

## REFRAMING FATHERHOOD: Hadith Interpretations and the Digital Discourse on Fatherlessness in Indonesia

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**Abstract:** Fathers' role in the family profoundly impacts children's character formation, emotional well-being, and moral values through active and consistent involvement. In Indonesia, there is still a view that limits the role of fathers as financial providers, which contributes to the phenomenon of fatherlessness, namely the physical and emotional absence of fathers in the lives of their children. This article analyzes this phenomenon through Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis approach, which explores how the discourse of fatherlessness is formed in the digital space and its influence on public perceptions of fatherhood. The analysis results show that this discourse can potentially shift understanding toward a more egalitarian role for fathers in the family. In addition, hadiths emphasizing the role of fathers as leaders, moral educators, and guides in religious discipline reinforce the position of fathers in parenting that encompasses the moral, spiritual, social, emotional, and academic aspects of children. The comprehensive involvement of fathers can overcome the phenomenon of fatherlessness and support children's comprehensive development, while changing the paradigm of fathers' roles in modern families.

**Keywords:** *Fatherlessness*, critical discourse analysis, Norman Fairclough, digital media, hadith, family.

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## Introduction

Fathers' role in the family profoundly impacts shaping children's character, emotional well-being, and moral values through active involvement and consistent presence. As one of the main pillars of parenting, this role is not only entrusted to mothers but is also very important for fathers. A father's responsibility in raising children, which includes efforts to create good parenting patterns, meet children's needs, provide affection, and build quality interactions, plays a crucial role in children's development.<sup>1</sup> A father's physical and emotional presence is not merely an obligation but also an important part of efforts to make children's lives more purposeful.

However, in Indonesia, there is still a view that mothers are responsible for domestic affairs and child care, while the role of fathers is limited to providing financial support. This view has implications for a phenomenon that is now widely discussed, namely *fatherlessness*—the absence of a father figure in a child's life. This phenomenon encompasses not only the physical absence of a father but also the emotional absence, both of which significantly impact the formation of character, morality, and psychological health in children. In modern society, particularly in Indonesia, this phenomenon raises greater concerns due to its effects on child development and family dynamics.<sup>2</sup>

As the third country on the list of *fatherless countries*, Indonesia faces major challenges related to the absence of father figures in children's lives. *Fatherlessness* is related to physical absence and the absence of a father's psychological presence.<sup>3</sup> One of the main factors causing this phenomenon is the deeply rooted patriarchal culture, which views the role of the father as limited to providing for the family, while the mother is the primary caregiver for the children. This is evident in daily life, both in rural and urban areas, where although some fathers are seen with their children, their roles at home often do not include direct caregiving, such as changing diapers, bathing children, or preparing meals. Many fathers feel they have fulfilled their obligations by providing financial support, yet adequate caregiving requires deeper involvement.

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<sup>1</sup> Surya Chandra Surapaty, *Peran Ayah dalam Pengasuhan* (Jakarta Timur: BKKBN Badan Kependudukan dan Keluarga Berencana Nasional, 2017), 31.

<sup>2</sup> Siti Maryam Munjiat, "Pengaruh Fatherless Terhadap Karakter Anak dalam Prespektif Islam," *Al-Tarbawi Al-Haditsah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 2, no. 1 (June 1, 2017): 111, <https://www.syekhnurjati.ac.id/jurnal/index.php/tarbawi/article/view/2031>.

<sup>3</sup> Ayu Yuni Afifah, "Indonesia Jadi Negara Fatherless Ketiga di Dunia, Stop dengan Cara Ini!," *The Asiant Parent*, July 21, 2022, <https://id.theasianparent.com/indonesia-negara-fatherless>.

This imbalance of roles in the household contributes to suboptimal child development, making the phenomenon of fatherlessness an increasingly troubling issue in modern society.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, this study aims to examine and raise awareness of the importance of the father's role in child rearing, which is not limited to material aspects but also includes emotional and moral aspects.

The phenomenon of fatherlessness has become a widely discussed issue in social, psychological, and legal studies, with various studies revealing its impact on child development. Maulidi Dhuha Yaum Mubarak, in his work *Keluarga Sakinah Yang Berkemajuan* (Progressive Families), emphasizes the importance of building resilient families that are able to adapt to social changes and overcome challenges resulting from the absence of fathers.<sup>5</sup> Ezra Salwa and Muhammad Arifin, in their study *Fenomena Fatherless dalam Keluarga Perspektif Hukum Islam* (The Fatherless Phenomenon in Families from an Islamic Legal Perspective), highlight the need for a re-evaluation of the role of fathers, emphasizing that active father participation in parenting is crucial for creating healthy families and well-developed children.<sup>6</sup> Siti Maryam Munjiat, in her study on the influence of fatherlessness on children's character, demonstrates the profound impact on children's emotional and spiritual balance from an Islamic perspective.<sup>7</sup> Zahrotun Zahrotun and Mohammad Khoiril Anwar, through *Pentingnya Dialog antara Ayah dan Anak dalam al-Qur'an: Analisis Tafsir Maqashidi terhadap Fenomena Fatherless* (The Importance of Dialogue Between Fathers and Children in the Qur'an), also highlight the importance of the father's role in parenting, using a *maqāshidī* interpretation approach that emphasizes the values of justice, freedom, and responsibility in raising children.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Novita Eka Nurjanah, Fasli Jalal, and Asep Supena, "Studi Kasus Fatherless: Peran Ayah Dalam Pengasuhan Anak Usia Dini," *Kumara Cendekia* 11, no. 3 (October 16, 2023): 262, <https://doi.org/10.20961/kc.v11i3.77789>.

<sup>5</sup> Maulidi Dhuha Yaum Mubarak, "Implementasi Keluarga Sakinah Berkemajuan Terhadap Fenomena Fatherless," *HAKAM: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam Dan Hukum Ekonomi Islam* 7, no. 1 (2023), <https://ejournal.unuja.ac.id/index.php/hakam/article/view/6065>.

<sup>6</sup> Ezra Salwa Wahyu Zarkasyi and Muhammad Arifin Badri, "Fenomena Fatherless Dalam Keluarga Perspektif Hukum Islam," *USRAH: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 4, no. 2 (2023): 193–208.

<sup>7</sup> Munjiat, "Pengaruh Fatherless Terhadap Karakter Anak dalam Prespektif Islam."

<sup>8</sup> Zahrotun Zahrotun, "Dialog Ayah Dan Anak Dalam Al-Qur'an; Analisis Tafsir Maqashidi Terhadap Fenomena Fatherless," *Al-Qudwah* 1, no. 2 (December 31, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.24014/alqudwah.v1i2.27593>.

Although various studies have provided valuable insights into the phenomenon of fatherlessness, most of these studies emphasize normative and socio-psychological approaches. In the current digital context, discussions about fatherlessness have spread to virtual spaces, resulting in new discourses shaped by social, religious, and contemporary cultural interactions. Therefore, this study aims to explore the discourse of fatherlessness in virtual spaces, with a focus on critical discourse analysis using Norman Fairclough's analytical framework.<sup>9</sup> This approach aims to understand how the phenomenon of fatherlessness is reproduced and discussed on social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and others, as well as how this understanding shapes public perceptions of the role of fathers.

This article combines an analysis of hadiths on the role of fathers with Norman Fairclough's critical discourse approach, particularly in the context of digital media. This critical discourse analysis aims to unravel how discourse formed in virtual spaces not only reflects the absence of the father's role but also shapes public perceptions and understanding of fathers' responsibilities in child-rearing in the digital age.

This study uses Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach to examine the phenomenon of fatherlessness in virtual spaces and how it influences public perceptions of the role of fathers. Through the CDA framework, this study aims to explore the meanings contained in the discourse of fatherlessness, which not only reflects existing social conditions but also has the potential to shape public perceptions. In this perspective, discourse is understood as a social practice that is produced, distributed, and interpreted in an ever-evolving digital context. Therefore, discourse analysis can provide deeper insights into how interpretations of the role of fathers in virtual spaces influence broader social views.<sup>10</sup>

### **The Fatherless Phenomenon in Virtual Space**

Fatherless refers to the phenomenon of a father's absence, where a father is only biologically present without providing deep psychological and

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<sup>9</sup> See Sanne Mohr and Kirsten Frederiksen, "A Constructed Reality? A Fairclough-Inspired Critical Discourse Analysis of the Danish HPV Controversy," *Qualitative Health Research* 30, no. 7 (June 1, 2020): 1045–57, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732320909098>; Israa Burhanuddin Abdurrahman et al., "A Critical Discourse Analysis of Feminism in Katherine Mansfield's Bliss," *Asian Journal of Human Services* 24 (2023): 1–20, <https://doi.org/10.14391/ajhs.24.1>.

<sup>10</sup> Haryatmoko, *Critical Discourse Analysis (Analisis Wacana Kritis): Landasan Teori, Metodologi dan Teori* (Depok: Rajawali Pres, 2019), 22.

emotional presence in a child's life, especially during their formative years. The physical absence of a father is often referred to as orphanhood, while absence includes both physical and emotional aspects, which can be caused by factors such as work outside the city or marital problems, which lead to fatherlessness. In this context, children do not feel the role and figure of a father who should accompany them in their development process. According to Smith, a child can be said to be fatherless if they do not have sufficient emotional closeness and interaction with their father. In modern society, rapid social changes have influenced social ideology, which ultimately narrows the role of fathers, with most of society viewing fathers as merely providers and givers of permission to marry off their daughters.<sup>11</sup>

The absence of a father figure in the family has a significant impact, especially on the formation of a child's identity, which includes emotional and psychological aspects. Children who experience this condition tend to be more prone to psychological disorders, such as anxiety, difficulty interacting socially, feelings of loneliness, and a sense of loss. They may also show a tendency to take risks without considering the consequences and difficulty controlling themselves. As protectors and role models, fathers should provide a sense of security, comfort, and physical and psychological protection for their children. The presence of a father who sets a good example should prevent these problems from occurring in a child's development.<sup>12</sup> In Indonesia, the phenomenon of fatherlessness has increasingly become the focus of public attention from 2023 to 2024, especially in the virtual space. Various digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Twitter have become increasingly open spaces for discussing the impact of a father's absence in the family. This discourse is not only based on personal experiences but also involves the perspectives of experts, statistical data, and community support to strengthen a collective understanding of the importance of a father's role in the family.

YouTube has various videos that share personal experiences of growing up without a father figure. One of them is a video uploaded by the Falcon channel a year ago with the theme #mentalhealth, which has been viewed more than 15,000 times. This video tells the story of actress Aghniny Haque,

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<sup>11</sup> Arsyia Fajarrini and Aji Nasrul Umam, "Dampak Fatherless terhadap Karakter Anak dalam Pandangan Islam," *Abata: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Anak Usia Dini* 3, no. 1 (March 22, 2023): 23, <https://doi.org/10.32665/abata.v3i1.1425>.

<sup>12</sup> Arie Rihardini Sundari and Febi Herdajani, "Dampak Fatherless terhadap Perkembangan Psikologis Anak," *UMS: Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta*, 2013, 262.

who experienced the phenomenon of being fatherless.<sup>13</sup> In her personal story, Aghniny reveals that she lost her father's role when her mother was three months pregnant, without knowing the reason why her father left them. Since then, Aghniny grew up with only her mother, who worked hard to provide for their basic needs. This situation affected Aghniny's mental health, which worsened when she joined the national taekwondo team. During training, Aghniny often faced harsh treatment from her coach, including physical and verbal abuse, without clear reasons. After enduring such mistreatment, Aghniny decided to withdraw from the national team, leaving her feeling lost and lacking self-confidence, as taekwondo was the only thing she had dedicated herself to in life.

Baim Cilik shared a similar experience in a podcast on the Kasisolusi channel, which has been viewed more than one million times. In the podcast, Baim revealed to the public for the first time that he had been fatherless since 2022 when his father stopped providing for his family.<sup>14</sup> Baim recounted how the money he had earned from acting since he was three years old, which was supposed to be saved for his family's needs, was not used wisely and not even to pay for his school fees. As a result, Baim and his family lost contact with his father. This situation brought Baim to the lowest point in his life, but he tried to remain independent by selling goods despite being under the age of 18 in order to continue his education. The podcast video received responses from netizens who felt that Baim's story could serve as a lesson for fathers who have failed in their marriages, reminding them that even if they no longer communicate, the obligation to provide for their children and wives must still be fulfilled.

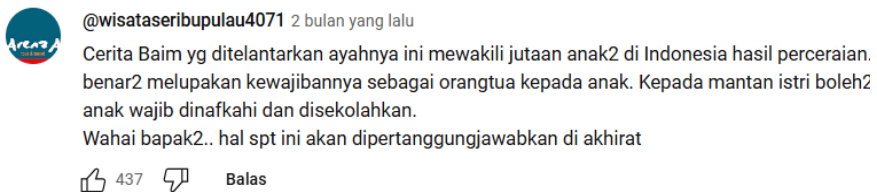


Figure 2. Comments from the kasisolusi podcast

<sup>13</sup> "Apapun Masalahnya Hadapi!" | 2 Maret 2023 Di Bioskop, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFMzCRUOSZw>.

<sup>14</sup> *Lama Menghilang, Kini Baim Cilik Sukses Jadi Pengusaha Kambing & Parfum: Gue Gak Pakai Privilage!*, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rulGDIZjg6o>.

Based on these two experiences, it can be concluded that digital platforms play a strategic role in opening up space for individuals to share their experiences and emotional expressions, ranging from feelings of loss to the process of building self-identity. These narratives highlight negative impacts and contribute to public empathy, particularly in building awareness among prospective fathers to be more reflective and proactive in avoiding the recurrence of similar problems in their families.

Virtual spaces not only serve as a platform for sharing personal experiences regarding the phenomenon of fatherlessness but also as a dynamic discursive space for discussing its impact on individuals and family structures. Through discussions and dialogues that develop in digital media, users can explore various perspectives to understand the root causes of the problem and develop strategies to resolve it. A relevant example is a video on Ahmad Risyad's YouTube channel entitled "Nasehat Ayah" (Father's Advice), which features a conversation between Risyad and his father, Muhammad Ali Toha Assegaf. The dialogue responds to data ranking Indonesia as one of the countries with the highest rates of fatherlessness while exploring the issue from a cultural and gender perspective.<sup>15</sup>

Muhammad Ali Toha Assegaf argues that the absence of fathers in children's lives is inseparable from cultural constructs that rigidly separate domestic and public roles. Within the Indonesian cultural framework, fathers are often identified as providers in the public sphere, while mothers are responsible for domestic affairs. This division of roles shapes societal perceptions that view child-rearing as the primary responsibility of mothers, while fathers' emotional involvement is often marginalized. As a solution, he emphasizes the importance of intensifying communication between fathers and children, regardless of time constraints. Additionally, he recommends public education initiatives from the government as part of a systemic strategy to address this issue.

The importance of the role of fathers is also widely discussed in various social media posts that educate the public about fatherhood responsibilities from an Islamic perspective. One of them is the Instagram account @1001tanyajawabparenting, which has more than 150,000 followers. In a post dated February 26, 2023, six fundamental roles of fathers according to Islamic teachings were highlighted: first, fathers are directly responsible for their children's education and should not fully delegate this responsibility to

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<sup>15</sup> *Akhirnya Terjawab!! Kekayaan Dan Kebahagiaan, Pentingkah Izin Suami, Memilih Teman Yang Baik, Dll*, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DIMWkxazP98>.

mothers; second, fathers provide emotional love through physical interaction and empathetic communication; third, fathers act as protectors of the family, as stated in QS. al-Nisā’ verse 34; fourth, fathers act as educators and advisors, as in QS. Luqmān verse 13; fifth, fathers serve as role models in behavior and life values.<sup>16</sup>

Through Ahmad Risyad’s content and educational posts, such as those from @1001tanyajawabparenting, it can be concluded that one of the crucial factors causing fatherlessness is the dominance of patriarchal culture, which limits fathers’ emotional involvement in child-rearing. The proposed solutions include improving the quality of communication between fathers and children, as well as developing educational policies that emphasize the importance of the father’s role in the family structure. The presence of active virtual spaces addressing this issue has the potential to form a new social support ecosystem. For example, online communities such as the Twitter account @DadsWhoCare and the Instagram hashtag #dadswhocare contribute to raising collective awareness, driving social transformation, and strengthening solidarity among individuals facing similar challenges.<sup>17</sup>

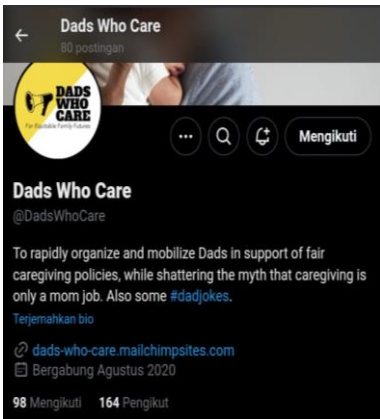


Figure 3. @DadsWhoCare account on Twitter

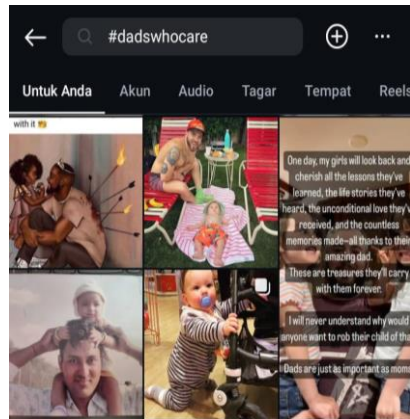


Figure 4. #dadswhocare on Instagram

<sup>16</sup> "1001 Tanya Jawab Parenting di Instagram: 'Teruntuk Ayah, peranmu sangat penting' #parentingtips #ayah," Instagram, February 26, 2023, <https://www.instagram.com/reel/CpIcMwXBWZI/>.

<sup>17</sup> "(1) Dads Who Care (@DadsWhoCare) / X," X (formerly Twitter), June 15, 2021, <https://x.com/dadswhocare>.

The account represents a digital campaign movement that aims to emphasize the importance of the role of fathers in parenting and encourage consistent involvement in raising children. Fathers in Western communities developed this initiative as a form of resistance against traditional gender role stereotypes. Through narratives of experiences, reflections, and evaluations, the movement showcases various parenting practices, caregiving methods, and efforts to build positive emotional bonds between fathers and their children.

### **Analysis of Hadiths on the Role of Fathers**

The role of fathers—often referred to as *fathering*—refers to the active involvement of fathers in the upbringing and education of their children, which includes providing advice, guidance, and fostering independence in their children as they grow into adulthood, both physically, emotionally, and socially. Although fathers generally spend less time with their children than mothers due to work and other public responsibilities, fathers' contributions continue to play a significant role in their children's growth and development. Normatively, fathers have the primary function as head of the family, which not only carries rights but also the obligation to create family welfare for the realization of a prosperous and happy household.<sup>18</sup>

From an Islamic perspective, the father's role is described as a divine trust, where he and the mother are responsible for educating and raising their children. However, in practice, awareness of this responsibility is often neglected.<sup>19</sup> In fact, children have specific needs and rights that, in some aspects, can only be optimally fulfilled by the father figure. A father who is consistent and emotionally and morally involved will make a positive contribution to the formation of his children's character. Therefore, parental role models—especially fathers—are the foundation for the formation of a child's personality.

Character education in Islam is not merely focused on cognitive aspects or potential development but also includes the internalization of moral and spiritual values.<sup>20</sup> In this context, a number of hadiths of the Prophet

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<sup>18</sup> Purindro Santoso, *Peran Ayah dalam Pengasuhan* (Jakarta Timur: BKKBN: Badan Kependudukan dan Keluarga Berencana Nasional, 2017), 28.

<sup>19</sup> Santoso, 30.

<sup>20</sup> Irma Yunita, "Peran Ayah dalam Pembinaan Karakter Anak Kajian Terhadap Pola Asuh di Komunitas Home Education Aceh | Yunita | Ar-Raniry: International Journal of Islamic Studies," *Ar-Raniry: International Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2019): 28, <https://jurnal.ar-raniry.ac.id/index.php/jar/article/view/10274/5738>.

emphasize the importance of the father's role in instilling noble values that shape the integrity of a child's character.

### 1. *The responsibility of fathers as heads of families*

Being a leader or head of the family is the primary responsibility of a father, who essentially serves as the household's decision-maker to achieve clear and sustainable family goals. The role of a father's leadership is not only administrative but also has a significant impact on the character development of children. A father who actively and wisely carries out his role can be a moral role model, a source of discipline, and a source of confidence for children in facing life.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, leadership within the family is not merely a formality but an essential foundation that every father must possess to prevent disorientation within the household. A father is socially and spiritually responsible for those he leads, including his family members. This principle of responsibility is emphasized in the words of the Prophet Muhammad as narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, volume 3, index number 1829, which states that every leader will be held accountable for his leadership.

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ حَدَّثَنَا لَيْثٌ وَحَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ رَمْحٍ حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ عَنْ نَافِعٍ عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ أَلَا كَلِّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكَلِّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ فَالْأَمِيرُ الَّذِي عَلَى النَّاسِ رَاعٍ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْهُمْ وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَةٌ عَلَى بَيْتِ بَعْلِهَا وَوَلَدِهِ وَهِيَ مَسْئُولَةٌ عَنْهُمْ وَالْعَبْدُ رَاعٍ عَلَى مَالِ سَيِّدِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْهُ أَلَا فَكَلِّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكَلِّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ

It has been narrated to us by Qutaybah b. Sa'īd and Muḥammad b. Rumḥ, both from al-Layth, from Nāfi', from 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with them both, from the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, who said: "Remember, each of you is a leader, and each of you will be held accountable for those under your care. A leader of the people is a leader, and he will be held accountable for his people. A husband is a leader in his family, and he will be held accountable for those under his care. A wife is a leader in her husband's home and over her children, and she will be held accountable for those under her care. A servant is a leader over his master's property, and he will be held accountable for those under his care. Know that each of you is a leader, and each of you will be held accountable for those

<sup>21</sup> Yunita, 31.

under your care.” (Hadith narrated by Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Volume 3, No. 1829).<sup>22</sup>

The explanation of the hadith above has been agreed upon by scholars, who emphasize that a leader is a guardian and guarantor of security and is responsible for carrying out his duties optimally, both in personal matters and towards those under his responsibility. In the words of the Prophet Muhammad, “Each of you is a leader, and each of you will be held accountable for those under your leadership,” there is a moral emphasis that a leader must uphold justice and fulfill the interests of the people in all aspects of life, including worldly, religious, and personal matters.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, a father, as the leader of his family, is responsible for creating comfort, fulfilling the needs, and maintaining the physical and spiritual well-being of his wife and children. A father’s leadership in this context is not merely a symbol of authority but also a trust that must be carried out with full responsibility and justice.

The saying of the Prophet Muhammad, as narrated by Imam Muslim in *Bāb al-Īmān*, states:

“There is no servant whom Allah has entrusted with leadership, then he dies while deceiving his people, except that Allah will forbid Paradise for him.” (HR. Muslim)

This hadith provides two possible meanings. First, if a leader consciously legitimizes deception against his people, he will be forbidden from entering Paradise and will remain in Hell. Second, if he does not permit deception but still commits fraud, he will be prevented from entering Paradise with the righteous. This means that his entry into Paradise will be delayed as a form of punishment, either through torment in Hell or a delay in the process of reckoning.<sup>24</sup>

Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that the character development of children depends heavily on the responsibility of a father as the head of the family. Leadership in the family is not only measured by how much power one has but also by how far a father is able to guide, protect, and fulfill the rights and obligations of his family members fairly and consistently.

The quality of the hadith narrated by Imam Muslim above can be classified as *ḥadīth ṣaḥīḥ* based on the study of *al-jarḥ wa al-ta’dīl* of its

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<sup>22</sup> Muslim bin al-Ḥajjāj Abū al-Ḥasan al-Qushairī Al-Naysābūrī, *Al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Mukhtaṣar Bi Naqli al-’adli ‘an al-’adli Ilā Rasūlillāh Ṣalla Allāh ‘alaiḥ Wasallam*, vol. 3, no. 1829 (Beirut: Dār iḤyā’ al-Tarāts al-’Arābi, 261AD), 31.

<sup>23</sup> Imam Nawawī, *Syarah Shahih Muslim*, vol. 9 (Beirut: Darus Sunnah, n.d.), 92.

<sup>24</sup> Nawawī, 9:93.

narrators, namely ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Umar, Nāfi‘ al-Mawlā, al-Layth b. Sa‘d al-Fahmī, Muḥammad b. Rumḥ, and Qutaybah b. Sa‘īd. All of them are considered *thiqqah* (trustworthy), and the chain of transmission of this hadith is free from *shudhūd* and *‘illah*, thus fulfilling the criteria of authenticity in the science of hadith.

## 2. *The Importance of the Role of Fathers in Children’s Moral Education*

The role of fathers in the education of their children is very important, especially in shaping their character and instilling moral values. Among the most fundamental aspects of education are manners—that is, learning about etiquette, ethics in speaking and acting, respect for others, honesty, and good behavior toward others. As the leader of the family, fathers are not only responsible structurally but also serve as educators and moral role models who guide their children from an early age.<sup>25</sup>

The importance of manners education is emphasized in a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, narrated by Imam al-Tirmidhi in his *Sunan*, vol. 4, no. 1952:

حَدَّثَنَا نَصْرُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ الْجَهْضَمِيُّ حَدَّثَنَا عَامِرُ بْنُ أَبِي عَامِرٍ الْخَزَّازُ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَيُّوبُ بْنُ مُوسَى، عَنْ أَبِيهِ،  
عَنْ جَدِّهِ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «مَا نَحَلُّ وَالِدٌ وَلَدًا مِنْ نَحْلٍ أَفْضَلَ مِنْ أَدَبٍ حَسَنٍ»

Narrated by Naṣr b. ‘Alī al-Jahḍamī, who said: “Narrated by ‘Āmir b. Abī ‘Āmir al-Khazzāz, who said: Narrated by Ayyūb b. Mūsā, from his father, from his grandfather, that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: “There is no better gift that a father can give to his child than good manners.” (Reported by al-Tirmidhī).<sup>26</sup>

This hadith emphasizes that the best gift a father can give to his child is not material wealth but good manners. Education in manners is not sufficient when given only verbally; it must be demonstrated through concrete actions by parents, especially fathers. Setting an example through daily behavior is more easily absorbed by children and helps form a strong character rooted in Islamic values. From an early age, children guided by moral values will have a strong moral foundation in making decisions, interacting with their social environment in an ethical manner, and maintaining their dignity and that of their family.

In terms of the quality of its chain of transmission, this hadith is considered to have the status of *ḥasan li-ghayrihi*. The majority of its narrators are considered *thiqqah* (trustworthy), except for ‘Āmir b. Abī ‘Āmir al-

<sup>25</sup> Santoso, *Peran Ayah Dalam Pengasuhan*, 91.

<sup>26</sup> Muḥammad bin ‘Isā al-Tirmidī, *Sunan Al-Tirmidī*, vol. 4, no. 1952 (Mesir: Syarikah Maktabah wa Maṭbu‘ah Mustafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabi, n.d.), 338.

Khazzāz, who, according to Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, is considered weak in terms of memorization. This hadith also lacks perfect corroboration from the *shawāhid* or *mutābi' tāmamah* chains. Therefore, although it does not reach the level of *ṣaḥīḥ*, this hadith can still be used as a basis in the context of *targhīb* (encouragement), especially in moral education within the family.

### 3. *The Role of Fathers as Educators in Instilling Discipline in Prayer*

Religious education is one of the rights of children that must be fulfilled by parents, especially by fathers as leaders in the family. In Islam, fathers are not only responsible for instilling moral values but also have the obligation to instill religious values in children from an early age. One form of religious education is the habit of performing prayer with discipline. The example set by the father in performing his role as the imam of prayer in the family is an important means of shaping the religious character of children and instilling discipline in worship in their daily lives.<sup>27</sup>

The Prophet Muhammad emphasized the urgency of prayer education in a hadith narrated by Imam Abu Dawud in his *Sunan*, vol. 1, no. 495:

حَدَّثَنَا مُؤَمَّلُ بْنُ هِشَامٍ يَعْنِي الْيَشْكُرِيَّ، حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، عَنْ سَوَّارِ أَبِي حَمْزَةَ قَالَ أَبُو دَاوُدَ: وَهُوَ سَوَّارُ بْنُ دَاوُدَ أَبُو حَمْزَةَ الْمَزْنِيَّ الصِّيرْفِيُّ. عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ شُعَيْبٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ جَدِّهِ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «مُرُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ سَبْعِ سِنِينَ، وَأَضْرِبُوهُمْ عَلَيْهَا، وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ عَشْرِ وَفَرَّقُوا بَيْنَهُمْ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ»

Mu‘ammal b. Hishām al-Yashkurī told us, from Ismā‘īl, from Sawwār Abū Ḥamzah—who, according to Abū Dāwūd, is Sawwār b. Dāwūd Abū Ḥamzah al-Muzanī al-Ṣayrafī—from ‘Amr bin Shu‘ayb, from his father, from his grandfather. He said that the Messenger of Allah *ṣalla Allāh ‘alayh wa sallama* said: “Command your children to perform prayer when they reach the age of seven. If by the age of ten, they have not yet done so, then discipline them (as a form of education), and separate their beds.” (Hadith narrated by Abū Dāwūd, No. 495).<sup>28</sup>

The explanation of this hadith, as explained by Imam al-Nawawī, indicates that the command to accustom children to prayer applies to both boys and girls without distinction. Parents, especially fathers, are obliged not only to tell their children to pray but also to teach them the requirements and pillars of prayer comprehensively. The warning in the form of light physical

<sup>27</sup> Wahyuni, Siregar, and Wahyuningsih, “Peran Ayah (Fathering) dalam Pengasuhan Anak Usia Dini,” 63.

<sup>28</sup> Abu Dāwūd Sulaimān bin Al-As‘ad bin Ishāq bin Bāshri, *Ṣunān Abū Dāwūd*, vol. 1, No 495 (Beirut: Al-Makātabah, n.d.), 133.

punishment (without violence), as mentioned in the hadith, is intended as an educational measure to instill discipline, not as a form of violence.<sup>29</sup>

From the perspective of the quality of the chain of narrators, the majority of the narrators in this hadith are considered *thiqah*, except for Shu‘ayb bin Muḥammad al-Sahmī, who was rated *ṣadūq* (truthful but weak in memorization) by al-Dhahabī. Although this hadith is not supported by sufficient *shawāhid* (supporting hadiths), its authenticity is still acceptable, and it is classified as *ṣahīḥ li-ghayrih*—that is, a hadith that is strong due to the overall chain of transmission despite having minor weaknesses that are not significant.

### The *Fatherlessness* in Virtual Space: A Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as developed by Norman Fairclough, emphasizes that language cannot be separated from social practice. Language in an interaction is not merely a means of communication but also a medium that reproduces social structures, power, and ideology. Within this framework, discourse is understood as a social practice that is actively shaped by the power relations that exist in society. Fairclough proposes three main dimensions for analyzing discourse: (1) text (linguistic), (2) discursive practice (the process of producing and consuming discourse), and (3) social practice (the broader social context).<sup>30</sup>

This approach is relevant in analyzing the phenomenon of fatherlessness—the absence or minimal role of fathers—as represented in virtual spaces. One actual example can be found in a podcast video on the YouTube channel Podhub, hosted by Deddy Corbuzier and Vidi Aldiano, featuring the married couple Onadio Leonardo and Beby as guests. In the discussion, Onadio’s statements about the role of fathers sparked critical responses from netizens, as seen in the video’s comments section, which has been viewed more than five million times.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Muḥammad Ashraf bin Amīr bin Alī bin Ḥaidar Abū Abdurrahman, *‘Aun Ma’būd Syarah Sunan Abū Dawūd*, vol. 14 (Beirūt: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, n.d.), 114.

<sup>30</sup> Norman Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse Textual Analysing for Social Research* (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2004), 22; M. Abdul Hamid, Abdul Basid, and Isma Nida Aulia, “The Reconstruction of Arab Women Role in Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis,” *Social Network Analysis and Mining* 11, no. 1 (October 20, 2021): 101, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13278-021-00809-0>.

<sup>31</sup> *KAN RIBUT KAN 🌈, ONAD: KAN GUA YG CARI DUIT!! DASAR SILUM4N AYAM PENYET LO!! Vidi, Beby*, 2024, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WOn-X1d\\_v1c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WOn-X1d_v1c).

Using the AWK Fairclough approach, the discourse on the role of fathers in the podcast can be analyzed to uncover how the social construction of the father figure is represented, reproduced, and debated in virtual spaces—while also reflecting the power dynamics and ideologies underlying them.<sup>32</sup>



Figure 5. Podcast podhub on Deddy Corbuzier's YouTube channel

### 1. Text Analysis

This section describes the verbal interaction between the participants in the *Podhub* podcast, namely Deddy Corbuzier, Vidi Aldiano, Onadio Leonardo (Onad), and his wife, Beby, which took place at 39:10. The conversation began when Onad asked Deddy Corbuzier's wife whether Deddy was really involved in taking their children to and from school. Onad says, "Does he really take the kids to school and pick them up, too?" while pointing at Deddy Corbuzier. Deddy's wife, Sabrina responds, "From kindergarten to middle school, he definitely takes them and picks them up." Onad then asks Deddy, "Why are you worried about using a driver?" Deddy answers firmly, "Because my kids aren't drivers' kids."

The conversation continued with Beby, Onad's wife, commenting, "It's just responsibility, isn't it?" However, Onad immediately refuted this by saying, "But then there's no division of labor, what are you doing?" This statement prompted a response from Vidi Aldiano, "Why are you being so calculating, Nad, in your household?" Bobby then reinforced Onad's narrative by stating, "Yes, he (Onad) feels that once he's earned the money, it's not my job to take the kids to school."

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<sup>32</sup> Sutikno Sutikno et al., "Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of Norman Fairclough's Theory on Gojek YouTube Advertisement GoSend Version: Jadi #BestSellerGoSend Bareng Ariel Noah," *Studies in Media and Communication* 13, no. 2 (March 4, 2025): 175–86, <https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v13i2.7561>.

This dialogue reflects a discourse that debates the roles and responsibilities of fathers in child rearing, particularly in domestic contexts such as school drop-offs. Onad's statement, "But then there's no division of labor, what are you doing?" indicates dissatisfaction with the division of roles in the household. The choice of the term "division of tasks" suggests a desire for role equity but implicitly places the burden of domestic responsibilities on the partner, reflecting traditional views that limit a father's role to that of a breadwinner.

Vidi's response, "Why are you being so calculating, Nad, in this household?" represents resistance to a transactional approach in domestic relationships. The phrase "counting" highlights criticism of patriarchal thinking that does not support equal collaboration between husbands and wives. Meanwhile, Beby's statement, "If you've earned money, then that's it, it's not my job to take the kids," further reinforces gender constructs that assume that a father's economic role frees him from domestic responsibilities. The phrase "not my job" reveals the existence of an unequal gender-based role dichotomy and illustrates how patriarchal ideology continues to be reproduced in family narratives in virtual spaces, thereby creating inequality in the division of roles and functions within the family.

## 2. *Discursive Practice Analysis*

In this second dimension, the analysis will focus on aspects of discourse related to the stages of text production and consumption, which shape public discourse on the role of fathers. The *PodHub* podcast, produced in August 2023 and lasting 1 hour and 11 minutes, was broadcast on Deddy Corbuzier's personal channel, which has 23.6 million subscribers. The dialogue in this podcast resulted from spontaneous interactions between the speakers, reflecting their personal experiences as well as cultural values and gender stereotypes in the context of the household. The production of this dialogue indirectly reveals how discourse on the role of fathers and domestic responsibilities continues to be negotiated. The narrative reflects the tension between patriarchal culture and modern ideas about equality of roles in the family.

At the text consumption stage, this discourse can be analyzed through the comments provided by netizens who interpret the podcast video. The various comments that appear reflect the cultural influences and personal experiences of the audience, some of whom consider the dialogue to be mere entertainment, while others see it as reinforcing gender stereotypes regarding

the role of fathers. In addition, videos like this often trigger various comments, discussions, and even criticism, as seen below.

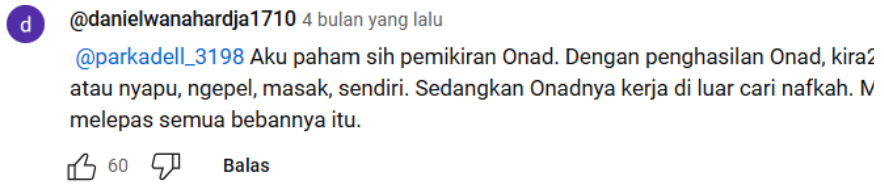


Figure 6. Netizen Comments on the Podcast

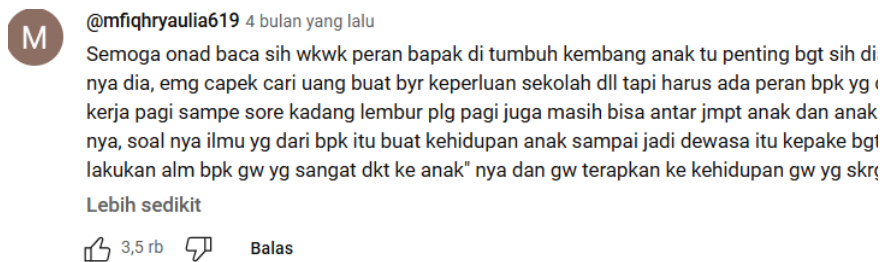


Figure 7. Netizen Comments on the Podcast

In Figure 6, there is a comment from a netizen who agrees with Onad's statement, who believes that the role of a father at home is limited to relaxing after work, without getting involved in domestic chores or housework, as the wife will be assisted by a domestic helper. If the responsibility of educating children is also relinquished by fathers, then this discourse has the potential to reinforce gender stereotypes about the role of fathers, which has an impact on the phenomenon of fatherlessness that is increasingly prevalent in Indonesia.

Meanwhile, in Figure 7, a comment from a netizen illustrates how the dialogue opens up opportunities for discussion on social media by sharing personal experiences about the role of fathers who actively take their children to and from school even though they have to work from morning to evening. This comment indirectly shows how the role of fathers in the family has a long-term impact, both on the development of children and on family life as a whole. Additionally, a father's role is not limited to providing financial support but also serves as a primary role model for his children.

From these two comments, it can be concluded that social media forums function as a space to create broader public discourse while expanding the conversation about the definition of a father's role in modern society.

### 3. *Social Practice Analysis*

The social practice analysis dimension is the final stage that examines a topic based on a paradigm that considers that discourse in virtual space can be influenced by the surrounding social context. This analysis is constructed through three socio-cultural practices, namely situational, institutional, and social systems. At the situational level, the analysis focuses on the context of the situation in which the podcast discussion addresses the role of fathers in taking their children to and from school, which emerges from spontaneous conversation. The questions posed by Onad, which focus on Deddy Corbuzier's habits as a father, illustrate a normative debate about the domestic responsibilities of fathers. Although these conversations take place in a casual setting, they reflect social expectations of gender role inequality in modern families, which are increasingly discussed in virtual spaces.

The second socio-cultural practice, at the institutional level, refers to the role of institutions in shaping and disseminating discourse. As a media institution, podcasts have the power to produce and disseminate information that becomes public consumption. Deddy Corbuzier's response, "They're my kids, not the driver's," illustrates the institutional view of a father's responsibility, emphasizing the importance of emotional and physical involvement in child-rearing. However, Onad's subsequent reaction reflects resistance to more traditional views of fatherhood, influencing his belief that taking children to and from school is the mother's job. As an institution, the podcast also demonstrates the power of social media in redefining family roles, encouraging the public to rethink the roles of parents, particularly fathers, in the context of a more egalitarian modern life.

At the third level, the social system, the conversation in the podcast reveals the social norms and values that prevail in society regarding the role of fathers in the family. Traditionally, fathers are seen as the primary breadwinners, while mothers are responsible for domestic affairs, such as taking care of children and the household. Onad's statement that his role as breadwinner frees him from domestic responsibilities, including taking his children to school, reflects one of the dominant views in society. This view influences many fathers to do the same, which in turn impacts Indonesian children who feel like victims of the "fatherless" phenomenon. Thus, virtual spaces like this podcast provide a platform for public discussion and can influence social norms toward a more egalitarian distribution of roles within the family.

### **The Ideal Portrait of Childcare: Realizing Egalitarian Fathering**

In the context of modern families, the concept of egalitarian fathering emphasizes the role of fathers as equal partners in childcare. The involvement of fathers in childcare cannot be viewed as a complementary role to mothers but rather as a key component in meeting the needs of children. Egalitarian fatherhood involves physical, emotional, spiritual, and educational aspects of supporting children. This involvement is not limited to providing financial support but also includes teaching discipline, supporting activities outside the home, and preparing children for their future. Therefore, fathers must understand their children's conditions and needs, both emotionally and instrumentally, to raise them to become a superior generation.<sup>33</sup>

Based on the explanation of the obligations of fathers in parenting, it can be concluded that in addition to being the head of the family, fathers also play a role in providing for their children's physical and emotional needs. The following are some ideal portraits of the role of fathers in parenting:

First, being a moral and spiritual role model. As the main role model for children, fathers have a big influence in shaping their behavior. Everything a father says and does, as well as his ethics, will be imitated and become an example for children. Therefore, it is important for fathers to provide moral education and instill good moral values. For example, when a child makes a mistake, a father can reprimand and explain in a wise manner that such behavior is inappropriate. This moral guidance aims to help children understand appropriate behavior when interacting with others and facilitate their socialization process in society.<sup>34</sup> In addition to moral values, spiritual aspects also need attention. Fathers, as central figures in the family, are responsible for instilling ethical principles in accordance with Islamic law and setting a good example. In Islam, the role of the father is to educate children with love, give wise advice, and act as a motivator. Al-Ghazali argues that the role of the father in education must be characterized by exemplary behavior, care, and kindness.<sup>35</sup>

Second, providing social and emotional education. Social and emotional skills are important pillars that enable children to interact and

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<sup>33</sup> Wahyuni, Siregar, and Wahyuningsih, "Peran Ayah (Fathering) dalam Pengasuhan Anak Usia Dini," 57.

<sup>34</sup> Sri Dwi Harti, "Keteladanan Orang Tua dalam Mengembangkan Moralitas Anak Usia Dini," *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* 7, no. 5 (October 6, 2023): 6374, <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v7i5.5191>.

<sup>35</sup> Indra Mulyana (Ka In), *Keistimewaan Peran Ayah dalam Pengasuhan Anak* (CV Jejak (Jejak Publisher), 2022), 35.

adapt to their social environment. Therefore, the role of fathers in introducing and modeling social behavior is essential for children's development. By guiding children in managing their emotions and interacting with others, fathers can help children become socially competent individuals. In addition to social aspects, fathers also play an important role in supporting children's emotional development. For example, when children are still infants or toddlers, a father's affectionate touch and facial expressions are crucial for their emotional stimulation. Fathers can teach children to compromise and be patient when they face emotional situations, such as conflicts with friends. This approach teaches emotional management and helps children grow into more emotionally mature individuals.

Third, building effective communication. Effective communication greatly influences the good relationship between parents and children. Although communication with fathers is often challenging for many children, but competent communication skills can improve this. With the development of digital technology, even though fathers may be busy with work, communication with children is now easier through various digital platforms. A father should not only play the role of educator but also that of a friend or companion to his children. Fathers can provide much-needed support by communicating frequently, whether about small things or big problems, especially when children experience difficulties or failures. This emotional support is very important, especially in building children's courage and confidence in facing various challenges.<sup>36</sup>

Fourth, supporting children's academic and non-academic activities. The role of fathers in supporting their children's academic activities is crucial for their intellectual development. Fathers' involvement in their children's learning activities, such as helping with homework, attending school events, or discussing lessons, can increase children's motivation and confidence in education. However, fathers' attention should not be limited to academic aspects. Fathers should also pay attention to the development of their children's non-academic skills, such as hobbies or individual skills in sports, arts, or other extracurricular activities. Fathers can use technology to support their children's development in the digital age. By discussing interesting educational content on digital platforms such as YouTube, using interactive learning applications, or joining online communities that support children's self-development, fathers can significantly contribute to their children's

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<sup>36</sup> Santi Esterlita Purnamasari and parmanti, "Peran Ayah dalam Pengasuhan Anak," *Insight: Jurnal Ilmu Psikologi* 17, no. 2 (2015): 85.

learning outside of school. Fathers' involvement in supporting these academic and non-academic activities not only affects their children's academic success but also prepares them with the life skills they need in the digital age.<sup>37</sup>

Therefore, active father involvement in child-rearing, both in physical, emotional, social, and academic aspects, is crucial for ensuring children's balanced and healthy development. As equal partners in child-rearing, fathers' egalitarian roles are key to creating harmonious families that support children's optimal growth.

### Concluding Remarks

The role of fathers in the family, as reflected in the hadith, includes responsibilities as leaders, moral educators, and disciplinarians. As leaders, fathers' decisions influence their children's future character, while as educators, fathers instill moral values and morals that shape their children's personalities. Fathers' obligations in teaching discipline, especially in worship, also strengthen their role as consistent role models in their children's lives.

Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis shows how the phenomenon of fatherlessness is formed and consumed in digital spaces, such as podcasts. Interactions in podcasts reveal how conversations about the role of fathers open up space for changes in discourse regarding gender roles in the family. Public discussions arising from audience responses in the comments section have the potential to redefine the role of fathers in modern families, promoting awareness of the importance of a more egalitarian role for fathers.

The phenomenon of traditional gender roles, which reinforces inequality in parenting, can exacerbate patriarchal culture and increase the phenomenon of fatherlessness. However, hadiths regarding the role of fathers and Fairclough's discourse theory show a strong relationship between Islamic teachings and contemporary social dynamics, which can shape the role of fathers as leaders, moral educators, and disciplinarians in the family.

Thus, the ideal portrait of the father's role in child-rearing includes involvement in the child's life's moral, spiritual, social, emotional, and academic aspects. This involvement not only prevents the phenomenon of fatherlessness but also strengthens the father's more egalitarian role, supporting the child's comprehensive development.

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<sup>37</sup> Mohammad Muhassin, "Peran Ayah dalam Perkembangan dan Pendidikan Anak: Studi di Kelurahan Labuhan Ratu Bandar Lampung," *al-Idarah: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam* 6, no. 2 (December 1, 2016): 38, <https://doi.org/10.24042/alidarrah.v6i2.798>.

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