



Paternal involvement: The central role of fathers in managing children's emotions

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Abstract

Emotional development in early childhood plays a vital role in forming the basis of psychological well-being. Father involvement is one of the main factors in the family to manage children emotions. This study aims to determine the central role of fathers in managing early childhood emotions. The research method used in the study was a qualitative case study design. The research subjects involved four fathers who have early childhood. Data was collected through interviews and observation. The results show that the father's involvement is not only limited to the physical aspect but also has a solid contribution to the emotional aspect of the child. It can be concluded that emotional management in early childhood requires holistic attention from fathers. The four fathers had different views and strategies. Some values often emerged as the main focus, including open communication, empathy, combining skills with emotional gentleness, and providing emotional support. The implications can serve as a foundation for fathers' parenting in early childhood and can be enriched to include understanding and emphasizing fathers' involvement in early childhood emotional development. It can guide ECE educators to integrate fathers in learning activities, opening insights on strategies for managing early childhood emotions and the values fathers apply in managing children's emotions.

Keywords: *early childhood education; emotional intelligent; emotions management; paternal involvement; roles of parent.*



A. INTRODUCTION

Social-emotional is one of the essential aspects of early childhood development that plays an important role in forming the basis of early childhood well-being (Calhoun et al, 2020). Social Emotional is a term that refers to aspects of an individual's social relationships and emotional being. It includes an individual's ability to understand and manage emotions, interact with others, and build healthy and positive social relationships. Social-emotional learning often includes the development of skills such as empathy, effective communication, problem-solving, self-understanding, and emotion management (Moreno et al, 2019). During this time, children are actively building the foundations for the ability to interact socially, manage emotions, and form relationships with their surroundings (Murphy et al, 2021). An in-depth understanding of social-emotional development in early childhood is an urgent need to develop children's development (McCormick et al., 2021; Weissberg, 2019).

In everyday life, the role of mothers dominates the literature and research on child development(Nurhani & Putri, 2020; Rohmalina et al, 2019). The primary responsibility for educating and nurturing children is more often on mothers. On the other hand, the father's role is limited to meeting the family's economic needs without actively educating, caring for, and providing warm affection to children (Septiani & Nasution 2018). As reported by Suara.com on November 12, 2023, Elly Risman, a psychologist at the Kick Andy event, stated that Indonesia is one of the fatherless countries where fathers are emotionally absent and spiritually absent from their children. Children's emotional development is strongly influenced by the role of parents, who act as prominent educators in the early stages of a child's life. Early childhood children tend to have a strong bond with parents, especially mothers, in this golden phase. The role of parents in emotional development is significant, considering that early childhood has a high level of trust and is highly dependent on the support and guidance of parents, especially mothers (Wijayanto, 2020). The importance of the role of parents in supporting children's social and emotional growth emphasizes the role of parents in shaping children's development. Positive parenting, such as positive reinforcement and positive praise, are practical tools for achieving reasonable social-emotional adjustment in children (Okorn et al, 2022).

The father's attention to role includes aspects where the father actively observes the child's development and tries to create a safe, comfortable, and joyful relationship between father and child. It involves the father's positive understanding and acceptance of his child and encouragement to develop optimally (Nafisah et al, 2022; Philip et al, 2021). In addition, there is support for the father's role in parenting; the father can fulfill his role as a parent in caring for children. The role of fathers in the family, especially in childcare in this modern era, is the main thing in providing support for optimal child development (Bussa et al. 2018; Wahyuni et al. 2021).

Paternal involvement in shaping children's emotional intelligence cannot be ignored. With their parenting styles and interactions, fathers make unique contributions in shaping the foundation of children's emotional intelligence. A positive paternal role can enrich the child's social experience, expand the child's social support network, and help develop

emotional skills. The father's physical presence in the child's daily life is significant. Direct interaction and physical presence create strong emotional bonds and provide a sense of security to children. Involved fathers will be active in children's activities, whether engaging in play, helping with homework, or supporting children's extracurricular activities. It will strengthen family relationships and model essential values.

The mother's role in the child's daily care is recognized as more dominant, partly due to the mother's availability and knowledge in caring for the child. Reasons given by parents for the mother's more significant role in child care include spending time with the child, the mother's knowledge of the child's needs and preferences, and the mother's familiarity with cues or signals the child gives. They reflect the traditional role of mothers in child care in many cultures worldwide (Jeong et al., 2018). Although mothers still spend more time caring for children than fathers, a caregiver primarily based on time spent with the child (quantity) has a less substantial impact on child development than considering the quality of interactions during the time spent together. Research often focuses only on mothers and has the same limitations as research on fathers. Research does not always acknowledge that fathers are part of the caregiver network, that others (e.g., mothers) also influence children and should also be included in the research, and that, at the very least, the effects of maternal care should be controlled for. Although research involving both parents is beginning to emerge, it must still be the norm (Cabrera et al, 2018).

The concept of fatherhood is not only limited to positive interactions between fathers and children but also includes attention to children's developmental needs, creating warm, comfortable, initiative-filled relationships, and the ability to understand and accept children by using various resources such as visible behavior, affection, and cognitive understanding (Anhusadar & Kadir, 2023). In addition, the level of fatherhood is also influenced by factors such as age, ethnicity, marital status, and sexual orientation. History reflects that in some societies, the traditional role is that a man is responsible for providing for his family. At the same time, a woman is expected to take care of the household, cook, and care for the children. However, social changes have altered the dynamics of parental care. In the past, mothers were considered solely responsible for childcare, while fathers were the primary breadwinners. Today, however, both often work outside the home. Reflecting that working mothers are part of modern life, it is not considered a deviation from social norms but a response to societal changes.

Every father has a unique approach to managing their children's emotions. These strategies can include talking, participating in shared activities, providing support when the child is in need, and teaching life values involving emotional aspects. This diversity shows that there is no single correct approach but rather an active role that reflects the needs and personality of each child. Fathers can play a role in children's emotional education, guiding children to recognize and manage emotions skillfully. It includes helping children understand their own and others' feelings and teaching problem-solving skills. As time goes on and child development evolves, the role of fathers plays a vital role as an element that supports the progress of children's growth and development. The importance of managing children's

emotions has become increasingly prominent in society as a whole. Children who understand and manage their emotions tend to have healthier social relationships, better academic performance, and the ability to cope with stress.

Fathers' role in parenting is to use positive patterns in activities, warm responses, and responsibility. The parenting role played by fathers can facilitate children's growth and development and contribute to building harmony in the work environment (Sairah & Chandra 2022). Fostering children by a father dramatically affects children's cognitive and emotional development (Waroka, 2022). When a father shows attention and affection towards his child, the child will feel happiness and joy in his relationship with the father, which can produce positive emotional development. If positive emotions are nurtured and stimulated, the child's ability to manage them will develop well (Azizah & Amining, 2015).

Furthermore, fathers' involvement optimizes child development, making children brave and independent (Nur Afifah, 2022). Fathers provide a form of stimulation for children to solve problems and add insight to their knowledge so that they continue to practice being brave. Fathers play an essential role in the family structure, with functions and responsibilities that are different from those of mothers. Mothers tend to focus on nurturing, while fathers emphasize protection. Over time, this orientation has changed, both in substance and implementation. Managing children's emotions is also faced with several challenges and obstacles. Some children may have difficulty expressing their feelings, while environmental factors or parental incomprehension may be barriers. Therefore, the father's role is not only about providing support but also about identifying and overcoming barriers that may arise in this process.

However, the role of fathers in educating children in Indonesia today still needs to show a satisfactory level. According to data from the Indonesian The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), fathers spend only about 1 hour daily interacting with children (Asy & Ariyanto, 2019). The underlying factor of this problem is the father's lack of knowledge related to childcare, so the application tends to be less than optimal and less contribute to educating children. The results of research on the quality of childcare conducted by NCPRC in 2015 contained findings regarding improving the quality of childcare in Indonesia (Nurhani & Putri, 2020). One of the causes of the absence of the father's role is a need for a more in-depth understanding of the extent of the father's expected role in direct and indirect influence on child development (Cardenas et al., 2022).

When a man becomes a 'new father' in caring for a child, there is an awareness of the father's role in childcare and an understanding of the importance of father involvement in child development (Harrington, 2022). There is a new experience of mastering knowledge and skills related to caring for children, such as infant care, nurturing, and understanding child development. However, fathers' involvement in child development is still limited in developing aspects of child development, especially regarding children's social-emotional development. This study aims to determine the central role of fathers in managing early childhood. This study will explain the role of fathers in the formation of children's emotional intelligence, the father's strategies in supporting children's emotional intelligence, the values

instilled by fathers in managing children's emotions, and the obstacles and challenges in the role of fathers in developing children's emotional intelligence. This study cannot understand how much a father's involvement can influence children's ability to manage and express their emotions. In addition, it aims to identify patterns of father involvement that have a good impact on emotional development in early childhood.

B. METHOD

The research method used in this study is a qualitative case study approach to understand fathers' involvement in managing children's emotions. The case study design was chosen to enable researchers to gain an in-depth and contextual understanding of the role of fathers in managing children's emotions. The sampling technique used purposive sampling, and the researcher selected the sample by considering (1) families who have children aged 0-6 years; (2) families who have fathers who work far away (LDM / Long Distance Marriage) with their mothers; (3) families who have fathers who work fulltime; (4) families who have fathers who work freelance; (5) considering variations in educational background; (6) social status; (7) families who have working wives; (9) and families who have non-working wives.

Data collection techniques are used through interviews and observations. Researchers observed early childhood owned by respondents by looking at the standard level of achievement of children's emotional development adjusted to their developmental tasks. Of the four families selected by the researcher, including: (1) the first family has children aged 4 years and 6 years; (2) the second family has children aged 2 years and 4 years; (3) the third family has children aged 2 years and 6 years; (4) the fourth family has children aged 6 years. The observation process was carried out by observing the development of children in their daily lives, including researchers making observations that occur at school, at home, and in the surrounding environment. In addition, researchers also conducted interviews with informants. The interview process is open-ended, where the researcher has prepared questions but does not prepare answers for the respondent, so the respondent answers the questions freely according to his experience. The informants in this study are four fathers who have early childhood. This sample was chosen because it already represents various variations of sample selection, including: (1) The first sample is from a family where the father works remotely (LDM), and the mother does not work; (2) the second sample is from a family where the father works (teacher) with limited time, and the mother works (midwife) with unlimited time/shift system; (3) the third sample, the father works freelance/entrepreneurship and the mother works (doctor) with shifts; (4) the fourth sample, the father works as a teacher with limited time.

Researchers used data analysis techniques described by Milles and Huberman, which included data reduction, data presentation, and data validation. Data reduction involves summarising and focusing on essential aspects of the research. This stage focuses on the father's role in managing children's emotions. Data presentation provides a narrative description of all information found during field research activities. Data validation is the final stage that assists researchers in formulating overall conclusions from the data to address

research problems. Data analysis techniques using triangulation, according to (Moleong, 2005) there is 4 data triangulation: Source triangulation collects data from various sources, such as interviews with fathers and children and direct observation.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Result

Researchers interviewed four fathers of young children to get an overview of how fathers manage young children's emotions. The following table describes the participants with a description of the initials of the name, age of the father, occupation, and last education.

Tabel 1. Demographic Data of Participants

Informant	Age	Job	Last Education
TA	30 years old	Self-employed	Diploma
AM	34 years old	Teacher	Bachelor
ID	38 years old	Self-employed	Diploma
MI	32 years old	Self-employed	Senior High School

TA's first respondent is a father of a 4-year-old and a 6-year-old, and he is creatively involved in his children's daily lives. He may often do art projects with them, design games, or even organize explorative activities in nature. TA's father tends to support his children's creative development and is often a source of inspiration for them, but due to the distance of his father's work, there is limited time to be together. Even when apart, the children often video call their father to talk. The second respondent, AM, is a father of a 2-year-old and a 4-year-old who is a good listener, recognizable by his patience and attention to his children's needs and stories. He may enjoy sitting with his children, listening to their little stories, and responding positively and supportively to all their activities. This ability helps children feel heard and loved, supporting their emotional and social development. The third respondent ID is a father of 2 young children (2 and 6 years old) who is very focused on his children's education from an early age. He may be directly involved in the teaching and learning process, reading books together and creating a fun learning environment at home. ID fathers often appreciate the importance of providing a robust educational foundation early on and are always looking for creative ways to make learning a fun experience. The fourth respondent, MI, is an adventurous father of a 6-year-old and is often a role model for his children when facing challenges. He may enjoy taking his family on vacation, exploring nature, or engaging in sporting activities together. MI fathers teach children resilience, cooperation, and curiosity through

positive, adventurous experiences. After analyzing the participants, the researcher conducted interviews and found the following discussion.

Fathers' perception in managing a child's emotions. Based on the results of interviews with four participants, the perception of fathers in managing emotions has different opinions. However, the father believes that managing emotions must be instilled early. TA's father's perception of managing emotions in children by focusing on understanding and responding to changes in children's emotions.

“Saya terlibat aktif dalam kegiatan saat di rumah untuk membangun kecerdasan emosional anak saya.”

(I am actively involved in activities at home to build my child's emotional intelligence) - CWTA.

Then, AM's father expressed that a father must manage children's emotions early on:

“Saya juga bantu istri ajarin anak” (I also helped his wife educate the children) – CWAM.

Then, ID's father's perception reveals that emotional intelligence in children is essential:

“Fokus saya itu untuk bangun kedekatan, juga bantu anak paham emosinya sendiri”

(My focus is on building closeness and helping children understand their emotions) - CWID.

Moreover, MI's father's perception said something similar:

“Walaupun saya kerja sampe sore, memang mengatur waktu sama anak itu sangat menantang. Tapi sebagai ayah, saya selalu berusaha ada waktu sama dia, dengar apa yang dia cerita, dukung dia.”

(Even though I work until sunset, managing children can be challenging. But as a father, I always try to create quality time and listen to my children talk as child support) – CWMI.

All four fathers emphasized the importance of active engagement and emotional understanding in managing children's development, although they had different educational backgrounds and life experiences. From fathers with high school backgrounds to those with university degrees, all acknowledged the diversity of how they dealt with challenges in managing children's emotions. The importance of emotional intelligence as a skill that needs to be taught early on is strongly emphasized by these fathers. Although the four fathers have different educational backgrounds and life experiences, they recognize the diversity of ways of dealing with the challenges of managing children's emotions. The awareness of the importance of emotional intelligence as a skill that needs to be taught early on is a striking common point in their perceptions. Thus, active engagement and emotional understanding are considered critical elements in managing children's development, which is universal despite the different life contexts of each father.

Father's engagement strategy in managing a child's emotions. The results of the interviews revealed the different father's strategy for managing emotions in early childhood. Father's strategy is to be a good listener for children, as expressed by TA's father, always listen when they want to talk, provide support when they need it, and create

a strong relationship. Awareness of children's emotions helps them respond better in difficult situations (CWTA). Then, the father's strategy always involves children making their own decisions; this is in line with what AM's father states that he always involving children in making simple decisions gives them a sense of control and helps manage emotions. For example, choosing clothes, food, or other activities (CWAM). The strategy used by fathers in their involvement in managing children's emotions is building closeness to children, in accordance with the statement of Father ID. The focus as a father is to build closeness with children, provide an understanding of their emotional changes, and help them overcome emotional challenges in a positive way (CWID).

In addition, the father's involvement strategy in managing emotions by giving full attention to children. According to MI's father's statement, he focuses on activities that build children's emotional intelligence—talking often with children, giving their full attention when they need it, and playing together to teach them how to manage emotions. Open communication is key, as is trying to create an environment that supports the expression of positive emotions (CWMI). Analysis of the four fathers' expressions showed that fathers actively teach children to recognize and manage their emotions. Modeling acceptance of a range of emotions helps create an environment where children feel comfortable sharing their feelings. Consistency in providing support and creating daily routines provides a sense of security and stability for children. Routines help children manage emotions by giving structure to their day. A positive approach and reinforcement through rewards are important parts of the father's strategy. Providing positive support for children's good behavior helps build confidence and provides positive guidance. Through the implementation of these strategies, fathers not only help children manage emotions but also build strong relationships and support children's early emotional development. This approach demonstrates the active and positive role of fathers in guiding children through the journey of emotional development.

Fathers' values instilled in managing a child's emotions. Four fathers have different opinions about the values instilled by managing children's emotions. TA instills values in children, such as open communication, patience, and acceptance of various emotions.

“Sebagai ayah, saya mau anak saya mengerti perasaannya dan bisa terbuka berbicara untuk mengelola emosi bersama”

(As a father, I want my children to understand every feeling and to be able to talk openly to manage emotions together) - CWTA.

The values instilled, such as empathy and sensitivity, are in line with the expression of Father AM, instilling the value of empathy and sensitivity to the feelings of others.

“Saya ingin anak-anak saya tidak hanya bisa kelola emosinya sendiri tapi juga memahami dan mendukung teman-teman mereka dalam menghadapi perasaan yang sulit dimengerti”

(I want my children to not only manage their own emotions but also understand and support their friends in dealing with difficult feelings) - CWAM.

The values instilled combine skills with emotional gentleness. ID's father said that combining skills with emotional gentleness—values such as consistency, integrity, and modeling.

“Sebagai ayah ingin anak-anak memahami pentingnya mengelola emosi dengan cara yang positif dan konsisten”

(As a father, I want my children to understand the importance of managing emotions in a positive and consistent way) - CWID.

In addition, values are instilled by providing emotional support. The opinion of MI's father emphasizes time management and flexibility in dealing with difficult situations for children.

“Sebagai ayah, saya ingin anak memiliki keterampilan untuk mengatasi tantangan dengan kepala dingin dan memberikan dukungan emosional kepada satu sama lain”

(As a father, I want my children to have the skills to overcome challenges with a cool head and provide emotional support to each other) - CWMI.

Overall, the four fathers illustrated that a holistic approach, the values taught, and attention to children's social relationships play an important role in shaping their emotional skills. It provides a solid foundation for their children's development into individuals who have a good understanding of themselves and others and are able to manage emotions healthily. Differences in the values instilled reflect the diversity of approaches to shaping children's emotional well-being.

Fathers' involvement challenges in managing a child's emotions. The challenges of fathers' involvement in managing children's emotions are different for each father. TA's father said that the biggest challenge faced in managing children's emotions is when they experience changes, for example, when they start school or when there are environmental changes. Meanwhile, Father AM's opinion as a working father is that the biggest challenge is creating a balance between work and quality time with the children.

“Terkadang, setelah hari yang panjang di pekerjaan, merasa lelah dan kurang energi untuk terlibat secara aktif dalam kehidupan emosional anak-anak. Namun, sebagai ayah menyadari pentingnya keterlibatan, jadi berusaha untuk menciptakan momen-momen berarti, walaupun itu hanya sebentar”

(Sometimes, after a long day at work, I feel tired and lack the energy to be actively involved in the children's emotional lives. However, as fathers, we realize the importance of involvement, so we try to create meaningful moments, even if it is only for a short time) - CWAM.

ID fathers felt that the main challenge was when children faced conflicts or disagreements with their friends.

“Saya rasa, membimbing mereka dalam mengatasi konflik dengan cara yang sehat dan memahami emosi orang lain itu rumit. Jadi saya fokus pada membimbing anak untuk memahami perspektif orang lain dan menemukan solusi yang positif”

(I think guiding them in resolving conflicts healthily and understanding others' emotions can be tricky. So, I focus to guide children to understand others' perspectives and how to find positive solutions) - CWID.

In MI's father's opinion, the challenge faced is when children experience disappointment or failure in something—providing support without making them feel overprotected.

“Menyemangati mereka untuk belajar dari pengalaman tidak berkembang dari kegagalan adalah hal yang membuat saya kadang tertekan. Bahkan menemukan kata-kata yang tepat bisa menjadi sulit dalam situasi itu”

(Encouraging them to learn from the experience and grow from failure is stressful. Then finding the right words can be difficult in these situations) - CWMII.

Overall, each father had different challenges in managing children's emotions. All fathers' statements showed an awareness of the importance of emotional engagement with their children, even in the midst of these challenges. To overcome these challenges, fathers need to take concrete steps, such as prioritizing time with their children, increasing their emotional literacy, and communicating openly with their partners or other supporters. In addition, supporting changes in cultural and gender norms that promote fathers' emotional engagement can help create a more supportive environment.

2. Discussion

Emotional awareness and the ability to see children's emotions as a natural part of their development can improve the quality of fathers' parenting and support children's positive emotional development. As the primary caregiver for the child, a father should voluntarily carry out all childcare tasks without any pressure from outside sources or external factors. Fathers' involvement in caring for children involves planning, thinking, caring, evaluating, monitoring, caring, and praying for their children (Afriliani et al, 2021).

Children's way of regulating emotions is a developmental process that is influenced by various factors (Carroll et al., 2020). The findings from this study support previous research showing that social-emotional learning programs can teach social and emotional competencies to children effectively and explicitly. Promoting social and emotional regulation and well-being has great potential to reduce the economic and social burden of mental health disorders and their devastating effects during adolescence and adulthood. Therefore, it is not surprising that this has become an important goal for educators.

In addition, children observe how their parents express emotions and interact with others, then imitate the behavior they observe from parents and the methods used to

manage emotions (Khusniyah, 2018). Children's temperament also plays a role in their emotion regulation, influenced by the parenting style applied. For example, when children experience unsupportive or inattentive parenting, they become more prone to negative emotions or anger, which often leads to further behavioral problems. Difficult temperaments can be a two-way source of problems that can trigger more negative emotions from parents if not properly supervised. Parents need to realize that not only do their emotions and the way they educate affect children's emotional development, but also that if children do not understand the impact of children's emotions on themselves, children can fall into patterns of ineffective and inattentive parental behavior, which in turn can contribute to children's negative behavior. There is a good understanding of the four fathers' views on managing children's emotions; all four fathers are of the opinion that emotion management should be done from an early age. Fathers' perceptions of children's emotions are also related to the parenting style applied. All four participating fathers viewed children's emotions as something that needed to be followed up with full support and tended to apply parenting styles that were more supportive of children's emotional development.

Fathers' perceptions of children's emotions are also related to the parenting style applied. All four participating fathers viewed their children's emotions as something that needed to be followed up with full support and tended to apply parenting styles that were more supportive of their children's emotional development. One of the most effective strategies is modeling behavior. By demonstrating healthy ways to manage emotions, fathers provide a direct example to their children. When children see fathers constructively handle stress or disappointment, they are more likely to imitate that pattern of behavior. Fathers need to provide a safe space for children to express their emotions. By not judging or blaming, fathers help children feel accepted and understood in expressing their feelings, be it excitement, fear, or disappointment. Fathers can invite the child to participate in finding ways to overcome challenges or manage difficult emotions. It gives the child a sense of responsibility in managing their own emotions.

Strategize the role of fathers by playing a role in establishing open communication with children. Creating an environment where children feel comfortable talking about their emotions can help them manage their feelings better. Fathers should be actively involved in their children's lives, whether it is through shared activities, reading bedtime stories, or simply talking, which can provide opportunities to stimulate emotional discussions and build closeness between fathers and children. The role of fathers in managing children's emotions is crucial in shaping children's emotional well-being and development. Social and emotional learning becomes very important for children. Social intelligence can help children cope with stress, develop empathy, communication, and social problem-solving skills, and facilitate emotional recovery (Kamei & Harriott, 2020).

The discussion of fathers' values instilled in managing children's emotions covers various aspects that shape the way fathers respond to and direct children's emotional development. Fathers' active role in their children's lives is a value that has a major impact

on emotional management. This value includes direct participation in the child's activities, listening, and giving full attention when the child needs emotional support. Then, the value of a role in emotional education includes the father's efforts to teach the child about emotion recognition, emotion regulation, and other emotional skills. They are helping children develop a better understanding of their feelings and how to manage them. In addition, open communication is a value that supports a healthy relationship between fathers and children. The presence of communication helps create an environment where the child feels comfortable to talk about their feelings, thus helping in managing emotions.

Moreover, fathers should instill the value of empathy, helping children understand and feel their feelings better. It involves the father's ability to respond sensitively to the child's feelings and provide the necessary emotional support. The father's role in taking care of the child creates a sense of security and a close relationship with the child. It is in line with research of Waroka (2022) that the role of a father has a good impact on children's emotional maturity. It shows that when a father is positively involved, warm, and in accordance with the needs of the child, it will help build and facilitate good child development by instilling values in managing emotions in children. As a father, creating an environment where children feel comfortable to talk about their feelings is very important.

Challenges in the role of fathers in managing children's emotions are an important aspect and can differ between fathers. A challenge recognized by some fathers is when the child experiences a change in environment, such as starting school or a change in daily routine. It can affect the child's emotions, and fathers may find it difficult to understand these changes fully. Also, working fathers may face challenges in creating a balance between work and quality time with children. Fatigue after work can be a barrier to actively engaging in children's emotional lives. Fathers need to learn how to manage their children's emotions and provide emotional support without being overly protective, which is another challenge they face. Fathers need to continue to learn and develop these skills as the children develop. It is in line with the research that every father has different challenges but must be aware of and needs to improve parenting. Understanding and awareness of these challenges is an important first step to improving fathers' role in managing children's emotions. By building this awareness, fathers can create an environment that better supports children's emotional development. The level of father involvement in China varies by factors such as geographical location, social class, and maternal support. It suggests that cultural, economic, and social factors play an important role in shaping the level of father participation (Li, 2020). Research suggests that fathers' active participation in their children's lives can have a positive impact on children's adjustment. This influence may be through the formation of a secure bond between father and child. The relationship between the father and mother also plays a role in determining the extent of the father's involvement. Thus, paternal involvement is related to a significant increase in three domains of cognition, language, and social-emotional skills (Wang et al., 2022).

Emotional skills can be mastered at various stages of life. Regardless of one's initial traits or behaviors, such as being shy, short-tempered, or having difficulty interacting with others, with the right motivation and effort, one can develop emotional intelligence to the fullest. The impact of this emotional intelligence development will be felt by children in the future, especially in the context of Islamic education, when they reach adolescence and adulthood (Rahman & Masripah, 2021). Research shows that it is quite strongly that fathers influence children's development (Keown et al, 2018). It has important implications for policy and practice in the various developmental domains reviewed. For example, practitioners and policymakers should consider ways to increase fathers' role in children's language development. It could involve supporting programs aimed at low-income families, given that children from these families may have less exposure to parenting that facilitates language development compared to middle-class children. It is critical to develop strategies that encourage more fatherhood in parenting efforts to support children's holistic development. Early childhood education, as an institution responsible for early childhood learning, should recognize children's social-emotional development. Through this father's role, children learn how to self-regulate and form a positive personality, which will have an impact on the future development of emotional intelligence. However, in the field, early childhood education often focuses more on developing academic abilities, such as improving reading, writing, and counting skills, rather than on developing children's social-emotional development (Rohmalina, 2019; Syarfina et al., 2018). Lack of attention to children's social-emotional development can have a negative impact on children's learning attitudes and personal development, as well as on children's efforts to find a positive identity and adapt to their environment in the future. In addition, if a child's social-emotional development is not well maintained, this can affect the child's future life, including finding a job.

The role of fathers is not only about physical presence but also involves responsiveness, attention, and an active role in guiding children in managing their emotions. Parenting can affect children's social skills in interacting with peers. Children who have interpersonal intelligence tend to foster positive relationships with their parents. If parents want to teach children to be affectionate, they need to demonstrate behaviors that create feelings of being loved and cherished by the child. Therefore, parents should be living examples who show exemplary behavior and accustom children to follow good moral values so that children can avoid bad attitudes that can endanger children's lives. By understanding the importance of the father's role in children's emotional intelligence, it can be expected that children will grow up with good emotional well-being and a strong ability to manage various feelings.

D. CONCLUSION

The role of fathers has a significant impact on the development of children's emotional intelligence. An active father's presence in the child's life not only increases the child's understanding of emotions but also teaches emotion management skills and builds a positive relationship between the child and the father. This study opens up opportunities to

develop new approaches in parent education and family counseling. Prospects for developing the results of this study include the application of the father concept in parent education programs. Integrating the role of fathers in parent education efforts can raise awareness about the important contribution of fathers in the development of children's emotional intelligence. In addition, this study also highlights the importance of fathers' roles in supporting children's overall development. It paves the way for further research that can explore the specific factors that influence interactions between fathers and children in the context of emotional intelligence. This study demonstrates the importance of fathers' roles in children's emotional intelligence development, opens up opportunities for the development of more inclusive parent education programs, and contributes to a deeper understanding of father-child interactions in the context of emotional intelligence. It can serve as a basis for further research and improvements in parent education and family counseling efforts.

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