Mauriduna Journal of Islamic Studies
E-ISSN: 2797-0876
http://ejournal.mc.ac.id
Open Acces
Mauriduna: Journal of Islamic Studies, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2026 Page 207-222
DOI: 10.37274/mauriduna.v7i1.102

Synergy of Parental Involvement in Fostering Self-Confidence among Children Aged 4–6 Years

Saskia Rahma Setiawati[1], Idat Muqodas[2], Gia Nikawanti[3]
[1.2.3] Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Purwakarta, Indonesia
E-mail: saskiarhms@upi.edu[1], idatmuqodas@upi.edu[2], gyanikawanti@upi.edu[3]

Submission: 25-11-2025	*Revised: 25-12-2025*	*Accepted: 29-01-2026*	*Published: 28-02-2026*

Abstract

Self-confidence is an important aspect of early childhood development that impacts emotional, social, and academic development in children. However, parental involvement in fostering self-confidence through communication, appreciation, and cultivation of responsibility has not been widely studied in depth. This study aimed to examine the role of parents in fostering self-confidence in children aged 4–6 years. The study employ a qualitative approach with a case study method, involving three parents at Roudhoh Plus Kindergarten in Purwakarta. Data were collected through interviews, questionnaires, and documentation, and their validity was tested through triangulation of sources, techniques, and time. The results showed that empathetic communication, consistent appreciation, the habituation of responsibility, and parental role modeling of self-confidence contributed significantly to the development of self-confidence in children. A supportive family environment and responsive parenting styles strengthened this process. The novelty of this study lies in revealing the synergy of various aspects of parenting in building children's self-confidence, with implications for early childhood education institutions and policymakers to develop parenting education programs to improve children's social-emotional development.

Keywords: Appreciation, Comunnication, Early Childhood, Parental Role, Self-Confidence.

Abstrak

Kepercayaan diri merupakan aspek penting dalam perkembangan anak usia dini yang berdampak pada perkembangan emosional, sosial, dan akademik pada anak. Namun, keterlibatan orang tua dalam membangun kepercayaan diri melalui komunikasi, apresiasi, dan penanaman tanggung jawab masih belum banyak dikaji secara mendalam. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan peran orang tua dalam menanamkan kepercayaan diri pada anak usia 4–6 tahun. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus, yang melibatkan tiga orang tua di TK Plus Roudhoh Purwakarta. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, angket, dan dokumentasi, serta diuji keabsahannya melalui triangulasi sumber, teknik, dan waktu. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi empatik, apresiasi yang konsisten, pembiasaan tanggung jawab, serta keteladanan sikap percaya diri dari orang tua, berkontribusi signifikan terhadap tumbuhnya kepercayaan diri pada anak. Lingkungan keluarga yang suportif dan pola asuh responsif memperkuat proses tersebut. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada pengungkapan sinergi berbagai aspek pengasuhan dalam membangun kepercayaan diri anak, dengan implikasi bagi lembaga PAUD dan pembuat kebijakan untuk mengembangkan program edukasi orang tua guna meningkatkan perkembangan sosial-emosional anak.

***Kata Kunci**: Anak Usia Dini. Apresiasi, Kepercayaan Diri, Komunikasi, Peran Orang Tua*

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A. INTRODUCTION

Confidence in early childhood is one of the key indicators for children's social-emotional, cognitive, and adaptive development within the family and educational environments. In the context of child development, confidence is not just a sense of comfort or belief in one's own abilities, but also reflects readiness to face challenges, the courage to explore, and the ability to build positive relationships with others. This perspective is consistent with the research of Bandura (1997) and Denham et al. (2012). Recent studies have shown that children who demonstrated strong self-confidence at the age of 4–6 tended to show better social skills, higher learning motivation, and smoother school adaptation (Fredricks & Eccles, 2020; Li, Wang, & Xie, 2023).

Self-confidence is one of the fundamental aspects of early childhood development that significantly influences children's emotional, social, and academic growth. Children aged 4–6 years are in a critical developmental stage where they begin to form self-concepts, develop social awareness, and build the courage to express themselves in broader social environments. At this stage, experiences gained from the closest environment, particularly the family, play a central role in shaping children's perceptions of their own abilities and self-worth.

Parental involvement is not merely limited to fulfilling children's physical needs, but also includes emotional support, communication patterns, behavioral modeling, and the provision of learning opportunities in daily life. In early childhood, parents function as the primary socialization agents who influence how children interpret success, failure, and social interaction. When children receive consistent support, positive feedback, and opportunities to attempt tasks independently, they tend to develop stronger confidence in their abilities. Conversely, limited interaction, excessive control, or lack of emotional responsiveness may reduce children's willingness to explore and express themselves.

Previous research has highlighted the importance of parenting styles and parental support in shaping children's socio-emotional development. However, many studies have tended to discuss parenting in broad conceptual categories, such as authoritarian, democratic, or permissive parenting, without providing detailed descriptions of specific parental practices that directly contribute to the development of self-confidence. As a result, there has remained a gap in contextual research that systematically explores

concrete forms of parental involvement in everyday practices, particularly within early childhood education settings in Indonesia.

In addition, research focusing specifically on the practical dimensions of parental engagement such as empathic communication, appreciation, responsibility training, and behavioral modeling has remained relatively limited. These dimensions represent observable behaviors that can be identified and analyzed empirically, rather than abstract parenting classifications. Understanding how these dimensions operate in daily parenting interactions is essential to provide a clearer and more applicable framework for fostering self-confidence in early childhood.

Considering this gap, this study aimed to analyze parental involvement in fostering self-confidence among children aged 4–6 years at TK Plus Roudhoh Purwakarta. This research focused on identifying patterns of parental practices across four key dimensions: empathic communication, appreciation, responsibility training, and behavioral modeling. By using a qualitative descriptive case study approach, this study provided in-depth contextual findings based on real parental experiences.

The contribution of this study lies in its presention of empirical patterns of parental involvement derived directly from field data, thereby enriching the discourse on early childhood education with context-based evidence. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for parents and educators regarding effective strategies to support children's confidence development during early childhood.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study method designed to provide an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of parental involvement practices in fostering self-confidence among children aged 4–6 years at TK Plus Roudhoh, Purwakarta. The case study method was selected because it enabled contextual explanations of social interactions and parenting behaviors within real-life settings.

The subjects of this study were three parents whose children were aged 4–6 years and enrolled at TK Plus Roudhoh. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, considering specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives. The selection of three participants was based on the qualitative case study approach, which emphasizes in-depth understanding rather than statistical generalization.

In case study research, a limited number of participants is acceptable as long as the data obtained are rich and capable of explaining the phenomenon comprehensively. The three respondents were selected based on the following criteria: (1) having a child aged 4–6 years, (2) being actively involved in daily caregiving practices, and (3) being willing to participate in in-depth interviews and complete the questionnaire. Thus, the selection of three participants was considered sufficient to describe parental involvement practices within an exploratory and contextual case study framework.

The questionnaire instrument in this study was developed based on four dimensions of parental involvement that constituted the focus of this research: empathic communication, appreciation, responsibility training, and behavioral modeling of confident behavior. Each dimension was operationalized into several specific indicators as follows :

Table 1. Indicators of Parental Involvement

Dimension	Indicators
Empathic Communication	Listening attentively when the child speaks, providing positive and supportive responses, allocating specific time for dialogue, assisting children in expressing and regulating their emotions
Appreciation	Giving verbal praise, acknowledging children's efforts, providing positive affirmations, offering simple rewards as encouragement
Responsibility Training	Encouraging children to complete tasks independently, allowing time before offering assistance, training children to handle simple daily responsibilities, providing opportunities for small decision-making
Behavioral Modeling of Confident Behavior	Demonstrating confidence when speaking, showing assertive yet respectful communication, displaying emotional regulation in challenging situations

The data obtained were analyzed inductively through the stages of data collection, data reduction, data display, and data verification in order to identify the main themes and patterns of parental involvement that influenced the development of children's self-confidence (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2020).

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The research findings were obtained from in-depth interviews, questionnaires, preliminary observations, and documentation involving three parents of children aged 4–6 years at TK Plus Roudhoh, Purwakarta. The findings converged around four main aspects: (1) forms of communication, (2) appreciation practices, (3) responsibility cultivation, and (4) modeling of confident behavior.

1. General Description of Informants

The first respondent was Mrs. RN, the mother of FN (5 years old), a female student in Class A3 at TK Plus Roudhoh. RN works as an entrepreneur, which allows her to remain actively involved in daily parenting. She applies an open and responsive communication pattern and prioritizes her child's emotional needs.

The second respondent was Mrs. PW, the mother of AD (5 years old). PW works as an administrative staff member but maintains intensive communication with her child, especially at night, which she designates as a special time for dialogue.

The third respondent was Mrs. NV, the mother of SY (5 years old). NV works outside the home, and daily caregiving is assisted by a caregiver. However, NV ensures consistency in parenting practices through aligned communication with the caregiver.

2. Interview Data

The results of the in-depth interviews revealed four primary patterns: parental communication practices, environmental and cultural influences, appreciation practices, and the cultivation of self-confidence in children. The summarized interview findings from the three respondents are presented below:

Table 2. Summary of Interview Finding

Dimension	RN	PW	NV
Communication	Emotional pause & active listening	Deep talk before bedtime	Routine emotional validation
Appreciation	Verbal praise	Activity-based rewards	Hugs & affirmations
Responsibility	Tidying up toys	Eating independently	Resolving conflicts independently
Modeling	Courage to perform	Assertive communication	Consistency and emotional calmness

3. Forms of Parental Communication

Based on the interviews, all three respondents demonstrated open and responsive communication practices. RN stated that she allowed her child time to calm down before initiating dialogue when the child was crying. PW explained that she allocated special time before bedtime to listen to her child's stories. NV mentioned that she routinely asked about her child's feelings as a form of emotional attention.

A recurring pattern indicated that all respondents provided space for their children to express themselves and actively listen to them. Although the specific practices differed, all three emphasized the importance of emotional presence in communication. These findings suggest that open and empathic communication constituted one of the most fundamental yet influential parental roles in fostering early childhood self-confidence.

4. Environmental and Cultural Factors

Interview data showed that all respondents trained their children through age-appropriate tasks. RN encouraged her child to tidy up toys and allow time before offering help when difficulties arose. PW trained her child to eat independently and attempt to solve minor problems first. NV provided opportunities for her child to resolve peer conflicts before intervening. The emerging pattern reflected parental trust in children to try and complete tasks independently, while still under supervision.

Furthermore, the three respondents revealed that a safe home environment, consistent rules, controlled opportunities for exploration, and coordination between caregivers contributed positively to children's self-confidence development. These practices demonstrated that environmental stability and family cultural consistency played significant roles in shaping positive behavior. These findings align with Yusuf (2017), Mulyasa (2012), and Hurlock (2015), who emphasize the importance of environmental security and consistency in child development.

5. Providing Appreciation to Children

Based on interviews and questionnaire data, all three respondents consistently provided appreciation. RN frequently gave verbal praise when her child dared to try new things. PW provided activity-based rewards, such as allowing her child to choose a favorite game. NV emphasized nonverbal appreciation through hugs and positive affirmations.

The identified pattern indicated that appreciation was directed not only toward results but also toward effort and courage. All respondents agreed that small and timely recognition increased children's enthusiasm. The findings concluded that appropriate verbal and nonverbal appreciation strengthened children's self-confidence by valuing effort rather than solely outcomes. This supports the views of Hurlock (2015), Yusuf (2017), and Mulyasa (2012), who argue that consistent recognition fosters positive behavior and healthy self-concept formation.

6. Cultivating Self-Confidence in Children

All respondents reported making conscious efforts to serve as role models of confident behavior. RN emphasized the importance of demonstrating courage in speaking in front of her child. PW highlighted firm and clear communication as a model for assertiveness. NV demonstrated calmness and emotional regulation when facing problems.

The emerging pattern suggested that children tended to imitate their parents' attitudes in speaking, behaving, and managing social situations. The interviews also indicated that responsibility was cultivated by assigning simple age-appropriate tasks and encouraging children to complete them independently. This habituation enabled children to feel capable, autonomous, and valued (Yusuf, 2017; Hurlock, 2015). Moreover,

parental modeling such as demonstrating courage, emotional stability, and perseverance appeared to be one of the most effective methods in fostering children's self-confidence.

7. Questionnaire Data

The results of the questionnaire completed by the three respondents indicated that all participants demonstrated responsive and positive parenting patterns that supported the development of self-confidence in early childhood. The questionnaire consisted of several indicators based on the dimensions of parental roles: communication, appreciation, responsibility habituation, and modeling of confident behavior. The detailed results for each respondent are presented below:

Table 3. Questionnaire Results on Parental Involvement in Fostering Self-Confidence

Dimension	Indicator	RN	PW	NV
Communication	Active listening when the child speaks	Always	Often	Always
	Providing positive and attentive responses	Always	Always	Always
	Involving the child in conversations	Sometimes	Often	Always
	Providing specific time for dialogue	Sometimes	Always	Often
Appreciation	Giving verbal praise	Always	Always	Always
	Valuing effort, not only results	Always	Always	Always
	Giving simple rewards	Sometimes	Often	Sometimes
	Showing affection (hugs/affirmations)	Often	Often	Always
Responsibility	Encouraging independent eating/drinking	Often	Always	Often

	Allowing time before helping	Often	Always	Often
	Training children to resolve minor conflicts	Sometimes	Often	Often
	Assigning age-appropriate tasks	Often	Often	Often
Modeling	Demonstrating confident behavior	Often	Always	Often
	Assertive and firm communication	Often	Always	Often
	Managing emotions in front of the child	Often	Often	Always
	Modeling courage to try new things	Sometimes	Often	Often

a. Respondent 1 (RN)

Based on the questionnaire results, in the communication dimension RN reported always focusing on listening attentively when her child speaks. She consistently provided full attention, including stopping other activities when the child was talking. RN also always responded positively when her child shared stories or experiences. In the appreciation dimension, RN consistently took her child's opinions seriously and provided verbal praise. However, regarding small decision-making, such as choosing clothes, RN sometimes involved the child to encourage confidence in expressing opinions.

In terms of responsibility development, RN often allowed her child to eat or drink independently and typically gave approximately five minutes before offering assistance when difficulties arose. She also provided space for her child to resolve minor conflicts with peers independently. Regarding modeling confident behavior, RN frequently demonstrated confidence in front of her child and maintained positive communication. She also provided opportunities for her child to express opinions, thereby supporting the child's confidence development.

b. Respondent 2 (PW)

The questionnaire responses from PW in the communication and appreciation dimensions indicated that she often listened actively and provided full attention when her child speaks. She always responded positively and took her child's opinions seriously. In daily decision-making situations, PW frequently involved her child to help foster self-confidence. In the responsibility dimension, PW always allowed her child to eat and drink independently. She also consistently gave her child the opportunity to solve problems independently before intervening.

In modeling confident behavior, PW consistently demonstrated self-confidence in front of her child and regularly provided opportunities for the child to express opinions, thereby reinforcing independence and assertiveness.

c. Respondent 3 (NV)

According to the completed questionnaire, NV consistently demonstrated active listening in the communication dimension. She always provided attention and small forms of praises, including stopping her activities when the child was speaking. In the appreciation dimension, NV consistently showed affection and concern through hugs, affirmations, and positive responses such as nodding or smiling when her child shared stories.

In the responsibility dimension, NV often allowed her child to eat or drink independently and provided time for the child to resolve problems before offering help. She encouraged social interaction by involving the child in family gatherings and allowed the child to manage peer conflicts independently.

Regarding modeling, NV consistently demonstrated confident behavior in front of her child and created space for the child to develop independence by solving problems independently. This practice supported the cultivation of self-confidence through both example and experience.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that parental involvement in fostering self-confidence among children aged 4–6 years is manifested through four main dimensions: empathic communication, appreciation, responsibility training, and modeling of

confident behavior. These four dimensions are interconnected and collectively form a parenting ecosystem that supports children's socio-emotional development.

In the communication dimension, the findings demonstrate that practices such as active listening, emotional validation, and providing dedicated time for dialogue serve as foundational elements in building children's self-confidence. This aligns with Albert Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasizes that interpersonal interaction plays a significant role in the formation of self-concept (Bandura, 1997). Children who feel heard and valued tend to develop more positive self-perceptions. Moreover, warm and responsive communication strengthens emotional attachment, which provides children with a sense of security necessary for expressing themselves confidently.

In terms of appreciation, this study found that parents provided recognition not only for outcomes but also for children's efforts and processes. This approach reinforced intrinsic motivation and helped children develop confidence in their own abilities. These findings support previous research suggesting that acknowledgment of effort is more effective in fostering self-confidence than result-oriented praise alone. When children perceived that their efforts are appreciated, they were more likely to persist in facing challenges and developing resilience.

Furthermore, responsibility training through simple daily activities—such as tidying up toys, eating independently, and resolving minor conflicts—contributed significantly to the development of autonomy. These practices allowed children to experience small successes, which strengthened their sense of competence. From a psychosocial developmental perspective, early experiences of mastery are crucial in shaping positive self-perception and readiness to confront subsequent developmental challenges.

The modeling dimension also emerged as a crucial factor. Children learned through observation of their parents' daily behaviors. When parents demonstrated courage in speaking, assertive communication, and stable emotional regulation, children tended to imitate and internalize these attitudes. This is consistent with modeling theory, which asserts that parental behavior serves as a primary reference for the formation of children's attitudes and character (Bandura, 1997). Modeling, therefore, functions not

merely as symbolic guidance but as an effective and practical strategy for character education.

Overall, this study underscores that children's self-confidence does not develop through a single isolated factor. Instead, it is constructed through the synergy of consistent parenting practices across multiple dimensions. The integration of empathic communication, meaningful appreciation, structured responsibility training, and positive behavioral modeling creates a supportive environment that enables children to develop a stable and healthy sense of self-confidence.

D. CONCLUSION

This study showsed that empathic communication, consistent appreciation, the provision of responsibility, and parental role modeling were the main dimensions in fostering self-confidence among children aged 4–6 years. These practices were strengthened by a responsive and stable family environment.

The findings emphasized that the development of children's self-confidence did not occur in isolation, but rather resulted from the synergy of various parenting practices carried out consistently. This study provides practical implications for parents and early childhood education institutions (ECE) in designing collaborative, parenting-based strategies to support children's development.

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