained above, the core of Bandura's theory is modeling, the process of observational learning or observing the behavior of others; individuals learn to imitate or copy the behavior of others who become models for themselves.

Parents can become facilitators for children by implementing utilization and conditioning so that the process of instilling character values can be internalized with various forms of active and fun learning activities by the characteristics of early childhood education that learn by playing and discovering new experiences through various forms of stimulus games that target cognitive and psychomotor aspects. Families today are not only required to provide new knowledge for children in the form of reasoning, numeracy, reading, language skills, and many others. More than that, families must be able to transform with the changing times, namely as a filter for new knowledge obtained by children. Character cultivation is often forgotten by parents because they are too focused on cognitive intelligence aspects (Izzaty, 2012). The process of character cultivation is made through a continuous and sustainable social process during the stages of child development. These educational patterns can be formulated into a learning curriculum that can be practiced at school and home (Raguindin, 2020).

## **Discussion**

The main pillar in building a nation's civilization is having children with strong character. The family is the spearhead in the process of internalizing life values that can be taught through social institutions both in society and in schools. Various types of spectacles and guidance become a chain that must complement each other. Learning activities can be started by providing an overview of activities that can provide values of politeness, honesty, and religiosity in children. Thus, the one who has the most difficult task in educating and nurturing children is the family, especially parents (Lagacé-Séguin & Coplan, 2015).

Parents also need to continuously strive to model good behavior and be role models for their children. This can be done by showing the right ways to overcome various problems faced, as well as showing a positive attitude and tolerance in interacting

with others. Paying attention to and supervising activities that children do outside the home, such as hanging out with peers, joining clubs or organizations, and so on. By doing this, parents can help children choose a positive environment that supports the development of good character. In addition, schools also have a very important role in the process of building children's character. By providing formal education, schools can also provide character learning through programs specifically designed for it. Teachers and educators also need to be role models for children by providing examples of good behavior and supporting children's character development. To build a strong character in children, there needs to be a good integration between family, school, and community (Rowley et al., 2013).

As stated by Montessori (Haslip & Gullo, 2018) the environment has a huge influence on child development and learning. The environment and also the social conditions of society contribute greatly to the process of cultivating this character. In an environment where violence, crime, and social norms are widely violated, children will become aggressive, violent, and unable to respect others. Social interactions should reflect the dynamics of a healthy social life that can provide a sense of security and comfort to the child. Families that pay attention to children will produce children who pay attention to the environment around them, and there are many other lessons that children can receive in the family environment. As a role model, the family must also be able to become an agent of change by instilling character values that are by local cultural norms and values (Annisa Fatmalia, 2018). Cultural values can also color children's characteristics to build a national identity based on the philosophy of Pancasila.

One of the relevant studies is the research conducted (Olszewski-Kubilius, 2015) which investigated the effectiveness of character learning programs in elementary schools. The study found that such programs can significantly improve students' character in various aspects, including positive attitude, responsibility, and social skills. These findings support the view that schools have an important role in shaping children's character through appropriate programs. However, some studies provide different findings. For example, research by (Van Sluijs et al., 2013) showed that the effects of character learning programs

may vary depending on contextual factors, such as family environment and school culture. The findings suggest that good integration between family, school, and community is crucial in building children's character.

In explaining the findings, it is important to consider the different research methodologies and contexts. Each study has different limitations and variables, which may affect the results and generalizations that can be made. Therefore, careful interpretation needs to be given to the findings. In this context, a suggestion for further research is to take a comprehensive approach that involves collaboration between schools, families, and communities in children's character development (Bosma et al., 2009). Research could investigate the role of each party in shaping children's character and how the interaction between them can improve character learning outcomes. In addition, the research could explore effective strategies for engaging teachers and educators as role models for children, as well as ways to improve the quality of existing character learning programs (Peisner-Feinberg et al., 2010).

Overall, through this literature review, it can be concluded that character learning programs in schools can make a positive contribution to children's character development. However, it should be noted that the effectiveness of such programs can be affected by various contextual factors, and good integration between family, school, and community is essential. Thus, further research is needed to deepen our understanding of how to build strong character in children and improve the effectiveness of character learning programs in schools.

#### **a. Child character development carried out by the family**

Etymologically, nurturing comes from the word "foster" which means, leader, manager, and guide. Therefore, nurturing here is educating and maintaining the child, taking care of his food, drink, clothing, and his success from the initial period to adulthood. The basic task of child development is to develop a correct understanding of how the world works. In other words, a child's main task in development is to learn the "rules of the game" (Tatik Ariyanti, 2012). Various parenting patterns can affect children's creativity, among others, the physical environment, and the social environment of internal and external education.

The intensity of children's need to get help from parents for ownership and development of the basics of self-creativity shows the existence of internal needs, namely when children still need a lot of help from parents to own and develop the basics of self-creativity (based on instinct), based on reason and based on heart. From the results of the study that if parents play a role in education, children will show improved learning achievement, followed by improved attitudes, socio-emotional stability, discipline, and children's aspirations to study to the highest level, and will even help children when they work and have a family. Children's creative power will grow along with the formation of character in children obtained through various sources of learning experiences (Sirkko et al., 2019).

### **b. Family as the first and main vehicle of education**

Sociologists believe that the family has an important role in determining the progress of a nation, so they theorize that the family is a very important unit in society. Therefore, sociologists believe that all kinds of societal depravity are the result of weak family institutions. For a child, the family is the first and main place for growth and development. According to the UN General Assembly resolution, the main function of the family is as a vehicle for educating, nurturing, and socializing children, developing the ability of all its members to perform their functions in society properly, as well as, providing satisfaction and a healthy environment for the achievement of a prosperous family". The family is the earliest and most effective place to carry out the functions of the health, education, and welfare departments (Garvis et al., 2018). If families fail to teach honesty, passion, the desire to be the best, and to master basic skills, it will be very difficult for other institutions to correct their failures. Because the failure of the family in shaping children's character will result in the growth of a society with poor character or no character. Therefore, every family must have the awareness that the character of the nation is highly dependent on the character education of children at home.

## **D. Conclusion**

Flexibility in efforts to instill character in children must also

be accompanied by the desire of parents to provide fundamental changes related to the education process that does not override the aspect of instilling children's character. This becomes crucial when children do not have an identity, they will be easily influenced by various forms of deviant behavior. The pattern of habituation is very good to be instilled when children are still early. Creativity supported by a strong character will lead children to patterns of interaction with the surrounding environment. This creativity can also be used as an asset for children in forming new knowledge both in the school environment and the place of residence. The family becomes very important in efforts to instill character when the transformation process can run according to ideal conditions. Further research can be conducted to deepen the understanding of cognitive and social aspects in children's character education. This study can involve the development of evaluation methods that can measure and monitor character development holistically, which can be useful for developing character education models in schools.

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