

FATHERS' INVOLVEMENT IN NURTURING CHILDREN IN DIGITAL AGE: A CASE FROM INDONESIA

Authors :

Sheilia Novitriani, Dahlya S. Parameswari, Rurul Yuliatin

National Population and Family Planning Board Representative of South Kalimantan

BACKGROUND

Parenting in digital age is challenging for parents. The emergence of Internet opens a chance for people to have any kind of information from all over the world. The negative content may become concern for parents when their children expose to the Internet. Yet, at the same time, parents also known and realize that Internet could help their children for education.

Meanwhile, parenting norms now are changing. Nowadays, fathers are more actively involved in nurturing their children. Father's roles are not only as economy provider because mothers have entered workforce. This requires fathers to take part in childcare together with mothers. Yet, it is lack of information about how fathers play their roles and how they are nurturing their children on internet use.

OBJECTIVE

- to explore how fathers parenting in digital age to overcome negative effects of the Internet for children
- to identify the roles of fathers in parenting children in digital age



METHOD

In-depth interviews were conducted with fathers who had children age 6 to 11 years in Banjarmasin, East Banjarmasin District, South Kalimantan. The wives were working mother. A total of 32 fathers were interviewed. Sampling method was using purposive sampling.

Interviews were face-to-face and semi-structured about the topic developed from literature review. The framework of the study based on Parental Mediation theory and a concept of father involvement in parenting children from Michael E. Lamb.

Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were analyzed thematically using the framework approach.

RESULTS

FATHER'S PARENTING IN DIGITAL AGE

Father accompany their children all the time

Yes, I accompany my child, beside him, (all the time?), yes, until he stop playing, he plays a game and I will stand by here next to him...

Fathers sometimes controlling their children

"Sometimes I accompany my child to see what content he saw on the internet, is it good or bad..."

Checking history on phone and listening are the ways of fathers to supervise their children

"Yes I know, I check my phone history, it's been a habit for my child, usually when my child play a game I can hear it, I'll ask about the content, for example, what kind of movie do you see?"

Teenager is the best age for children to have their own smartphone

"I think he should be mature enough, he is now at elementary school so it's not their time to have it. At least (he can have it) when he is at junior high school, 13 years old

Fathers have their own rules

"yes, the rule is at night my child can access internet not more than one hour, I will turn off Wi-Fi, and off; I want my child to take a rest, and she can focus on positive thing, so I can supervise her,..."

Fathers believe

"No I don't have rules because I believe in my child."

THE ROLES OF FATHERS

Role of fathers: as supervisor and guide

"The role of parent is.. I have to supervise..."
"As a father, for me, a father is not only as for childcare, but also as a guide for them..."

Fathers made strategies to avoid negative impact of the internet

"I restrict the signal of internet at home, if my child wants to access internet so he can ask his mom to open hotspot..."
"My battery was not full, at least 25 percent, if it's reach to 25 percent I will unplug the charger so my child cannot use it all the time,..."

CONCLUSION

1. The study revealed that fathers nurturing their children in digital age adopted active and restrictive mediation, and not apply mediation. Parenting styles they have applied in nurturing their children for digital technology use were related to parental mediation framework.
2. The study identified that fathers realize about their roles as for supervisor and guide to their children on internet use. This was including their roles as for teacher and protector to their children to use internet safely and wisely.

