

Parental Role in Digital Era Character Formation: A Deuteronomy 6:4-9 Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The digital transformation has fundamentally altered family dynamics and child development patterns, creating unprecedented challenges for moral and spiritual formation within contemporary families. While technology offers substantial benefits, unregulated digital exposure poses significant risks to children's character development and spiritual growth. This study examines the critical role of parents in fostering moral and spiritual development among family members during the digital era, utilizing biblical principles from Deuteronomy 6:4-9 as a theoretical framework. A systematic literature review methodology was employed, analyzing peer-reviewed publications from 2018-2024 focusing on parental influence, digital era challenges, and family-based character formation. Data were synthesized using thematic analysis to identify key patterns and relationships between parental practices and child development outcomes. The analysis reveals that intentional parental engagement significantly correlates with positive character formation outcomes in children exposed to digital environments. Effective parental strategies include structured digital literacy education, consistent moral guidance, and active spiritual mentorship. Families implementing comprehensive digital stewardship approaches demonstrated superior outcomes in children's moral reasoning, spiritual development, and behavioral regulation compared to families with minimal parental involvement. Parents serve as primary architects of family moral and spiritual development, particularly in navigating digital era complexities. The integration of biblical principles with contemporary parenting strategies provides a robust framework for character formation. This study contributes to the growing body of evidence supporting proactive parental involvement as essential for optimal child development in technologically saturated environments.

Keywords: parental role; digital era; moral development; spiritual formation; family dynamics; character education; Deuteronomy 6:4-9

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INTRODUCTION

The unprecedented pace of digital transformation has fundamentally reshaped contemporary family structures and child-rearing practices worldwide. Digital technologies, while offering substantial benefits for communication, education, and social connectivity, have simultaneously introduced complex challenges to traditional family dynamics and value transmission systems (Johnson & Williams, 2023). The proliferation of digital devices and social media platforms has created new paradigms for parent-child interactions, fundamentally altering how moral and spiritual values are transmitted across generations.

Contemporary families navigate an increasingly complex digital landscape where children demonstrate higher technological proficiency than their parents, potentially disrupting traditional hierarchical knowledge transfer patterns. This digital divide creates unprecedented challenges for parental authority and guidance in moral and spiritual development (Chen et al., 2024). The pervasive nature of digital media exposure has been linked to significant shifts in children's moral reasoning, spiritual engagement, and character formation processes, necessitating new approaches to family-based education and guidance.

Recent empirical evidence reveals alarming trends in child development within digitally saturated environments. Indonesian national statistics indicate that social media usage among children and adolescents increased by 12.35% between 2021 and 2022, with 191 million active users representing nearly 70% of the population (Goodstats, 2022). Concurrently, data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission documented 1,022 child victims of digital-related crimes between 2014-2015, with 28% involving online pornography exposure and 21% related to child exploitation (Indonesian Child Protection Commission, 2015).

These statistics underscore a critical gap between technological advancement and moral-spiritual protection mechanisms within contemporary families. The rapid digitization of childhood experiences occurs without corresponding development of parental competencies for digital-era moral guidance, creating vulnerability periods where children's character formation lacks adequate supervision and intentional development frameworks.

The challenge of moral and spiritual formation in digital contexts requires robust theoretical foundations that integrate contemporary developmental psychology with enduring wisdom traditions. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 provides a comprehensive framework for intentional family-based character formation, emphasizing continuous, contextual, and relational approaches to moral education. This biblical passage outlines specific strategies for integrating spiritual instruction into daily family life, including: (1) personal parental commitment to values, (2) intentional teaching moments, (3) environmental reinforcement, and (4) consistent modeling across contexts.

The Deuteronomic model's emphasis on comprehensive life integration resonates with contemporary research on effective character education, which emphasizes the importance of ecological approaches that engage multiple environmental systems in children's development. This integration of ancient wisdom with modern developmental science provides a unique lens for examining parental effectiveness in digital-era character formation.

While extensive research exists on digital media's impact on child development and separate literature addresses biblical approaches to family education, limited scholarship integrates these domains to examine parental effectiveness in digital-era character formation. Most existing studies focus on either technological impacts or religious education practices in isolation, failing to address the complex interactions between digital environments and faith-based character development approaches.

Furthermore, research on digital parenting predominantly originates from Western contexts, with limited attention to Indonesian family dynamics and cultural values. This study addresses this gap by examining how Indonesian parents can effectively implement biblical principles for moral and spiritual development within contemporary digital contexts, contributing to both international scholarship on digital parenting and indigenous approaches to character formation.

This study aims to analyze the critical role of parents in fostering moral and spiritual development among family members during the digital era, utilizing Deuteronomy 6:4-9 as a theoretical framework for effective parental engagement. Specifically, this research addresses the following questions:

1. How do contemporary digital environments challenge traditional parental approaches to moral and spiritual development?

2. What specific strategies from Deuteronomy 6:4-9 remain relevant for digital-era family character formation?
3. How can parents effectively integrate biblical principles with contemporary digital literacy to foster positive character development?
4. What are the key indicators of successful parental engagement in digital-era moral and spiritual formation?

This research contributes to the growing body of interdisciplinary scholarship examining faith-based approaches to contemporary parenting challenges. By integrating biblical hermeneutics with empirical research on digital parenting, this study offers practical frameworks for families seeking to maintain moral and spiritual development priorities within technologically saturated environments. The findings will inform both academic discourse and practical applications for religious communities, educational institutions, and family counseling services addressing digital-era parenting challenges.

Additionally, this study contributes to international understanding of Indonesian family dynamics and indigenous approaches to character formation, expanding the cultural diversity of digital parenting research and providing insights relevant to other collectivistic societies facing similar technological transitions.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a systematic literature review methodology to examine the role of parents in fostering moral and spiritual development within digital-era family contexts. A qualitative approach was selected to enable comprehensive analysis of complex phenomena involving parental practices, digital environments, and character formation processes. The systematic literature review design provides robust methodology for synthesizing existing knowledge while identifying patterns, gaps, and emerging themes in the intersection of digital parenting and biblical character formation (Petticrew & Roberts, 2022). The research is grounded in Deuteronomy 6:4-9, which provides a comprehensive framework for family-based moral and spiritual education. This biblical text emphasizes four core principles: (1) parental commitment to values transmission, (2) intentional integration of moral instruction into daily life, (3) consistent environmental reinforcement, and (4) continuous relational modeling. These principles serve as analytical lenses for evaluating contemporary parental practices in digital contexts and assessing their effectiveness in character formation outcomes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Parents and Family

Fathers and mothers, referred to as parents, are the primary and first educators for the children born into that family. As the primary and first educators, parents bear a significant responsibility for shaping the morality and spirituality of their children and all family members. Building the morality and spirituality of children within the family depends on the parenting style applied by the parents in that family.

In Indonesian law, the definition of parents as the first and primary educators within the family community is outlined in Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 35 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Law Number 23 of 2003. Article 1 states that parents are biological fathers and/or mothers, or stepfathers and/or stepmothers, or adoptive fathers and/or mothers. Meanwhile, according to the Online Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (found at <https://kbbi.web.id/orang-tua>), parents are defined as biological fathers and mothers; individuals considered elderly (wise, knowledgeable, experts, etc.); respected individuals in the community; or the eldest. Parents are those who have reached an advanced age, referring to both mothers and fathers, in contrast to children; heads of families; or individuals regarded as elderly or wise within the community (KBBI, 2010).

The role of parents is to prepare their children to face the demands of their time. As primary educators, parents need to periodically conduct self-evaluations and introspections, with the determination to continuously prepare their children for the current and future digital era. Parents also need to create proactive plans to protect their children from potential threats present in the digital age, without hindering the potential benefits it can provide.

In this regard, the role of parents is carried out through appropriate and effective parenting actions or methods. Education within the family environment takes the form of parenting. Parenting is closely related to parents' ability to provide the necessary attention, time, and support to meet their children's physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs. Parents act as companions and guides at every stage of their child's growth, supporting them through their development. This process involves a series of actions and interactions performed by parents to support the optimal development of their children. Parenting is not a one-way relationship where parents only influence their children; rather, it is an ongoing interaction between parents and children that involves a variety of activities aimed at encouraging the optimal development of the child.

Parents in the family are one of the essential elements in the life of society, as families always exist in the flow of time. Families move along with the changes of the era while simultaneously shaping the times within human civilization. Changes in the era have implications for various aspects of family life, including its spiritual and moral dimensions. In this regard, the educational task becomes increasingly challenging in maintaining the identity and role of the family in the world. Parents within the family must work hard to educate and guide their children toward a brighter future that aligns with the demands of an increasingly globalized world, including anticipating the negative impacts of advancements in media, technology, and information.

Thus, it can be concluded that parents are the first and primary educators who bear the responsibility for shaping and nurturing their children both psychologically and physiologically. Both parents are required to guide and educate their children to become generations that align with the goals of human life.

The family functions as a system that provides the strongest support among family members, regardless of any situation or condition faced by any one family member. The family is also the first and most fundamental source of education for each family member. The early education received from the family greatly contributes to their behavior, habits, ethics, morals, and intelligence. Therefore, the family also becomes a primary indicator in the formation of the behavior, habits, ethics, morals, and intelligence of family members. As a result, children, as part of the family, will shape their behavior through the influence of the family. Thus, children, as part of the family, will develop behavior, temperament, ethics, and morals that are often synonymous with character.

The family is the most fundamental unit of human society, consisting of parents and children (Peschke, 2003:32). The family serves as the foundation for new human life, becoming the center where individuals can grow and develop both physically and spiritually. The human capacity to live morally and spiritually, as well as the ability to love, is first instilled by parents. The family also plays a role as the cell that enables society to endure and transform. The Vatican Council in *Gaudium et Spes* No. 47 (1990) emphasizes that personal well-being and that of human society, especially for Christians, are closely linked to the success of marriage and family. The family is the first and most fundamental environment for children's education before they enter formal education such as school (Vatican II Council, 1990). In the document *Familiaris Consortio* (FC) art. 42 (1993), it also states that the family is the first essential cell in society, where community members are born and where they first learn about fundamental social values, which form the basis for the development of society itself. The educational duty of parents to their children is an irreplaceable responsibility that cannot be taken over by anyone else.

It can be concluded that the family functions as the frontline in instilling character values for children, serving as the primary force in instilling and building the morality and spirituality of every family member. Fitzpatrick identifies four types of families: *Consensus Type*: This type of family highly values open communication, but the authority within the family rests with the parents. *Pluralism Type*: This type of family frequently engages in conversations but exhibits low levels of compliance. *Protective Type*: This type of family rarely engages in conversations but has high levels of compliance. *Laissez-faire Type*: This type of family seldom engages in conversations and also demonstrates low compliance, with a hands-off approach and low involvement (Syamsu, 2004).

The types of family dynamics present in each household will influence the morality and spirituality of all family members.

Morality

Morality is an aspect of development that must be stimulated in children from an early age. The moral development of children as individuals should not be taken lightly.

The term "morality" is rooted in the word "moral," which comes from the Latin word "mos," meaning habit. "Mores," which refers to decency, also has the same etymological origin, namely "mos." Morality refers to the general views regarding actions, attitudes, obligations, and similar matters that are considered good or bad; it also encompasses ethics, character, and values. This involves a mental state that motivates a person to remain courageous, enthusiastic, disciplined, and so on.

Etymologically, morality can be defined as follows: first, a set of norms and customs of decency that apply within a social group; and second, teachings about decency, which are principles and norms of morality that are systematically studied in the field of ethics.

In Greek, the term "ethos" is used to refer to the norms and rules related to human actions, personality traits, motives, intentions, and character. Furthermore, the term "ethics" is used to refer to decency that reflects how life actions play a role in society and determines what is considered good or bad (Nandia Kiranti et al., 2021).

Morality, attitudes, and moral values have their roots in the Latin word "mores," which refers to customs, habits, and traditions. Moral attitudes indicate behaviors that align with the moral code accepted by a social group, defined by moral concepts. In this context, a moral concept is a set of behavioral rules that have become customary within a particular culture. This moral concept plays a role in regulating the expected patterns of behavior from all members of the group. In other words, the moral aspect is not something innate; rather, it is something that develops and can be learned.

Neutral moral attitudes are expressed in behavior that is impartial (neither supporting nor opposing) towards the values present in society. Negative moral attitudes are expressed in rejecting behaviors colored by emotions and negative feelings such as disappointment, annoyance, anger, hatred, hostility, and opposition towards the moral values existing in society.

Spirituality

Terminologically, spirituality comes from the word spirit. In religious literature, the term spirit has two substantial meanings: first, it refers to the character and essence of human souls that are interconnected, as well as the experiences arising from this interconnectedness, which form the primary basis of spiritual belief. The spirit is the

innermost part of the soul and serves as a means of communication that allows humans to connect with God. Second, spirit refers to the concept that all human "spirits" are interconnected and are part of a larger unity.

Webster's Dictionary states that the term spirit originates from the Latin noun *spiritus*, meaning "breath," and the verb *spirare*, meaning "to breathe." From its etymology, it can be defined that to live is to breathe, and to have breath is to possess spirit. To be spiritual means to have a connection beyond the physical or material. Spirituality represents self-awakening or enlightenment in achieving the meaning and purpose of life. Spirit is an essential part of a person's overall health and well-being.

The Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) defines spirituality as being related to or of a psychological (spiritual, inner) nature. It refers to intelligence concerning compassion and care for fellow humans, other creatures, and the surrounding environment, based on the belief in the existence of God Almighty (KBBI, 2010).

According to Sijabat, spirituality originates from the root word *spiritus* (Latin) or *spirit* (English), referring to a non-material substance or being whose essence is immaterial. The immaterial substance is God. In John 4:24, it is written that "God is Spirit" (Sijabat, 1996).

The term spirituality relates to matters derived from or sourced in God, which become part of human life. Humans are material beings (physical), yet they simultaneously possess non-material substances such as spirit or soul, mind, and conscience.

John M. Nainggolan defines spirituality as "the force or spirit that provides resilience to an individual or group to sustain, develop, and realize their life." Spirituality is often associated with religiosity, referring to human activities aimed at attaining personal sanctity or spiritual salvation. It can also be described as a person's lifestyle resulting from their profound understanding of God in a comprehensive manner. God is understood as immanent (John M., 2008).

The above definition explains that a person's lifestyle in their daily life is a result of their understanding of God and the consequence of a proper relationship with God, which is a prompting of the Holy Spirit arising from within their heart, creating a desire to be like Jesus and to impact those around them, particularly family members.

According to Thomas Rausch, Christian spirituality refers to a spiritual life led by the Holy Spirit to increasingly believe in and love the Lord Jesus Christ completely (Thomas, 2010). The word "spirituality" comes from the Latin word "*spiritus*," which means spirit, soul, or essence. Spirituality is living according to the guidance of the Spirit or living in the Spirit. Spirituality encompasses four activities: a life of prayer or spiritual living, the actual and concrete expression of faith in daily life, activities directed toward goodness, and socio-political aspects (Heryatno, 2008).

Social Era 0.5

In the Society 5.0 era, people have become familiar with social media as a platform for users to socialize, access the latest information, and express themselves with unlimited reach.

Society 5.0 can be defined as a human-centered concept based on technology. Rapid technological advancements, including the replacement of certain human roles by intelligent robots, necessitate an understanding of Society 5.0 that integrates spirituality and culture as essential tools for developing a millennial generation prepared to face challenges and problems (Kemenristek, 2020).

The rapid technological development has had a significant impact on human life. Currently, the Industry 4.0 era is characterized by trends in automation and data exchange, encompassing cyber-physical systems, the Internet of Things (IoT), cloud computing, and more. This evolution continues into the era known as Society 5.0, where human activities focus on technology-based endeavors (Lestari, 2018).

THE ROLE OF PARENTS BASED ON DEUTERONOMY 6: 4-9

In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, the duties and responsibilities of parents within the family are clearly outlined. These verses explain that the family is the place for establishing a child's personality toward maturity and serves as the first venue for the proclamation of the gospel within the family. Therefore, the researcher will explain the role of parents in building the morality and spirituality of family members based on the book of Deuteronomy as follows:

As Primary and First Educators

If the family is the primary and first place of education, then it is undoubtedly the parents who serve as the primary and first educators for their children within that family. In Deuteronomy 6:1-3, Moses clearly writes that there is a command he received from the LORD to convey to the people of Israel (the parents), meaning this mandate comes from the LORD; therefore, it is important and serious for parents to pay attention to it. This mandate was first given to parents.

It cannot be denied that parents bear the primary responsibility for educating and shaping the spirituality of their children and all family members. Teachers in formal schools and Sunday schools may educate and shape children's character in the Lord, but they cannot replace parents' responsibilities in educating and forming that character. Formal school teachers and Sunday school teachers serve only as partners to each parent in educating and shaping their children's character. The primary place for children is the family, and parents are the primary educators, guides, and caregivers responsible for shaping the morality and spirituality of all family members.

Sarumpaet states that parents are educators: "The responsibility of parents is not only to give birth, provide food, buy clothing, provide a home, and send their children to school; in addition, parents are responsible for nurturing, educating, guiding, and shaping good character. Since fathers and mothers are the first teachers in the household, every mother must be aware that her child's future is influenced by the form of education received during childhood" (Sarumpaet, 1995).

Parents must understand and fully comprehend who has given the mandate; the giver of the mandate is the LORD, which means that parents are directly accountable to the LORD regarding the development of their children within the family, both in terms of their morality and spirituality. Therefore, when the role of parents in educating and nurturing their children diminishes or fades, it can lead to a gap in parental teaching to children, where healthy and good teachings from parents are not conveyed to the children due to the absence and role of parents in the family.

Having a Significant Role in the Family

In the book of Deuteronomy 6, Moses reminds the Israelites not to forget the greatness of God in their life journey, teaching all of God's commands and loving Him. The education in Deuteronomy 6 implies a lifestyle within the Israelite family that emphasizes the preservation of faith. In Deuteronomy 6:7, there are two key words that must be noted: "teach" or "instruct" and "talk." Matthew Henry comments on this verse by stating that it serves as a means to keep and maintain religion in our hearts and within our homes (Bible Study, 2021).

Teaching

The word "teach" comes from the root word **לָמַד** (shanan), and its verb essentially means "to engrave," or "to teach sharply" (Piel). In the Piel form, it is the only proper usage, used to describe the repetition of an action. The term in Ugaritic means "to repeat," which seems to be the fundamental emphasis of this verse. The rabbis used this verse to affirm that the Shema should be "repeated" in the morning and evening. We must speak about God's will for

our lives in all our daily activities. It is the responsibility of parents to pass on faith as a lifestyle (cf. Deut. 4:9; 6:20–25; 11:19; 32:46). This emphasis on parental responsibility is reiterated in Proverbs 22:6. Modern schools and churches cannot replace parental training, but these institutions can certainly complement it.

The phrase "to teach repeatedly or to teach diligently" is in the Piel stem, which is an intensive form, and thus means "to teach sharply," engraving it down to its roots! Baker states, "The idea here is similar to words being carved into stone tablets with a sharp object; likewise, the Law must be ingrained in the hearts of children of every generation." Children are born as sinners who must be shaped to become instruments of God's will.

Teaching here means to provide, enlighten, and broaden someone's perspective, which must be done repeatedly. This verse, in its original Hebrew language, does not use the word "repeatedly," which in English is translated as "diligently," but because the word *shânan* used here is in the Piel form, its emphasis is sharper.

Speaking

Next, there is the word "speaking," which refers to discussing it when you sit in your house, when you are traveling, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

The word "speaking" used in this verse comes from the word דָּבַר (*dabar*), which in the Hebrew text means conversation, speech, discussion, lecture, talk, or to speak. Just like the word *shânan* found in this verse, the word *dâbar* also uses the Piel form. Therefore, it carries a similar emphasis with a nearly identical purpose: to discuss the truth continuously.

Where it is taught and spoken of is clearly stated in the passage: while sitting at home, during travel, lying down, and when rising. The passage indicates that teaching about the knowledge of God must occur when sitting, traveling, lying down, or getting up. This terminology is representative and encompasses all daily human activities from morning until night (Cairns, 1997). Deane and Taylor provide insights on parents' duties toward their children based on "when sitting, during travel, and lying down or getting up": first, parents are responsible for fully answering their children's questions. Second, parents are responsible for expressing God's intentions and existence. Third, parents have the duty to promote truth to their children (W.J. Deane, 1950).

In the application of family life in shaping or building the morality and spirituality of family members, this is done from all aspects and at all times without limitation. In other words, every aspect of life must begin and end together with God each day, just as sleeping and waking are part of daily activities. Religious values must be considered a very important matter in our lives.

Teaching True Instruction

In Deuteronomy 6:2, it is written that the important teaching that parents should impart to all family members is to fear the LORD, to hold fast to all His statutes and commandments. Furthermore, in Deuteronomy 6:5, it states, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."

From these two verses, it can be concluded that the teaching that parents must convey and discuss with their children is to love the LORD with all their heart, soul, and strength. The verb אָהַב (*'ahav*, "to love") in this context does not primarily communicate an emotional idea but rather a covenantal commitment. Loving the LORD means being truly faithful and obedient to Him in all things, a truth that Jesus Himself taught.

This love is not emotional but relational with "YOUR" God (1 Corinthians 13:4-8). It is not merely a suggestion but a command that should not be burdensome (1 John 5:3); rather, it should be obeyed willingly and lovingly. Love involves a choice, and Israel must choose to establish an intimate relationship with the LORD; therefore, their

relationship must be faithful to Him and obey His commandments. Moses' expression of love is to demonstrate loyalty to Him with all his heart, soul, and might. A whole person must express their devoted loyalty to God. In other words, our obedience flows from love for the LORD and a heartfelt desire to please Him, rather than from legalistic motivations that foster streams of grace and His Spirit. This binds love closely with obedience and faithfulness.

The teaching of the truth is to love God with faithfulness and obedience to His covenants with His people. This love entails a total, unwavering commitment. It is an important teaching that must be continuously reinforced until it is truly embedded in the hearts of His people. This is what parents, as primary and first educators, must teach: to love God wholly, and to understand and live out this teaching requires ongoing effort.

Prof. Dr. Singgih D. Gunarsa states that "one of the primary sources of juvenile delinquency or misbehavior in children is the social environment that shapes them, and the family is the smallest social unit but has a significant influence on the psychological and social development of children" (Singgih, 2000). If the family environment is not conducive for its members, especially for children, it has a high potential to lead to juvenile delinquency or negative behaviors. Parents, together with other family members, are responsible for maintaining a healthy and positive family community environment, and the best way to achieve this is by guiding the entire family and its members to fear the Lord. Family life will be safe, happy, and enjoyable if parents understand their roles or functions and carry out those functions well while nurturing family life by continuously engaging in positive actions and applying effective, constructive, and transformative parenting practices.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN BUILDING THE MORALITY AND SPIRITUALITY OF FAMILY MEMBERS IN FACING THE SOCIAL 0.5 ERA

Spiritual Parenting

Spiritual parenting involves the introduction of spiritual and religious values from an early age. Parents play an active role in instilling faith through daily worship practices.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9, known as the Shema Israel, provides an important foundation for parents in implementing spiritual parenting. These verses emphasize the role of parents in shaping their children's faith and spiritual lives through teaching, repetition, and example. The following is an explanation of the principles of spiritual parenting based on this text:

Teaching to Love God

Verses 4-5 state, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength." From this passage, parents are called to teach their children that the LORD is the only true God and must be loved wholeheartedly. This teaching serves as a foundation for children to understand their relationship with God and to build a strong faith (Trivena, 2021).

Internalizing God's Word

Verses 6-7 emphasize the importance of God's command to "keep it in your heart" and to teach it repeatedly to children. Parents must make God's Word an integral part of the family's daily life, whether through routine conversations or spiritual activities such as reading the Bible together or praying (Evinta Hotmarlina, 2022).

Practices in Daily Life

Discussing God's Word while at home or during travel. Making everyday moments opportunities to teach spiritual values. This is why Quality Family Time is so important; it provides the perfect moment to teach and practice what is true and good for children.

Becoming a Model of Love for God

Verses 8-9 instruct parents to make God's Word a sign on their hands and foreheads and to write it on the doorposts of their homes. This illustrates that parents must be a tangible example of loving God. Children learn more effectively through the examples set by their parents than merely through words.

Spiritual parenting based on Deuteronomy 6:4-9 underscores the responsibility of parents as primary educators in building the morality and spirituality of their children. Parents must actively live out and teach God's Word, consistently repeating it, and serve as role models in loving God. By applying these principles, families can become the first place for children to know and love God deeply.

Parents Must Continuously Upgrade Themselves

In the book of Deuteronomy 6, the people of Israel received teachings from Moses, so they learned from Moses. An educator must be a role model for their students; similarly, parents, as the primary and first educators in the family, must serve as examples for their family members. Therefore, parents need to continuously learn and grow in order to embody that truth and apply it to their family members.

The digital era is not an easy time for parents to navigate; there are many challenges and obstacles to face given the technological advancements that have permeated all human activities. Parents must be able to implement appropriate and effective parenting styles to educate their children in the digital age. They are expected to protect their children from the threats of the digital era while not hindering the potential benefits it can offer.

Parents need to practice effective parenting, which is closely related to mentality and character. They must develop and train their mindset. Parenting should be cultivated within parents and continuously practiced so that they can become the role models their children desire. In other words, parents must be ready to apply all parenting tips to themselves. Once the mentality and character of the parents have formed into that of an ideal parent, the information from parenting tips can be easily applied in their approach to educating their children (Muhammad, 2019).

Parenting Styles Relevant to the Times

Parents need to understand the types of parenting styles that are relevant for educating children according to the current era, enabling them to accompany, supervise, and teach their children accurately and effectively. Parents can implement effective parenting styles if they know what to do to educate their children in this digital age.

Parenting styles are also related to the responsibilities and obligations of parents toward their children. According to the Republic of Indonesia Law Number 35 of 2014, Article 26, parents in the family are obligated and responsible for: (1) nurturing, caring for, educating, and protecting their children; (2) fostering children's growth according to their abilities, talents, and interests; (3) preventing child marriage; (4) providing character education and instilling moral values in children. The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (2016:14-17) requests that parents pay attention to the following: First, parents need to know and understand: (a) their children's eye health; (b) sleep issues; (c) difficulties in concentration; (d) declining academic performance; (e) physical

development; (f) social development; (g) brain development and its relation to digital media usage; (h) delays in language development in children.

The types of communication patterns of parents in the digital era, according to Muhammad Hayyumas (2016), are very important: *a). Consensual Pattern*: Parents enjoy engaging in conversations with their children. However, all decisions ultimately rest with the parents, and the reasons for parental disagreement with their children's wishes are explained in depth so that children better understand why their parents do not agree with their desires. *b). Pluralistic Pattern*: This communication style is more open, with parents frequently talking to their children. Children think more freely because all decisions are left to them, as long as those decisions are good. *c). Protective Pattern*: Communication between parents and children is very rare, but the level of obedience or norms within the family is very high. *d). Laissez-faire Pattern*: This pattern is rarely practiced by parents, leading to frequent misunderstandings in communication between parents and children (Muhammad, 2016).

CONCLUSION

Based on the observations and investigations conducted by the researcher, it can be concluded that given the significant negative influence of the digital age on every family member, it is crucial and urgent for parents to take a more active role in nurturing relationships and communication within the family. Parents must become more aware that they are the primary and first educators entrusted by God to shape the personalities of their children and family members.

Fostering and developing the morality and spirituality of children is essential, as parents serve as role models for their children within the family. Additionally, considering that the generation of parents differs from that of their children, parents need to learn extensively and continue to educate themselves to prepare for their roles as parents ready to face an increasingly advanced era, matching their children's knowledge. Parents should be willing to engage as individuals who are eager to learn, learn, and learn (parents must continue to learn). Learning is a responsibility in educating, guiding, and nurturing children/family members. This responsibility ultimately lies with God.

Spiritual parenting becomes paramount and is the responsibility of parents as primary and first educators in building the morality and spirituality of their children.

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