



ANALYSIS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE BY GRANDPARENTS

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Abstract

The quality of human resources influences the quality of the nation, so it can be said that the quality of early childhood, as the next generation of the nation, plays a very important role in the quality of the nation. One aspect of services to early childhood is care, and one of the activities of care is education. Good care will encourage children to have good character such as responsibility, independence, discipline and self-confidence. In general, child care is attached to the mother figure as the main role, although in practice there is care by the father, also by grandparents or other relatives. This study aims to describe early childhood care carried out by grandparents in the last 5 years, as well as the causes of it, how it impacts children and tips or practical steps for authoritative care by grandparents. The research method uses a Systematic Literature Review model Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses, based primarily on Google Scholar data, for the period 2020 to 2025 with descriptive data analysis techniques. In addition, there are several free articles (not based on Google Scholar) and several articles based on Eric to deepen the description. This research reveals that early childhood care by grandparents can be due to factors such as parental death, divorce, economic factors, or parents being busy working. The impact is not always negative, as the stigma in society suggests, but can still be positive. If grandparents implement appropriate parenting patterns, early childhood development is as good as that of early childhood children raised by their parents (living with their parents) who also implement appropriate parenting patterns. The opposite is true, and the parenting style considered appropriate to apply is authoritative (democratic). One tip (practical step) for authoritative parenting by grandparents that is worth emulating is parenting with love, wisdom, and example, becoming a guide for children towards the future.

Keywords: Parentings, early childhood, parenting by grandparents

INTRODUCTION

One of the main pillars of a nation is education (Darmansah et al., 2025), and education is one of the efforts to improve the quality of human resources (Apriliani, 2026). The spearhead of education, besides educators (teachers, lecturers), is parents as the first and primary educators of a child (Hanum & Hanum, 2024). Parents, as the first and primary parties in educating children, are inseparable from the task of providing childcare services. Likewise, when parents carry out childcare duties while also providing educational services, so that when parents care for children, they also carry out educational activities. This refers to the definition of care, namely the activity of helping children's development through interactions carried out individually and together, including activities of educating, caring for, guiding, leading, protecting, and training children, which is certainly a very complex activity (Putrihapsari & Fauziah, 2020, in (Utami & Prasetyo, 2021)). Similarly, according to Johan and Daeli (2024) in Tantiani et al. (2025), parenting is the process of guiding, developing, and educating children from birth to adulthood. Therefore, both parents, educators (secondary parents in schools), and prospective educators need to understand the various types of parenting styles and their impact on children. Parents and educators, as caregivers (educators), also influence the quality of children. The quality of human resources formed through education influences the quality of the nation, thus the quality of children influences the quality of the nation (Dewi & Muhtar, 2022). Thus, the importance of parenting is inseparable from educational activities or raising children.

Undeniably, the implementation of parenting styles will influence the formation of a child's character, morality, knowledge, skills, and life skills (Andriani & Rachmawati, 2022). Thus, parenting affects aspects of a child's development in the form of physical, cognitive, social and emotional

(Indrawati & Muthmainah, 2022, in (Alfaeni & Rachmawati, 2023)). Proper parenting, forming children who BLAST to BEST in the midst of the rise of digitalization (Org & (Semai2045), 2017). The conditions of the increasingly developing digitalization era, children can face a lack of communication with parents, lack of family time, shifting values, gadget addiction, unfiltered content on social media, also peer pressure, and bullying (violence). BLAST stands for Bored (bored), Lonely (lonely), Angry (angry), Afraid (fear), Stress (depressed), and Tired (tired). The condition of children is bored with daily routines and school routines, lonely because children are not close to their parents in quality or quantity, angry because of the situation, rooted in dissatisfaction, afraid to talk to their parents, afraid of peer pressure, stressed because of the situation, due to the accumulation of all problems. This requires the right parenting pattern to form children who BEST stands for Behave (behaving well), Empathic (being able to put oneself in the shoes of others), Smart (intelligent), maximizing one's potential, and Tough (standing firm in one's principles).

Furthermore, parental strategies for caring for, guiding, educating, protecting, socializing, and disciplining children, which are the process by which children learn to behave in a socially acceptable manner, are called parenting styles (Utami & Prasetyo, 2021). According to Santrock (in Setiawan, 2017, in Sari et al., 2023), parenting styles are techniques used by parents to support their children in developing into responsible and socially aware adults. Parenting styles must be implemented wisely and carefully, as ineffective parenting can lead to maladaptive child behavior (difficulty adapting to the environment). "Ineffective parenting leads to maladaptive child behavior" (Cappaldi and Patterson, 1989, in Luo et al., 2020).

Baumrind defines various parenting styles. (Baumrind, 1978, in (Daoud et al., 2025) namely authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. It was only in 1983 that the fourth parenting style was recognized, namely neglectful (Maccoby and Martin, 1983, in (Daoud et al., 2025)). The authoritarian or authoritarian style emphasizes the dominance of power held by parents by shaping, controlling, and evaluating children based on applied standards, but is less responsive to children's needs (Handoko & Fauziah, 2021 in (Alfaeni & Rachmawati, 2023)). In this style, there is little opportunity to communicate with children because the center of decision-making is the parents so that children have low social skills and tend to be easily depressed even though they show good performance at school (Puspita sari, 2020 in (Alfaeni & Rachmawati, 2023)). Meanwhile, authoritative (democratic) parenting is giving children the freedom to do what they want but under parental supervision (Hurlock, Hardys and Heyes in Wibowo, 2012 in (Werdingisih, 2020)). Children with this parenting style will become individuals who trust others, are responsible for their actions and are honest. These children are also cheerful, self-controlled, achievement-oriented, maintain relationships with peers, work with adults, handle stress well (Sobita, 2019, in (Putra, 2023)). The third parenting style, namely permissive, parents give complete freedom to children, whatever the child wants is allowed, responding to the child's needs without punishment and without any demands (Baumrind, 1978 in (Alfaeni & Rachmawati, 2023)). This results in children being less disciplined, arbitrary, and irresponsible (Werdingisih, 2020). Irresponsible attitudes are formed because in permissive parenting, parents tend to pamper children by accepting all their children's actions (Handoko, Fauziah, 2021 in (Alfaeni & Rachmawati, 2023)). Fourth, neglectful parenting, namely parents allow children to develop themselves both physically and psychologically without good guidance from parents (Sari et al., 2023). Its characteristics, parents are not actively involved, parents believe children are not their business (Baumrind in Amin and Harianti, 2018 in (Sari et al., 2023)). This impacts children will be less socially sensitive, unable to exercise strong self-control, lack self-confidence, and lack motivation to succeed (Baumrind, in (Sari et al., 2023)). Neglectful or neglectful parenting is synonymous with parents' tendency to place rigid boundaries on their children and exert considerable pressure on them to behave maturely (demandingness), accompanied by a lack of parental accommodating the child's individuality in meeting their needs and agreeing to their requests (responsiveness) (Estlein, 2016 in Sari et al., 2023).

Generally speaking, the term "parenting" is associated with the mother as the child's primary caregiver (Asfari, 2022). However, in practice, other figures, such as the father, may also play a significant role in childcare. For example, parental divorce, busy work schedules, and the death of a parent can lead to the absence of both parents (Kabho et al., 2025). This article examines the role of grandparents in early childhood care, not parents. This is due to various factors. Early childhood, according to Law Number 20 of 2003, is defined as ages zero to six (Farhurohman, 2017 in (Nurhayati & Putro, 2021)). Meanwhile, the classification of early childhood abroad is ages zero to eight (Hugh et al., 2024). Similarly, in an article by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of

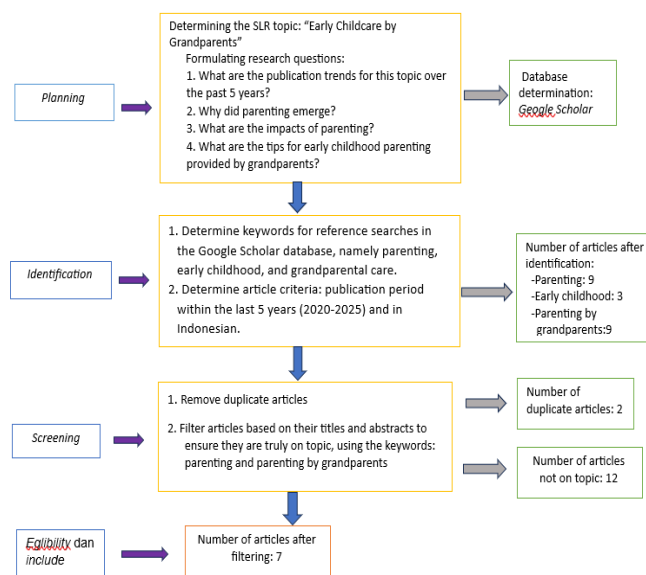
California, Berkeley (Edwards et al., 2021), it is written that in Maryland a care and education system was created for ages zero to eight. Of course, whatever the early age category, it still requires appropriate care, as stated that "international recognition of the early years as a crucial foundational period has led to the design and implementation of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) that define, communicate, and monitor the components of quality in early childhood education and care (ECEC)" (the early period/early childhood is a very important period so that the quality components of education, care or early childhood care need to be monitored) (Harrison et al., n.d.).

In this article, besides describing the causes of early childhood care by grandparents, it also describes the impact and tips or practical steps for early childhood care by grandparents so that it still has a positive impact on children.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, which is a way of interpreting and evaluating previous work on a phenomenon that is explicit, systematic, and can be (reproduced) by other researchers (Simamora & Gaffar, 2024). The model used is the Prisma model, based on Google Scholar data from 2020 to 2025 and descriptive data analysis techniques. Prisma stands for Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses, which is a series of evidence-based minimum standards aimed at helping authors report various systematic reviews and meta-analyses that assess the benefits. The search steps or stages after planning the Prima SLR are identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion (eligibility and which articles are included in the analysis) (Simamora & Gaffar, 2024). Based on a search through Google Scholar with the keywords parenting, early childhood, and care by grandparents, the period 2020 to 2025 found 21 articles. Subsequent filtering resulted in two duplicate articles and 12 off-topic articles, resulting in the focus of the study on seven. Several articles based on Eric and free articles (not based on Google Scholar) were also included to deepen the description. The stages of the Prisma-style SLR search in this study can be seen in the following chart:

Chart 1. Stages of Prism Model SLR



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Causes of Grandparental Care

Parents play a crucial role and are largely responsible for a child's growth and development (Lasota, 2015 in Utami & Prasetyo, 2021). Therefore, parents are also largely responsible for childcare. However, in certain areas of East Nusa Tenggara province, there is still a belief that the greatest responsibility of parents, both fathers and mothers, is to provide for their children's needs and provide adequate facilities (Dhiu & Fono, 2021). The research subjects in this province were young children aged 4-6 years. Parents support their families by working abroad (migrant workers). Therefore, care is provided by close relatives, such as uncles and aunts, grandparents, or other trusted individuals (Dhiu & Fono, 2021).

In addition, parenting is not carried out directly by parents because parents are busy working outside the home or because divorce also occurred in one of the villages in Gorontalo Regency, which focuses on children aged 3 to 5 years (Tantiani et al., 2025). An article reported that in 2021, approximately 37% of childcare in Indonesia was transferred to grandparents due to parental divorce, death, and economic factors (Pagarwati and Rohman, 2021 in Johan & Daeli, 2024). Similarly, a study in Gondowangi Village, involving kindergarten children, found that the reasons for childcare by grandparents were parental death, parental divorce, parental busyness (busy work schedules), and death (Kabho et al., 2025). Similarly, a case study in Ule Village, Bima City, found that childcare by grandparents was due to parental divorce (Zulkifli, 2025).

Furthermore, a literature review revealed that the reasons for childcare being transferred to grandparents include parental divorce, parental death, maternal depression, and economic difficulties leading to working abroad as Indonesian Migrant Workers (TKI) (Hary et al., 2022). Furthermore, there are Also, care by grandparents is due to the situation of single working mothers (migrant workers), as occurred in a hamlet in Central Sulawesi (Oktarima & Almaghfiro, 2025). Based on the explanation above, it can be emphasized that the causes of early childhood care by grandparents are economic factors, parental death, parents with busy work schedules, and parental divorce.

The Impact of Early Childhood Care by Grandparents

An article notes that parenting by both parents, instilling positive values in children, is considered good parenting (Hartanto & Yuliani, 2019; Septiani & Nasution, 2018, in (Dhiu & Fono, 2021)). However, an interesting study suggests that parenting by non-parents is not always positive. In fact, this research can help erase the societal stigma that grandparental care often has negative impacts (Arini, 2018). One such study, conducted in Hobobelu Hamlet, Ekoroka Village, Golewa District, Ngada Regency (Dhiu & Fono, 2021), suggests that grandparents provide care based on their experience and insight (openness to experience). In this case, the care provided by grandparents was flexible and under the control of the parents. The parents monitored their children's basic needs, and the children's attitudes and behavior were found to be positive. Based on interviews and observations, it was found that grandparents employ a democratic (authoritative) parenting style. Children are given freedom, while rules are implemented that are not burdensome and tailored to the child's abilities. Children are given the opportunity to do their own activities, create a light work schedule, and provide verbal rules and explanations to ensure the child understands them, fostering a harmonious relationship between the grandparents and their children. If a child makes a mistake, such as coming home late or not completing daily activities, the child is disciplined and then given appropriate advice and guidance to maintain a warm relationship. Grandparents' education also includes fostering habits, behaviors, skills, and abilities, such as organizing clothes and shoes, and frequently advising them on how to live an organized life.

Research in Bandung Rejo Village also demonstrated a positive impact of grandparental care, particularly in supporting children's social development (Tantiani et al., 2025). In this case, parents entrust their children to their grandparents during work, except on holidays. Open communication with parents also contributes to children's positive development. The findings of this study also demonstrate that grandparents are able to adapt to current developments in educating their grandchildren, despite the challenges of generational differences and physical limitations. Grandparents play an active role in their grandchildren's social development by shaping their children's social behavior through good examples, praise, and early practice. Grandparents consistently demonstrate politeness, sharing, and caring for others, thus serving as role models for their grandchildren. The grandparents' loving, traditional-values-based parenting approach supports the family's social function and is crucial for the character development of future generations.

The positive impact of loving and wise parenting by grandparents is also demonstrated in a case study of single migrant working mothers in Hamlet IV, Ampibabo Village, Central Sulawesi (Oktarima & Almaghfiro, 2025). Grandparental care provides a space for the formation of values, emotional stability, and spirituality in children, enabling grandparents to function beyond simply replacing mothers. Grandparents provide emotional closeness through daily routines, despite the challenges of physical limitations and generational differences. Grandparents demonstrate adaptive behaviors, such as striving to understand their children's digital world. This parenting experience is filled with love and role models from grandparents, but there are still psychological challenges, a sense of loss (the absence of a single mother), and physical burdens experienced by both grandparents and grandchildren. However, the strong emotional bond between grandparents and grandchildren provides a solid

foundation for children's character development. For grandchildren, spending time with grandparents teaches values not necessarily learned in formal education, such as gratitude, sincerity, and resilience in the face of limitations. For grandmothers, the presence of grandchildren is a source of new hope and an unexpected experience of love. This loving, wise, and exemplary parenting, a social practice rich in values, can guide children's futures in a quiet, gentle, and profound way.

Furthermore, research conducted at a playgroup in Gondowangi Village (Kabho et al., 2025) found that grandparents raising their grandchildren implemented a variety of parenting styles, resulting in varying impacts. However, the most common was democratic parenting. This grandparental parenting style is said to be positive, as it often helps children become more independent and disciplined despite the challenges of enforcing discipline. Democratic grandparents allow their grandchildren to play and participate in extracurricular activities under the grandparents' supervision. Freedom is balanced with responsibility, thus fostering independence and discipline. Permissive grandparents grant their grandchildren's every request. Whenever a child becomes angry or throws a tantrum, they ultimately give in to their wishes because they find it unpleasant to see the tantrum. These children may have difficulty regulating their emotions and may not respect boundaries. Grandparents who practice authoritarian parenting set rigid boundaries for their grandchildren, expecting them to obey without question.

A case study of post-divorce grandparental care in Ule Village, Asakota District (Zulkifli, 2025) revealed that after fathers formed new families, the parenting style shifted from supportive parenting to full parenting. This was characterized by a democratic parenting style (giving freedom) but tending towards a permissive style, namely indulgence (minimal control). This fostered emotional closeness and support for cultural/religious values, but carried the risk of dependency, low independence, and a lack of personal responsibility in children. A literature review also found that grandparents generally adopted a permissive parenting style (Hary et al., 2022). This parenting style resulted in children tending to withdraw and having difficulty socializing with peers.

In addition to the above, quantitative research at RA Persis Qurrata A'yun, Depok (Johan & Daeli, 2024) found differences in the independence of children raised by their parents and those raised by their grandparents, as seen in the mean scores. The mean score for parental care was higher (67.45), while the mean score for grandparental care was lower (54.00). H_0 is rejected, meaning parental care has a higher mean independence score than the mean independence score for children in grandparental care. Therefore, parental care has a more positive impact. This study did not address the parenting styles employed by the parents or grandparents.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that the impact of grandparental care varies, with some positive and others negative. Of the seven studies, four showed positive results, while three showed negative results, due to the implementation of permissive parenting. Therefore, in general, grandparental parenting can have a positive or negative impact, influenced by the parenting style implemented, not by the caregiver. The research presented in this article shows that grandparental care can still have a positive impact if the appropriate parenting style is implemented.

Tips or Practical Steps for Early Childhood Care by Grandparents

Based on seven articles retrieved from the search results, four studies showed that grandparental care has a positive impact on child development. The parenting style that has a positive impact is authoritative (democratic, loving, and flexible), characterized by the application of discipline without punishment, consistency in actions, and active parental involvement in the child's life (Mentari & Daulima, 2017 in Manu et al., 2024), and emphasizes two-way communication (Sary et al., 2021 in Manu et al., 2024).

The positive impact of authoritative parenting is also written in the Educational Process, International Journal (Daoud et al., 2025) that "When interacting with their children, authoritative parents show high levels of warmth and control. This style of parenting provides a balance between authoritarian and permissive parenting. Authoritative parents use reasoning, discussion, and explanation and are consistent. To discipline their children, these parents use positive reinforcement and discussion of reasons and consequences. They also communicate clearly and encourage independence (Baumrind, 1973). Authoritative parenting has been found to be positively associated with intrinsic motivation, high school achievement, peer acceptance, high self-efficacy and cognitive ability (Bronstein & Ginsburg, 1993)." This means that authoritative parents show high levels of warmth and control when interacting with their children. The balance between authoritarian and permissive is applied in this style, using reasoning, discussion, explanation, and consistency. Positive reinforcement and discussion of reasons

and consequences are used for discipline. Parents and children communicate clearly and encourage independence. Authoritative parenting positively impacts children's intrinsic motivation, high school achievement, peer acceptance, strong self-efficacy, and cognitive abilities.

Furthermore, the following findings, specifically related to early childhood care by grandparents, have a positive impact. These findings can be used as practical tips or steps in implementing democratic parenting by grandparents:

1. Implementing good habits in everyday life (Dhiu & Fono, 2021; Tantiani et al., 2025).
Daily habits include training children to do chores like sweeping, washing dishes, and carrying water. They also learn self-care (independence) such as making their bed, bathing, eating, and going to school. Grandparents also remind them to pray regularly and attend church every week (related to spiritual habits). Grandparents instill healthy habits such as greeting others when meeting, saying "thank you" when someone helps them, saying "excuse me" when passing others, respecting their elders, and apologizing when they make mistakes.
2. Repeated advice (Dhiu & Fono, 2021).
Grandparents provide advice on how to live an organized life. They also remind grandchildren daily about what they need to do that day, such as reminding them to respect their friends and teachers at school and not to misbehave at school. They also remind them to do their daily chores at home.
3. Providing simple verbal rules with explanations of their benefits (Dhiu & Fono, 2021). For example, when going out to play with friends, they should arrive home by 6 p.m. because it's not good for children to come home late, and going to bed by 9 p.m. to avoid waking up late and being late for school. If a child comes home late, misses a daily activity, or does something else, they sometimes give them educational punishment, followed by providing guidance and advice with kind words to maintain a warm relationship.
4. Rewarding children for successfully completing light activities at home, as well as for diligently praying before and after activities (Dhiu & Fono, 2021; Tantiani et al., 2025). This reward takes the form of attention, praise, and physical rewards, not material things. For example, if your grandchild is so smart, you're proud to have him.
5. Grandparents provide positive role models in everyday attitudes and behaviors, such as politeness, sharing, and empathy, especially since children often behave in ways that mimic adults (Dhiu & Fono, 2021; Tantiani et al., 2025).
6. Implementing or carrying out parenting with a heart full of love and wisdom (Dhiu & Fono, 2021; Oktarima & Almaghfiro, 2025).
7. Grandparents help grandchildren interact with others, fostering communication, self-confidence, and adaptability (Tantiani et al., 2025). For example, by inviting them to play with neighbors, to family events, and to community gatherings.
8. Open communication between grandparents and parents ensures harmonious and consistent parenting (Tantiani et al., 2025).
9. Parenting styles are tailored to the child's age and developmental stage, fostering a positive, independent, and loving personality (Kabho et al., 2025).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Parenting is the activity of caring for, guiding, training, and educating children from birth to adulthood, thus integrating with educational activities, which certainly affect the quality of the nation. In parenting, the primary role is played by parents. However, in life there are times when we face unavoidable things such as the death of parents, economic factors that cause parents to work abroad, divorce factors, or even parents who are busy working, so that care is carried out by grandparents. In the implementation of parenting by grandparents, as in general parenting by parents, there are four types of parenting patterns (authoritative/democratic, authoritarian, permissive and neglect), which have different impacts on child development. The appropriate parenting pattern for early childhood development based on the results of the research that has been presented is an authoritative (democratic) parenting pattern that balances freedom and control, thereby encouraging children to become good individuals such as responsible, independent, disciplined, and confident. In this SLR research, several tips or practical steps were found for implementing an authoritative (democratic) parenting style, including implementing parenting styles with love, wisdom and role models as a guide for children in their future.

Suggestions

The findings of this study can serve as input for all levels of society, helping to eliminate the stigma that exists in society, which generally holds that parenting by grandparents tends to have negative impacts (often causing problems). This research further confirms that this is not always true. This is more influenced by the appropriate parenting patterns implemented by grandparents, rather than by who is doing the care. This also serves as a motivation for grandparents who care for their grandchildren due to unavoidable circumstances. Regarding practical steps in implementing parenting patterns in terms of habituating spiritual activities, early childhood should also be taught that it is not just a routine and obligation, but also taught to perform worship with a sincere heart. This research is still limited to several places in Indonesia, future researchers can conduct similar research in other regions in Indonesia or even abroad, so as to increase insight into early childhood care and strengthen the implementation of appropriate parenting patterns for anyone who cares for children, especially grandparents, so that optimal child quality can be realized, which will influence the quality of the nation.

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