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## THE ROLE OF FAMILY IN BUILDING RELIGIOUS AWARENESS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

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### Abstract

This research explores the family's role in forming religious awareness in elementary school children. In the complex context of modern life, the role of the family is crucial in guiding children to religious values and awareness. Qualitative research methods were used with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews with parents and children, participant observation in daily family interactions, and content analysis of religious documents and materials used at home. The research results show that family interactions, parental role models, a supportive family environment, and religious practices at home all form a strong foundation for children's religious awareness. These findings strengthen theoretical studies of the role of the family in religious education and child development and provide a valuable contribution to a deeper understanding of the key factors that influence this process. In conclusion, the role of the family has a significant impact on forming religious awareness in elementary school-aged children, and efforts need to continue to be made to strengthen the positive role of the family in children's religious education.

### Keywords

Elementary School Children, Religious Awareness, Role Family



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## INTRODUCTION

The family is very important in shaping religious awareness in elementary school children. This is relevant because it is a critical period in a child's development during which their values, beliefs, and attitudes are significantly shaped (Latifah, 2017; Nasution, 2019). This background provides a solid basis for understanding the importance of research on the role of the family in this process. In the complex and diverse context of modern life, the role of the family is becoming increasingly important in guiding children to religious values and consciousness. In particular, during the period of primary school age, children begin to develop their understanding of life, morality, and spirituality, and the family has a crucial role in this process (Dewi & Purandina, 2022; Kandiri & Arfandi, 2021).

Socially, the family is the smallest unit of society that has a central role in shaping the character and values of children. In Indonesia's diverse society, early religious instruction is important to form a generation that is tolerant, has noble morals, and a strong understanding of spiritual values (Or, 2021; Zulfirman, 2022). This research is fundamental because modernization and globalization often erode traditional values, including religious ones. As the first party to interact with the child, the family is responsible for instilling religious awareness, which will be the moral and ethical basis for the child in facing the challenges of an increasingly complex world.

Literature-wise, this research is important because there are still limited empirical studies exploring the family's specific role in building religious awareness in elementary school-aged children. Much of the literature emphasizes the importance of formal education in character building and religious awareness, but the role of the family often needs to be considered in more research. Thus, this study can fill the literature gap and provide a new perspective on the contribution of families to religious education. In addition, this research can also be a reference for education policies and family empowerment programs that support the development of religious values in children, thus producing young people who are not only intellectually intelligent but also strong in spirituality and morality. This background underlies the urgency and relevance of research on the role of the family in shaping religious consciousness in primary school children.

Primary school children are a very important audience to understand in the context of building religious values. At this age, they are in a character-building phase that is very vulnerable to the influence of the environment around them, including the family (Abdurahman et al., 2023; Salwiah & Asmuddin, 2022); (Lubis et al., 2022). The religious education received at home significantly impacts how children understand, feel, and internalize religious values in their daily

lives (Asfahani & Fauziyati, 2020; Syukri et al., 2019).

Several previous studies have revealed that the family is the first and foremost institution in shaping religious consciousness in children. Family interactions, such as prayer together, scripture reading, and participation in shared religious activities, are important factors in forming the foundation of such children's spirituality (Bariyah, 2019; Nirmayuni, 2019; Puspytasari, 2022; Subianto, 2013; M. Ulfa, 2020). However, comparisons of past studies have also shown significant variations in the level of involvement of families and the way they integrate religious values in daily life. Previous research has shown that the family environment greatly impacts shaping a child's character (Bakar, 2020; Chulsum, 2017; Hermawan et al., 2020; Wahid et al., 2020; Wiani et al., 2018). Various religious values, norms, and beliefs are often passed from generation to generation through interactions within the family. However, there are significant differences in how these families function in shaping religious consciousness in primary school children (Alabdulhadi, 2019; Prehadini et al., 2021; Siregar, 2021). For example, some families actively teach religious values through rituals, religious stories, and participation in religious activities, while other families may be less active in such matters.

Despite efforts to understand the role of the family in shaping religious awareness in primary school children, there is still a knowledge gap that needs to be filled. One such gap is a deeper understanding of how diverse family interaction patterns affect children's religious understanding. Among them are the specific role of parents in providing strong examples of religious values, the influence of siblings or other family members in shaping religious identity, and family dynamics that can strengthen or hinder children's religious awareness. A comparison of previous research reveals that families actively involved in children's religious education tend to have a more positive impact on shaping religious awareness (Anggraini, 2019; Nisa, 2019). However, a knowledge gap still needs to be filled regarding how different family interaction patterns affect the religious awareness of primary school children. For example, the concrete role of parents, the involvement of other family members, and the influence of the surrounding environment on the formation of religious consciousness in children.

This study explores the role of families, including parents and other family members, in shaping religious awareness in primary school children. This is expected to contribute to understanding the dynamics of family interaction and its influence on the development of religious values in children. The novelty of this study lies in its in-depth approach to understanding the role of the family in the specific context of primary school children, as well as identifying key factors that

can strengthen religious awareness in the family environment.

## **METHOD**

This study used qualitative research methods with data collection techniques through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with parents and children, and content analysis of religious documents and materials used at home. The study was conducted in the family environment of elementary school children over six months in 2023 to observe the dynamics of family interaction and its influence on the religious awareness of children in the Sukabumi district. The location of the study was in the Cibolang area, and interviews were conducted with several community leaders, ten parents, two teachers, and ten elementary school children. The documentation is carried out at the time of observation and interview. This research is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of the family in building religious awareness in elementary school children qualitatively. Data analysis techniques in this study use the Miles and Huberman data analysis model by collecting, reducing, presenting, and drawing conclusions.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

This study seeks to explore the role of the family in shaping religious awareness in primary school children through a qualitative approach. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews with parents and children, participatory observations in daily family interactions, and content analysis of religious documents and materials used at home. The study was conducted in several families with primary school children over a six-month period.

In addition, the role of parents in setting a consistent and positive example of religious values is also very influential. Children tend to imitate parents' behavior in such matters as discipline in worship, attitudes toward others, and respect for religious values. This shows that the role models and role models shown by parents are very important in shaping religious consciousness in children. In addition, the results of the study also revealed the importance of a supportive family environment in shaping children's religious awareness. Families with an open discussion environment provide a deeper and more inclusive understanding of religious values. Open communication between parents and children also allows children to ask questions and better understand the religious aspects they are studying.

Based on interviews and observations conducted, it is known that the family has a significant role in shaping religious awareness in elementary school children. Family interaction, especially between parents and children, plays a major role in transmitting religious values. Families who actively engage in religious practices such as praying together, reading scriptures, and participating in religious activities tend to have children with stronger religious awareness.

From the findings of this study, it is known that the role of the family is the basis for shaping religious awareness in elementary school children in the community. The interactions within the family, the role models of parents, and the supportive family environment all form a strong foundation for children's religious consciousness. This research provides a deeper understanding of the key factors influencing this process and makes a valuable contribution to the development of religious education in primary school children. Apply punishments and rewards related to children's religious behavior, and teach children about the consequences of good and bad deeds according to religious teachings.

**Table 1.** Family role factors in forming children's religious awareness

No.	Name of Parent and Child	Role in The Family
1.	Mr. Agus and Rina	Invite children to worship together, teach daily prayers, and tell prophetic stories.
2.	Mrs. Siti and Andi	Make it a habit to read the scriptures together every morning, discussing the moral values of religious stories.
3.	Mr. Budi and Lina	Involve children in religious activities in the environment, providing examples of good behavior.
4.	Mrs. Rina and Dedi	Provide formal religious education through madrasas and implement worship discipline at home.
5.	Father Joko and Siti	Creating a religious home atmosphere with religious symbols and regularly praying together
6.	Mrs. Ayu and Fikri	Provide religious storybooks and assist children in learning religious values.
7.	Mr. Tono and Eni	Invite children to attend family studies and set an example in carrying out religious teachings.
8.	Desi and Rina's mother	Encourage children to participate in religious and social activities and provide an understanding of the importance of worship.
9.	Mr. Heri and Aldi	Set the child's daily schedule to balance formal education and religious study time.

This table provides an overview of how families build religious awareness in their children, ranging from daily activities to involvement in religious activities in the community. The results of these interviews show that family roles are very important and vary depending on the habits and values of each family.

Families that actively engage in religious practices, such as praying together, reading scriptures, and participating in religious activities, tend to have children with stronger religious awareness. In addition, the role of models shown by parents is also very influential in forming children's religious consciousness. Children tend to imitate parents' behavior and attitudes toward religious values, such as discipline in worship, attitudes toward others, and respect for religious values. Therefore, parents play a very important role in setting a positive and consistent example of religious values for children.

Another finding is the importance of a supportive family environment in shaping children's religious consciousness. Families with an open discussion environment provide a deeper and more inclusive understanding of religious values. Open communication between parents and children also allows children to ask questions and better understand the religious aspects they are studying.

In addition, religious practices at home are also influential in shaping children's religious awareness. Families that regularly engage in religious practices such as reading scriptures, following religious rituals, and teaching religious teachings to children provide a strong foundation for developing religious awareness (Asfahani et al., 2023). The role of the family is very important in shaping religious awareness in elementary school children. Family interactions, parental role models, supportive family environments, and religious practices in the home all contribute to forming a strong foundation for children's religious consciousness. This research provides a deeper understanding of the key factors influencing this process. It contributes to the development of religious education in primary school children, especially in the family, community, and school environments.

## **Discussion**

The analysis of the research results reinforces previous studies' findings and supports existing theoretical studies. One of the study's key findings is that family interactions significantly impact shaping religious awareness in primary school children. These findings are consistent with

theoretical studies that emphasize the role of the family as the first and foremost institution in shaping religious values in children. Previous research has also revealed that families actively involved in religious practices tend to positively impact children's religious awareness (Supriyanto, 2015; Taubah, 2016). This shows the consistency between empirical findings and pre-existing theories so that it can develop these findings.

In addition, the analysis of the results of the study also confirmed the role of models played by parents in the formation of children's religious consciousness. These findings are in line with the theory that parents are the primary source of religious education for children, and parental behaviors and attitudes greatly influence children's understanding and appreciation of religious values (Dini, 2022; Salafuddin et al., 2020; R. A. Ulfa et al., 2021). Thus, the results of this study strengthen theoretical studies that emphasize the importance of the role of parents as models in the formation of religious consciousness in children.

The importance of a supportive family environment in shaping children's religious awareness is also confirmed through the analysis of the results of this study. The finding that open communication and open discussion about religion in the family influences children's understanding and appreciation of religious values is by theories that highlight the role of the family environment in children's religious education (Hidayatuladkia et al., 2021; Rohmah, 2022; Wahyuni et al., 2021). Thus, the results of this study strengthen theoretical studies that emphasize the importance of a supportive family environment in the formation of children's religious awareness (Jalil & Hidayatullah, 2022; Ni'amah et al., 2023); (Artipah et al., 2024).

In general, the analysis of the results of this study juxtaposes empirical findings with pre-existing theoretical studies, confirming and strengthening the compatibility of field findings with existing theories. This provides a solid foundation for a deeper understanding of the role of the family in shaping religious awareness in primary school children, as well as enriching academic discussions in religious education and child development.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that families have a significant role in shaping religious awareness in primary school children. Family interactions, parental role models, supportive family environments, and religious practices in the home all contribute to forming a strong foundation for children's religious consciousness. The findings underscore the importance of the family's role in educating children about religious values, morality, and spirituality. This research will enrich the literature on

the role of the family in religious education, especially for elementary school-age children. This will be an important reference for future researchers interested in similar topics. For future research, it is advisable to look deeper into the factors influencing the role of family in shaping religious consciousness in primary school children.

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