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DEVELOPMENT OF RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR ON 4-5 YEARS AT KB-TK ISLAM AL AZHAR 22 SEMARANG

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Abstrak
Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan perkembangan perilaku tanggung jawab pada anak usia 4-5 tahun di KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, yang melibatkan enam anak di KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang, terdiri dari tiga anak berusia 4 tahun dan tiga anak berusia 5 tahun, serta dua orang guru sebagai informan. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi langsung dan wawancara dengan guru kelas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa anak usia 4 tahun cenderung lebih konsisten dalam mematuhi aturan dan menunjukkan kepedulian terhadap lingkungan, seperti merapikan mainan dan menjaga kebersihan kelas secara rutin. Sementara itu, anak usia 5 tahun menunjukkan kemandirian yang lebih tinggi dalam menyelesaikan tugas secara mandiri, namun konsistensi mereka dalam mematuhi aturan dan tanggung jawab sosial belum sepenuhnya stabil. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa perkembangan sikap tanggung jawab tidak hanya dipengaruhi oleh faktor usia, tetapi juga oleh kebiasaan, keteladanan guru, dan karakter masing-masing anak. Penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya stimulasi yang berkelanjutan dan konsisten dalam membentuk perilaku tanggung jawab sejak usia dini.

Kata Kunci: *Anak Usia Dini, Tanggung Jawab, Perkembangan Karakter, Studi Kasus, Pendidikan Karakter.*

Abstract
This study aims to describe the development of responsible behaviour in children aged 4-5 years at the KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang. The study used a qualitative approach with a case study design, involving six children at the KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang, three children aged 4 and three children aged 5, and two teachers as informants. Data collection was conducted through direct observation and interviews with class teachers. The results showed that 4-year-old children tended to be more consistent in obeying rules and showing concern for the environment, such as tidying up toys and maintaining classroom cleanliness regularly. Meanwhile, 5-year-old children displayed higher independence in completing tasks independently, but their consistency in obeying rules and social responsibility was not yet fully stable. These findings indicate that the development of responsibility is not only influenced by age, but also by habits, teacher role models, and the character of each child. This study emphasizes the importance of continuous and consistent stimulation in forming responsible behaviour from an early age.

Keywords: *Early Childhood, Responsibility, Character Development, Case Study, Character Education.*

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A. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is the most critical stage in the development of an individual's character and personality. Experts refer to this period as the golden age because a child's brain undergoes rapid development and is highly responsive to various forms of environmental stimulation.[1]

The stimulation a child receives during this golden phase will have a significant long-term impact on all aspects of their growth and development, from cognitive development, language development, physical and motor skills, social and emotional development, religious and moral values, to the arts. Therefore, early childhood education plays a very strategic role in building a strong foundation of character, including fostering responsible behaviour.

Responsibility is a fundamental character value that needs to be instilled from an early age so that children can live independently and harmoniously in society. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), responsibility is a person's awareness of their behaviour and actions, both intentional and unintentional. More broadly, responsibility encompasses an individual's awareness of the difference between right and wrong, what is permitted and what is prohibited, what is recommended and what is avoided, and the willingness to bear the consequences of every action.[2] Instilling the value of responsibility from an early age is crucial so that as adults, children can have a better and more dignified quality of life.[3] In early childhood, responsibility is deeply

[1] Al Melia Putri Kuku et al., 'Studi Literatur Tentang Perkembangan dan Karakteristik Anak Usia Dini', *Inovasi Pendidikan dan Anak Usia Dini*, 2.3 (2025), p. 268.
[2] Hanik Hidayati, Tutik Khotimah, and F. Shoufika Hilyana, 'Pembentukan Karakter Religius, Gemar Membaca, dan Tanggung Jawab pada Anak Sekolah Dasar', *Jurnal Pendidikan Glasser*, 5.2 (2021), p. 78.
[3] Nur Fitriana Dewi, Ayu Asmah, and Siti Muntomimah, 'Efektifitas Meaningful Learning terhadap Tanggung Jawab Anak

embedded within social-emotional development, enabling children to adapt, manage behavior, and interact harmoniously within their environment.[4]

Instilling the value of responsibility in early childhood depends heavily on consistent and ongoing habituation. Habituation is a stage in which attitudes and actions are formed consistently and automatically through repeated learning. The essence of the habituation process is essentially repetition, meaning that what is habituated is something that is done consistently until it eventually becomes a deeply rooted habit within the child.[5]

Previous research has shown that responsible behaviour can be fostered through routine habits, programmed activities, spontaneous activities, and role models. These habits significantly influence a child's sense of responsibility.[6] Parents are the primary role models for their children, so children will imitate their parents' habits. Positive role models, such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and good communication, will yield optimal results in a child's sense of responsibility. Responsibility encompasses high integrity, a willingness to fulfil obligations, and a willingness to accept the consequences of actions.

Children's sense of responsibility does not simply emerge. It requires effort, time, and consistent stimulation to develop and become firmly established within the individual. The process of developing responsibility in children is the result of an interaction between internal factors, such as the child's physical and cognitive maturity, and external factors, such as the family, school, and peer environment.[7] A

Kelompok B Usia 3–4 Tahun di Playgroup Amanah Bunda Malang', *Jurnal Warna: Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Anak Usia Dini*, 6.1 (2021), p.16.

[4] Nazia Nuril Fuadia, 'Perkembangan Sosial Emosi Anak Usia Dini', *Wawasan: Jurnal Kediklatan Balai Diklat Keagamaan Jakarta*, 3.1 (2022), p. 36.

[5] Cindy Anggraeni, Elan Elan, and Sima Mulyadi, 'Metode Pembiasaan untuk Menanamkan Karakter Disiplin dan Tanggungjawab di RA Daarul Falaah Tasikmalaya', *Jurnal PAUD Agapedia*, 5.1 (2021), pp. 101–102.

[6] Khoirun Ni'mah, 'Model Pembiasaan Karakter Tanggung Jawab dan Kemandirian pada Anak Usia Dini di Taman Kanak-Kanak Negeri Pembina II Pungging Mojokerto', *MODELING: Jurnal Program Studi PGMI*, 9.1 (2022), pp. 161–162.

[7] Monita Nur Shabrina, Nur Azizah, and Muhammad Zuhad Rifqi, 'Pembelajaran Tahfidz sebagai Media Menumbuhkan

child's sense of responsibility is evident in their daily activities. This aligns with the view that children's sense of responsibility is not yet fully developed. This is reflected in behaviors in which they still rely on those around them, such as fathers, mothers, teachers, and peers.[8] However, the development of this sense of responsibility can be fostered from an early age through various forms of training and the cultivation of concrete habits, such as tidying up toys, completing individual or group tasks, maintaining personal cleanliness after meals, and placing shoes on the rack.[9]

One early childhood education institution that consistently implements the habit of responsibility is the KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang. This institution teaches its students to be responsible through various daily routine activities, such as tidying up or putting away toys after playtime, completing tasks assigned by teachers, listening to and obeying teacher instructions, returning lunch boxes and water containers to their bags, disposing of food wrappers in the trash, and lining up neatly when washing hands and collecting eating utensils. This form of responsibility can be assessed and observed in the daily behaviour of students of various ages.

An interesting phenomenon was observed at KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang, where children aged 4 years consistently demonstrated greater compliance with classroom rules and daily routines than children aged 5 years. In contrast, the older children exhibited higher levels of independence and exploratory behavior, which were often accompanied by a greater tendency to question, negotiate, or test established rules.

This finding challenges the common developmental assumption that increasing age is directly

Karakter Tanggung Jawab pada Anak Temper Tantrum', *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 4.2 (2020), pp. 1099–1100.

[8] A. Samad Usman, 'Tanggung Jawab Orang Tua terhadap Pendidikan Anak dalam Perspektif Islam', *Bunayya: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*, 1.2 (2017), p. 112.

[9] Ike Khandy Saskia, I. Sutama Wayan, and Tomas Iriyanto, 'Pola Asuh Orang Tua Single Parent terhadap Kemandirian Anak Usia 5–6 Tahun di TK Yaa Bunayya Kalipang, Sutojayan, Blitar', *Bunayya: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*, 4.2 (2024), pp. 43–44.

associated with greater responsibility and behavioural maturity. Instead, it suggests that the development of responsible behaviour may be a multidimensional process shaped not only by chronological age but also by factors such as classroom routines, teacher modelling, parenting practices, individual temperament, and opportunities for autonomy. Consequently, this phenomenon highlights the need to examine the interaction of these factors in shaping children's social-emotional development and responsible behaviour during the early childhood years.

Based on the background presented above, this study addresses the following research questions: (1) How does responsible behaviour develop among children aged 4-5 years at KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang? and (2) What factors contribute to the differences in responsible behaviour patterns between children aged 4 and 5 years?

Accordingly, this study aims to describe in depth the development of responsible behaviour in children aged 4-5 years at KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang and to identify the factors influencing differences in responsible behaviour patterns between these two age groups. The findings are expected to provide meaningful empirical evidence for the development of character education strategies in early childhood education settings, particularly those that integrate Islamic values and promote the development of responsible behaviour from an early age.

Contemporary research on early childhood character development in Indonesia shows a gap between expectations and reality in the implementation of character education. Many early childhood education institutions have structured character development programs, but not all have succeeded in consistently integrating them into daily learning practices.

Consistency of implementation was the most significant differentiating factor between successful and unsuccessful early childhood education institutions in fostering responsible character in their students. KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang is one example of an institution that has

successfully integrated the value of responsibility into all aspects of its daily activities.[10]

Understanding the development of children's responsibility is also inseparable from the study of self-regulation. Self-regulation is an individual's ability to manage their own thoughts, emotions, and behaviour in order to achieve specific goals. In early childhood, self-regulation skills are still developing and are heavily influenced by the interaction between biological and environmental factors. Consistent and structured educational environment plays a significant role in supporting the development of children's self-regulation, which ultimately leads to the formation of stable, responsible behaviour.[11]

This research was also motivated by academic concerns about the lack of empirical studies specifically comparing the development of responsible behaviour between 4- and 5-year-olds within the same institutional context. Most previous studies focused on the 5-6-year-old age group or conducted general studies without distinguishing between different age groups. However, a one-year difference in early childhood can be significant in the context of child development, given the rapid pace of development during this period. By selecting KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang as the research setting, the researchers hope to fill this knowledge gap with rich, contextual empirical findings.

Studies on the moral development of early childhood indicate that children aged 4-5 years in the preconventional stage, a stage when children's behaviour is still influenced by the desire to gain rewards and avoid punishment. This understanding helps teachers design developmentally appropriate stimulation of responsible behaviour through providing concrete and direct consequences, then

[10] Ambariani and Rakimahwati, 'Pengaruh Pola Asuh Orangtua terhadap Pembentukan Karakter Anak Usia Dini', *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 7.5 (2023), pp. 6065–6066.

[11] Abdul Salam and Rara Dewi Aminati, 'Desain Lingkungan Fisik untuk Perkembangan dalam Kebutuhan Anak di PAUD', *ECEIJ: Early Childhood Education Indonesian Journal Research*, no. 3 (2022), pp. 79–80.

gradually developing a deeper understanding of the value of responsibility as children's cognitive abilities develop.[12]

On the other hand, the self-determination theory put forward by Deci and Ryan emphasizes the importance of fulfilling children's basic psychological needs, such as competence, autonomy, and social connectedness, so that responsible behaviour develops from intrinsic motivation within the child, not just a form of compliance with external pressure or demands.[13]

B. METHOD

Accordingly, this research employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of responsible behaviour development within its real-life educational context. Data were collected through direct classroom observations and in-depth interviews with teachers to capture participants' perspectives and everyday experiences. A case study design was chosen because the research focuses on a specific phenomenon within a bounded educational setting, allowing the researcher to examine the interactions among children's age, classroom environment, teacher practices, daily routines, and individual characteristics that may shape the development of responsible behavior.

The participants in this study comprised six children aged 4–5 years who were enrolled at KB TK Al Azhar 22 Semarang. The participants included three four-year-old children, identified by the initials D, A, and O, and three five-year-old children, identified by the initials H, K, and R. Two classroom teachers, identified by the initials ADN and ARPH, also participated as key informants. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on age characteristics relevant to the research focus and their potential to provide rich and relevant data. To protect

[12] Loso Judijanto et al., *Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* (Malang: Future Science Publisher, 2025), pp. 1–9.

[13] Imam Faisal Hamzah, 'Aplikasi Self-Determination Theory pada Kebijakan Publik Era Industri 4.0', *PSISULA: Prosiding Berkala Psikologi*, 1 (2019), pp. 68–70.

participants' privacy and maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms or initials were used throughout the study in accordance with research ethics.

The data collection techniques used in this study were direct observation and interviews. Observations were conducted through passive participation during classroom teaching and learning activities. The researchers directly observed the interactions between teachers and students as they instilled attitudes of responsibility and recorded the various methods employed to instil these attitudes.

The focus of the observations was children's responsible behaviour in various situations, such as: cleaning up toys after play, obeying teacher instructions, completing independent assignments, lining up in an orderly manner, returning lunch boxes to bags, throwing food wrappers in the trash, and putting shoes back on the shelf. Interviews were conducted with both classroom teachers to obtain in-depth information regarding their perceptions and experiences in observing the development of children's responsibility.

This research was conducted over a four-week period during the even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. Although the duration of data collection was relatively short, the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings were strengthened through methodological triangulation. Data were collected using multiple techniques, including classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with teachers, allowing information obtained from one source to be verified against another.

In addition, source triangulation was applied by comparing data obtained from the six participating children through classroom observations with the perspectives of two classroom teachers. To further enhance the credibility of the findings, member checking was conducted by reconfirming the researcher's interpretations with the participating teachers, while peer debriefing with fellow researchers was employed to critically review the analysis and minimize potential researcher bias.

The data analysis was conducted iteratively through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion

drawing and verification. During data reduction, field notes and interview transcripts were manually coded into inductively derived categories, including rule compliance, environmental responsibility, task independence, social responsibility, and responses to teacher reminders. The data were then presented in a comparative matrix to identify similarities and differences among the six participants. The stages of data analysis are illustrated in Figure 1.

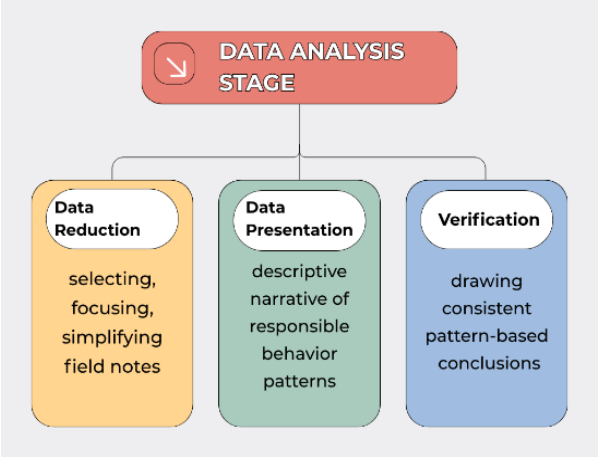


Figure 1. Data Analysis Stage

Figure 1 illustrates the three stages of data analysis. Data reduction involved selecting, focusing, and simplifying relevant data. The data were then presented descriptively to identify patterns of responsible behavior, followed by verification to draw and confirm consistent conclusions.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on four weeks of observations at KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang, distinct patterns of responsible behaviour were identified among the six participants, comprising three 4-year-old children (D, A, and O) and three 5-year-old children (H, K, and R). Observations focused on everyday classroom activities, including play, learning, shared meals, handwashing routines, toy clean-up, and transitions between activities. Overall, the findings revealed consistent differences between the two age groups in terms of rule compliance, social initiative, task independence, and responses to classroom expectations.

1. Responsible Behaviour Profile for the 4-Year-Old Age Group

The 4-year-old children generally demonstrated responsible behaviour through adherence to established routines and completion of simple classroom tasks. Their responsible behaviour was more evident when activities were structured and supported by teacher instructions or

reminders. Differences were also observed in how consistently each child followed classroom expectations and responded to guidance. The findings revealed differences in patterns of responsible behaviour between the 4-year-old and 5-year-old groups.

In the 4-year-old group, children demonstrated relatively more consistent responsible behavior in following classroom rules and caring for the environment. Subject D was seen routinely cleaning up toys after use without needing to be reminded by the teacher. He also habitually disposed of food waste in the trash and returned his eating utensils to his bag independently. These behaviors occurred almost daily during the observation period. Furthermore, D also appeared to care about the classroom environment by helping tidy up toys left behind by his friends. This shows that responsible behavior towards the environment has begun to develop quite well in D.

Subject A demonstrated significantly more socially responsible behavior than the other subjects. A not only consistently complied with the teacher's instructions but also took the initiative to remind his classmates to help clean up their toys after playtime. On several occasions, A was seen helping friends who were having difficulty putting away toys on the shelves. The class teacher stated that A was one of the most consistent children in carrying out daily classroom routines. This behavior indicates that A's social responsibility developed through habituation and daily interactions in the school environment.

Subject O also demonstrated fairly good socially responsible behavior, although he still needed occasional reminders from the teacher. O appeared to be able to follow classroom rules in an orderly manner, such as lining up to wash his hands, putting his shoes away, and returning his school supplies after use. When the teacher instructed him to clean up his toys, O usually carried out the instruction immediately after being reminded. During the observation period, O showed fairly stable development, especially in his ability to follow classroom routines. In general, the 4-year-old age group appeared more easily directed and more consistent in

carrying out routines established at school.

Four-year-old children appeared more responsive to teacher instructions and more orderly during transitions between learning activities. They tended to spontaneously follow classroom rules because they were accustomed to doing these activities every day. This consistency of behavior was evident throughout the four weeks of observations and indicates that the teacher's habituation was successful in developing responsible behavior in four-year-old children.

2. Responsible Behaviour Profile for the 5-Year-Old Age Group

In contrast to the 4-year-old age group, the 5-year-old age group exhibited more diverse patterns of responsible behaviour. Subject H demonstrated a high degree of independence in completing learning tasks. He was able to complete coloring, cutting, and pasting activities without requiring intensive assistance from the teacher. In fact, he often completed tasks faster than his peers. However, H lacked consistency in maintaining order in the classroom. After completing assignments, he often left stationery and learning materials on his desk without tidying them away. This indicates that H's individual responsibility skills were quite well developed, but his responsibility towards the environment was not yet fully established.

Subject K demonstrated active and cooperative behavior in group activities. He often helped friends who were having difficulty working on group assignments and seemed to interact easily with peers. In group activities, K was able to work well together and displayed positive social attitudes. However, in individual assignments, he often delayed completion due to his preference for playing and talking with his friends. During the observations, this behavior recurred, indicating that K's consistent individual responsibility still needed further development.

Meanwhile, subject R demonstrated fairly good independent abilities in completing several learning activities, but still experienced difficulties in social responsibility. On several occasions, R appeared reluctant to share stationery with friends and required encouragement from the

teacher to collaborate in group activities. When participating in group activities, R also sometimes focused more on his own interests than the needs of the group. Nevertheless, R was able to demonstrate fairly good emotional control when faced with certain situations in class.

The following figure presents the observational findings on children's responsible behavior based on age group, the observed behavioral aspects, and the consistency of the behaviors demonstrated during classroom activities. The data illustrate variations in responsible behavior among 4- and 5-year-old children across the aspects of rule adherence, environmental responsibility, independence, and social interaction.

Initial	Age	Salient Aspects	Observation Findings	Description
D	4 years	Rules & Environment	Consistently cleans up toys and keeps the classroom clean without being reminded; actively throws away trash and returns eating utensils	Compliant, responsive, stable
A	4 years	Social & Rules	Complies with teacher instructions consistently, takes the initiative to remind friends to help clean up their toys.	Cooperative, high social initiative
O	4 years	Rules	Complies with rules, occasionally needs a reminder from the teacher before acting.	Needs little guidance, responsive
H	5 years	Independent Assignments	Highly independent in individual tasks, but is inconsistent in tidying up the classroom after completion.	High autonomy, less stable rule compliance
K	5 years	Social & Group	Active and cooperative in group activities, often delays structured independent tasks.	Good social responsibility, individual needs to be considered
R	5 years	Social	Independent in tasks, reluctant to share stationery needs encouragement in social responsibility	Social responsibility is not yet fully stable.

Figure 2. Profile of Responsible Behaviour of Research Subjects

The most consistent aspect distinguishing the two age groups was the daily classroom routine. Every day, KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang implements a series of structured routines that include: lining up for class (7:15-7:30 AM), morning prayer and greetings (7:30-7:45 AM), core learning activities (7:45-9:30 AM), break and mealtime (9:30-10:00 AM), free activities or play (10:00-10:30 AM), and going home (10:30 AM). During each phase of this routine, researchers observed the emergence of responsible behavior. The results showed that 4-year-old children were significantly more obedient and orderly in following each phase of the routine, while 5-year-old children showed greater inconsistency, particularly during the transition between activities.

Another interesting finding concerns children's behavior when faced with unfamiliar situations or new activities. In these situations, 5-year-old children (especially H and K) tended to be more adventurous and take initiative, while 4-year-olds were more likely to wait for teacher instructions before acting. This pattern is consistent

with developmental theory, which states that 5-year-olds are in a more active stage of autonomous exploration.[14] Interestingly, the explorations undertaken by 5-year-old children are not always accompanied by responsibility for the consequences, which sometimes creates situations that require teacher intervention.

The most prominent and consistent responsible behavior in the 4-year-old age group was in the context of tidying and cleaning the classroom environment. On average, 4-year-old children needed no more than one reminder from the teacher to start tidying up their toys or equipment. Subject D often didn't need any reminders at all—he tidied up immediately after playing, sometimes even helping tidy up toys left by his friends. This behavior was very consistent and unchanged throughout the four weeks of observation, indicating that the value of environmental responsibility had been sufficiently internalized in D.

Meanwhile, the most prominent responsible behavior in the 5-year-old age group was in the context of completing academic assignments independently. Subject H consistently demonstrated outstanding abilities in completing worksheets, coloring assignments, and other creative tasks without requiring intensive teacher guidance. The quality of H's work was also generally better than the average child his age. Mrs. ARPH explained that H has a strong intrinsic motivation to complete his assignments well, which is a fairly mature form of personal responsibility. However, this strong motivation for academic tasks does not necessarily translate into responsibility for the classroom environment and rules.

3. Contextual Factors Influencing the Development of Responsibility

Beyond age and individual characteristics, this study identified several contextual factors that may contribute to differences in responsible behavior between 4- and 5-year-old children. The first factor was the physical design of the classroom. The 4-year-old classroom, taught by Teacher

[14] Fuadia, 'Perkembangan Sosial Emosi Anak Usia Dini', pp. 31-33.

ADN, had a more structured and organized layout. Each shelf and toy storage area was clearly labeled, making it easier for children to identify where to return used items. This consistent arrangement helped children understand and follow the organization of the classroom, thereby supporting the development of responsible environmental habits.

The second factor influencing the development of responsible behavior was the teacher's communication style in conveying instructions and expectations. Teacher ADN consistently used short, simple commands in a warm but firm tone. Phrases such as "Come on, guys, it's time to clean up your toys! Put them back!" were repeated whenever tidying activities began. This repetition provided recognizable verbal cues that helped children associate specific instructions with the expected actions, making it easier for the 4-year-olds to respond consistently as these routines became part of their daily habits.

The third factor was the reinforcement system implemented by teachers during the learning process. Teacher ADN frequently used direct and specific positive reinforcement, such as praising a child by saying, "That's great, D. You've tidied up your toys neatly." Specific praise helped children understand which behaviors were valued and encouraged them to repeat these behaviors. In contrast, Teacher ARPH used more varied forms of reinforcement tailored to the needs and interests of individual children. This approach was consistent with the characteristics of 5-year-olds, who begin to develop stronger personal preferences and may respond to a wider range of motivational strategies.

The research also shows that the development of responsible behavior in each child does not develop equally across all aspects. Based on the analysis of various dimensions of responsibility, no single subject excelled in all aspects of responsibility simultaneously. This demonstrates that responsibility is a multidimensional ability. A child may demonstrate excellent development in one aspect of responsibility, but still require guidance and stimulation in others. Understanding the differences in developmental profiles of responsibility is important for teachers so that they can provide approaches

and stimulation that are appropriate to the needs of each child.

The findings of this study indicate that the development of responsible behavior in early childhood is not always directly proportional to chronological age. Four-year-old children at KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang, actually showed greater consistency in complying with classroom rules and maintaining the learning environment. These findings align with Piaget's theory of moral development, which explains that children in the heteronomous morality stage tend to view rules as absolute and must be obeyed because they originate from an authority figure, in this case the teacher as the primary figure in the school environment.[15] This condition makes it easier for four-year-old children to demonstrate compliant behavior towards classroom rules and routines even though their understanding of the meaning of responsibility in depth is not yet fully developed.

The results of this study also align with previous research conducted, which stated that routine and consistent habituation can increase responsible behavior in early childhood.[16] The 4-year-old children in this study appeared to have an easier time following rules and routines because they were accustomed to receiving direct direction from teachers and were accustomed to performing the same activities repeatedly every day. Furthermore, research by Anggraeni et al. also stated that habituation methods can help shape children's discipline and responsible behavior through continuous repetition of activities until they become habits in daily life.[17]

Unlike 4-year-olds, 5-year-olds begin to enter the autonomous morality stage, a stage where children begin to develop self-awareness and the ability

[15] Chairun Nisa Safitri and M. Hajar Dewantoro, 'Penerapan Teori Perkembangan Moral Jean Piaget dan Kohlberg dalam Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini', *Al-Ubudiyah: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Studi Islam*, 6.1 (2025), pp. 312–314.

[16] Ni'mah et al., 'Model Pembiasaan Karakter Tanggung Jawab dan Kemandirian pada Anak Usia Dini di Taman Kanak-Kanak Negeri Pembina II Pungging Mojokerto', pp. 163-165.

[17] Anggraeni, Elan, and Mulyadi, 'Metode Pembiasaan untuk Menanamkan Karakter Disiplin dan Tanggungjawab di RA Daarul Falaah Tasikmalaya', pp. 103-104.

to think more independently regarding the rules around them. 5-year-olds begin to try to understand, question, and test the limits of rules as part of their development of autonomy. This condition causes 5-year-olds to appear less consistent in adhering to classroom rules than 4-year-olds, even though they are actually more cognitively and emotionally developed.[18] In line with this, Teacher ARPH stated that the behavior of exploring rules in 5-year-old children is a normal part of the development of self-awareness and independence in children, but still requires appropriate guidance and direction from teachers so that the development of this autonomy continues to develop positively.

This finding aligns with previous research, which indicates that the development of responsible behavior in early childhood is strongly influenced by structured and repeated habituation. When habituation is implemented consistently from the beginning of the school year, four-year-old children, who are still in a highly receptive phase, may more easily absorb and internalize these routines as part of their daily behavior.[19] Consistent habituation not only promotes behavioral compliance but also gradually helps children develop an understanding of the values underlying these behaviors.

The differences in responsible behaviour patterns between the 4-year-old and 5-year-old age groups in this study are also closely related to the development of children's executive brain functions, which develop gradually during early childhood. Executive functions include the ability to plan actions, control impulsive responses, consider options, and adapt behavior to the situation at hand. At age 5, the development of executive functions begins to show more complex progress, so that children begin to develop more critical and selective thinking skills in determining actions that are considered important to them.

[18] Judijanto et al., *Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, pp. 9-15.

[19] Dewi, Asmah, and Muntomimah, 'Efektifitas Meaningful Learning terhadap Tanggung Jawab Anak Kelompok B Usia 3–4 Tahun di Playgroup Amanah Bunda Malang', pp. 16-18.

This condition causes 5-year-old children to not always automatically comply with all rules as 4-year-old children do. Children begin to choose activities that are considered more interesting or meaningful to them and sometimes ignore routines that are considered less important. This is seen in subject H, who demonstrated excellent independent abilities in academic tasks and creative activities, but was less consistent in simple routines such as cleaning the play area and putting away learning equipment after use.

The social and emotional development of early childhood is also greatly influenced by the gradual development of self-regulation skills. Self-regulation is related to a child's ability to control emotions, restrain impulsive urges, and adapt behavior to applicable social rules. A good self-regulation skills help children act more purposefully and consistently follow rules. In this study, self-regulation in the 4-year-old age group appears to be still heavily influenced by external control or hetero-regulation, namely compliance that arises from teacher direction and authority.

Four-year-old children tend to follow rules because they are used to being directed and want to receive appreciation from teachers. Meanwhile, in the 5-year-old age group, a transition process begins to appear towards self-regulation or internal regulation, namely when children begin to try to control their behavior based on their own awareness and considerations. This transition process causes the behavior of 5-year-old children to appear more dynamic and sometimes less stable in carrying out daily responsibilities.[20]

In addition to cognitive development and self-regulation, teacher role models are also a very influential factor in shaping children's responsible behavior. Teachers, as the main figures in the school environment, play a crucial role in providing concrete examples of responsible behavior that

[20] Elce Purwandari, Nur Handayani, Okky Leo Agusta, Arni Mabruria, and Nik Haryanti, 'Peningkatan Kemampuan Sosial Emosional Anak Usia Dini melalui Metode Bercerita', *Jurnal PG-PAUD Trunojoyo: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Anak Usia Dini,* 9.1 (2022), p. 53.

children can emulate in their daily lives.[21] When teachers consistently demonstrate discipline, maintain a clean environment, speak politely, and implement rules in an orderly manner, children will more easily internalize these behaviors through imitation. Early childhood learns social behavior through imitation of the adults around them, especially teachers and parents as figures close to the child's life. This is evident in the class taught by Teacher ADN, where 4-year-old children demonstrate a high level of consistent responsible behavior because the teacher routinely models and consistently implements classroom routines every day.[22]

Previous research conducted also showed that structured task-giving methods can have a positive influence on the development of responsibility in children aged 5–6 years. However, the results of this study provide additional findings that age is not the sole determining factor in the maturity of children's responsible behavior. The development of responsibility is also influenced by the child's individual character, the habit patterns implemented at home, the quality of teacher-child interactions, and family parenting patterns that support the development of independence and discipline in children from an early age. Thus, responsible behavior does not develop automatically with age, but requires stimulation and habituation carried out consistently in everyday life.[23]

This finding is consistent with previous research, which emphasizes that responsibility is part of an individual's rights and obligations in social life and should be instilled from an early age so that children understand the boundaries of acceptable behavior in society. Children who are accustomed to responsibility from an early age will

[21] Azizah Nurul Izzati and Lia Kurniawaty, 'Studi Kualitatif Kemandirian Anak Usia Dini Melalui Regulasi Diri', *Jurnal Pendidikan, Sains dan Teknologi*, 3.4 (2024), pp. 755-756.
[22] Ambariani and Rakimahwati, 'Pengaruh Pola Asuh Orangtua terhadap Pembentukan Karakter Anak Usia Dini', pp. 6066-6068.
[23] Elisa Pitria Ningsih and Harun Rasyid, 'Pengaruh Metode Pemberian Tugas terhadap Sikap Tanggung Jawab Anak Usia 5–6 Tahun', *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 7.4 (2023), pp. 5123–5124.

more easily understand the consequences of their actions and have a better ability to adapt to their social environment.[24]

The findings of this study also indicate that the development of social and emotional aspects and the formation of responsible character in early childhood at KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang are inseparable from the application of Islamic values, which form the foundation of the institution's education. Habitual practices of worship, mutual respect, polite behavior, and the instilling of moral values in daily activities contribute to strengthening the development of responsible behavior in children.

A school environment that integrates religious values with daily social habits helps children understand that responsibility is not only related to classroom rules but also relates to moral attitudes and social relationships with others. This finding is consistent with previous research, which emphasizes that responsibility is part of an individual's rights and obligations in social life and should be instilled from an early age so that children understand the boundaries of acceptable behavior in society.[25]

The physical classroom environment is also a crucial factor in the development of children's responsible behavior. A structured classroom layout helps children understand order and makes it easier for them to carry out daily responsibilities.[26] The 4-year-old class at KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang has a clear and consistent layout system, making it easier for children to know where to store items and understand the flow of classroom activities. A structured environment makes children feel secure and helps them develop positive habits more quickly.[27]

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[24] Ainur Rofiq, Bakti Fatwa Anbiya and Huriya Afrah Khuzaima, 'Analisis Hak dan Kewajiban Warga Negara yang Terkandung dalam UUD Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945', *Harmoni Nusa Bangsa*, 2.1 (2024), pp. 89–91.

[25] Fuadia, 'Perkembangan Sosial Emosi Anak Usia Dini', pp. 35-37.

[26] Salam and Aminati, 'Desain Lingkungan Fisik untuk Perkembangan dalam Kebutuhan Anak di PAUD', pp. 79-80.

[27] Dewi, Asmah and Muntomimah, 'Efektifitas Meaningful Learning terhadap Tanggung Jawab Anak Kelompok B Usia 3–4 Tahun di Playgroup Amanah Bunda Malang', pp. 17-19.

Research also shows that family support has a significant influence on the development of children's responsibility.[28] Therefore, the development of responsibility in early childhood requires consistent collaboration between schools and families so that habits developed at school can be reinforced at home.

Meanwhile, at the age of 5, children's cognitive development begins to experience more complex developments. Children begin to develop more flexible thinking skills, are able to consider options, and begin to develop the ability to assess and negotiate the rules around them. Where this stage, children begin to test the boundaries of rules as part of the development of their thinking skills and autonomy. Therefore, behavior in 5-year-old children that appears inconsistent in following rules does not necessarily indicate a lack of responsibility but may be part of a healthy ongoing process of cognitive development and self-regulation.[29]

Overall, this study makes an important contribution to the discourse on character education in Indonesia, particularly in the context of early childhood education. The finding that 4-year-olds demonstrate higher levels of responsibility consistency than 5-year-olds in the context of classroom rule compliance provides a new perspective that challenges the common assumption of a linear relationship between age and behavioral maturity. This perspective invites educators and researchers to pay closer attention to the complexity of child development, not only in terms of chronological age, but also in terms of individual maturity, the quality of the educational environment, and the values instilled by the institution.[30]

Comparing the findings of this study with those of previous studies provides a more comprehensive picture found that a meaningful learning

[28] Ambariani and Rakimahwati, 'Pengaruh Pola Asuh Orangtua terhadap Pembentukan Karakter Anak Usia Dini', pp. 6065-6067.
[29] Kuku et al., 'Studi Literatur tentang Perkembangan dan Karakteristik Anak Usia Dini', pp. 117-120.
[30] Shabrina, Azizah and Rifqi, 'Pembelajaran Tahfidz sebagai Media Menumbuhkan Karakter Tanggung Jawab pada Anak Temper Tantrum', pp. 1099-1101.

approach significantly increased children's responsibility.[31] These findings are relevant to the implementation of learning at the KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang, which integrates responsible behavior into various meaningful play activities relevant to children's daily lives. Through play, cleaning up play equipment, maintaining classroom cleanliness, collaborating with friends, and following daily routines, children learn that every action carries a specific responsibility.

As children begin to understand the reasons and purposes behind the rules, responsible behavior develops more meaningfully and does not simply emerge as a fleeting form of compliance with teacher instructions. This internalization process helps children develop an awareness that responsibility is part of everyday habits and needs.

Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to employ a longitudinal design with a longer observation period to allow for more in-depth and continuous observation of children's responsible behavior development. Future research could also utilize more standardized observation instruments and involve a broader and more diverse number of subjects to enhance the validity and generalizability of the results.

Furthermore, further research could further examine the influence of family parenting styles, school culture, and specific learning approaches on the development of responsible behavior in early childhood.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the research conducted at KB-TK Islam Al Azhar 22 Semarang, the development of responsible behavior in children aged 4–5 years exhibits a multidimensional pattern and is not solely determined by chronological age. The findings reveal that 4-year-old children demonstrated greater consistency in adhering to classroom rules, following daily routines, and maintaining environmental cleanliness compared to 5-year-olds.

[31] Dewi, Asmah and Muntomimah, 'Efektifitas Meaningful Learning terhadap Tanggung Jawab Anak Kelompok B Usia 3–4 Tahun di Playgroup Amanah Bunda Malang', pp. 21-22.

This consistency is primarily driven by their higher receptivity to structured teacher guidance and authority. Conversely, 5-year-old children exhibited more advanced personal autonomy, independence, and cognitive problem-solving skills when completing individual tasks, though their compliance with social rules and routine transitions was less stable as they began testing behavioral boundaries.

This developmental dynamic indicates that responsible behavior in early childhood is heavily shaped by an interplay of contextual factors, including consistent classroom habituation, physical layout structuring, teacher role modeling, and parental reinforcement at home. While 4-year-olds benefit significantly from repeated behavioral routines and direct verbal cues, 5-year-olds require more varied reinforcement and opportunities for self-regulation to align their growing autonomy with social responsibility.

In conclusion, age alone should not be used as a definitive benchmark for behavioral maturity. Early childhood character education requires continuous, collaborative support between schools and families through structured daily routines, experiential learning, and positive role modeling to foster stable, long-term responsible behavior.

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