

Parental Education Conditions in Rural Areas of Bengkulu: Case Study on Responsive Gender, Parenting Styles, Equality Behavior, and Learning Needs

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ABSTRACT

This study is to examine the understand the awareness and knowledge of the community in these areas regarding gender issue, which crucial for informing government policies on community education. This scientific paper employs a qualitative approach to comprehensively describe the nuanced experiences of parental education in Bengkulu, Indonesia. The research was conducted in three rural area Bengkulu Province located on Sumatra Island, Indonesia. parental education in rural areas is hindered by persistence of traditional gender roles that assign distinct responsibilities to women and men. the study revealed that there are distortions in the community understandings of gender in rural Bengkulu. The distortions manifest as a lack of awareness and understanding of gender issues, resulting in inadequate child-parent interaction, especially among fatherless families, perpetuation of gender stereotypes and a deficiency in gender-responsive literacy. The findings indicate that parental education in rural areas is hindered by persistence of traditional gender roles that assign distinct responsibilities to women and men. Understanding the condition of parental education and gender responsiveness in rural Bengkulu is very important because it is directly related to government policy making in the field of public education. This report highlights the importance of promoting gender equality, combating stereotypes, and improving parent education in rural areas to create a more inclusive and responsive educational environment.

Keywords: Parental education, responsive gender, rural area, equality behavior, parenting style.

INTRODUCTION

In developing countries such as Asia, Africa, and the Pacific, women work 12 to 13 hours more per week than men. However, women's contributions are often 'invisible' and are unpaid. Women also have a double burden on their families, from doing domestic work to productive work. Some of the issues that still exist in rural areas are isolated areas, the social behavior of people who are not yet advanced, and economic decline. (Trussell and Shaw 2009). About 75% of the world's poor live in rural areas, which "frequently suffer from inadequate business, poor infrastructure access, financial services, and social protection that does not reach the people (Mtika & Kistler, 2017 (Mtika and Kistler 2017). It does not stop at that problem alone; the social construction created by the community

itself is still inherent in the community in rural areas. Issues regarding gender take place in rural areas both in terms of care, protection, and other social issues for both children and women. Issues that exist in rural areas must be given special handling to impact certain groups in society (Kouamé and Schellekens 2002). Many ways can be done to reduce this issue, for example, by treating the family as the most important and broadest educational center in transforming knowledge and character.

There is a close connection between education, family, and gender which binds each other. For example, the family as an informal educational institution plays a role in forming a superior, intelligent, and moral generation which is very important today. Agreeing with this, the family is indeed the center of community knowledge; family education is usually a transformation (Fletcher 1989). Family and education mean that some intervene as learners, namely children. The role of the family is to support the comprehensive development of early childhood, including physical, cognitive, emotional, and social adaptation and language (Xu et al. 2022). This binds the emotional involvement of parents to be impactful because of the mediating effect between parents and children, which is significant in children's development, especially in rural areas (Li and Liu 2022). Child development and psychology become implications that arise in education in the family; for example, character formation occurs from this, triggering children's actions so that they can provide life experiences for children according to the atmosphere of family life (Yao et al., 2022 (Yao, Zhen, and Zhang 2022)). This development and upbringing impact the social construction of society, namely the formation of gender roles. However, in today's society, the concept of gender is often interpreted as differences in roles based on gender. It is considered absolute and difficult to change because it relates to the surrounding environment's values and norms. The need for and benefits of gender equality stems from issues of justice based on sustainable development and prosperity (Lozano-Torres 2021). However, gender inequality continues to occur, even within the family sphere. The practice of gender non-responsiveness can be found in many aspects of childcare. For example, there is still a widespread view that all child development matters are entirely the mother's responsibility (the woman). Boys and girls are also often given different toys and roles, following certain gender stereotypes (Putra, Junaidi, and Fitri 2020). If analyzed, gender inequality still appears very often in society. The data collected by the SDGs (2023) through UNDP reveals the facts from cases of gender inequality that have occurred as follows.

Table 1

Facts About Gender Inequality

Work	Experience	Asset	Wedding	Education Access	Political
Women only earn 77 cents/dollar compared to men for the same job	1 in 3 women, or 35 percent, have experienced physical and sexual violence.	Women represent only 13 percent of agricultural landowners.	Nearly 750 million women and girls alive today are married before their 18th birthday.	Only two-thirds of developing countries have achieved deep gender equality in basic education.	Only 24 percent of national parliament members are women as of November 2018, a slight increase from 13 percent.

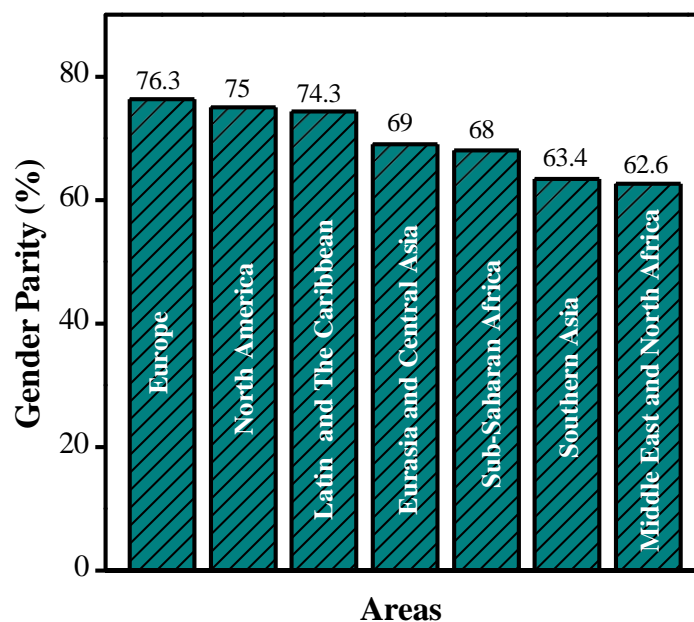
Source: UNDP SDGs, 2023

This already leads to gender discrimination because there are several determining factors (Palma, Reis, and Rodrigues 2023). The facts above happened to women and girls, such as denying equal employment rights with men, sexual violence and exploitation, unequal division of care and domestic work that does not even receive wages and discrimination in public office.

What are the views on gender in Indonesia? Global attention to gender parity, as highlighted in the Beijing Declaration and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizes the importance of women's access to economic and political progress (Rahmah et al. 2023). However, there is still a gender gap that occurs in women and children. Women in developing countries such as Indonesia face barriers such as lack of education, illiteracy, language, financial constraints, and cultural conventions that hinder their involvement in community life, thereby limiting their involvement in shaping a better future. The Indonesian people need to know, understand, and want to uphold equality to realize national development in terms of improving the quality of human resources and achieving prosperity.

Figure 1

Diagram of Gender Parity across Continents



When compared to countries on other continents, Europe has the highest gender parity of all regions at 76.3%, surpassing North America since 2022. In this country, the gender gap has decreased by at least one percentage point. North America ranks second, with a 75% gap. Latin America and the Caribbean have bridged 74.3% of the gender gap. Eurasia and Central Asia have closed 69% of the gender gap, although progress has stagnated since the 2020 edition of the report. In East Asia and the Pacific, progress on parity has been stagnant for more than a decade, and the region has seen a decline of 1.6 percentage points in recent years. Sub-Saharan Africa has closed 68.2% of the gender gap. South Asia has achieved gender parity of 63.4%, representing an increase of 1.1 percentage points since the last edition. The Middle East and North Africa remain the furthest region from parity, with a 62.6% gender gap closed (World Economic Forum, 2023). Thus, it can be seen that countries in Asia still have a significant gender gap. It can be concluded that gender equality accelerators can balance where there is increased participation of women in the workforce, close the gender pay gap, and help more women advance into leadership roles and develop skills in demand. It is just that. Unfortunately, this must be continuously improved, including strengthening the roles of each sex, including the role of husband and wife.

Back to gender issues in Indonesia. Indonesia is said to be one of the countries that fall into the category of a fatherless country or a "country that has lost a father figure." A fatherless country is characterized by a condition or symptom of its society in the form of a tendency to have no role and involvement of a father figure, even though the father is still alive. Not all children can feel the presence of their father (Fajarrini and

Nasrul 2023). If studied based on the patriarchal culture in Indonesia, the father's role in the family is often considered more dominant, and the father dominates decision-making as the "head of the family." Then this is what causes the father figure to disappear because the dominant role makes children afraid to communicate with their father. Children's behavior without the presence of a father figure causes changes in child discipline behavior (Atkinson and Ogston 1974).

Furthermore, gender-based violence is still a severe problem, especially against women and children in Bengkulu. They are often victims of various forms of violence, such as physical, psychological, and sexual. Globally, one in three women experience domestic violence in their lifetime (Stojetz and Brück 2023). So where did this problem come from? Bengkulu has the problem of poverty and gender inequality, which triggers family income. Many housewives are considered to have no opportunity to work and participate in the economy, so the poverty rate in this rural area continues to increase. This triggers violence in the family. The importance of achieving gender equality and empowering women is linked to sustainable development. Therefore, this article examines family profiles in rural communities in Bengkulu by analyzing gender conceptions, gender responsiveness starting from interaction and communication within the family, parenting styles, gender equality behavior, and learning needs to improve parental competence in implementing gender-responsive parenting.

This scientific paper employs a qualitative approach to comprehensively describe the nuanced experiences of parental education in Bengkulu, Indonesia. This study was conducted in three rural districts in Bengkulu Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia. The choice of location is based on the condition of the vulnerable area in parental education. We adopted a qualitative approach to recording the experiences of parental education from the micro perspective. For this reason, the sampling was carried out using a purposive sampling method in which the profile of the community's work was represented. The number of families that were the object of this study was nine complete families consisting of fathers, mothers, and children (age range 0-6 years). Some families studied are community groups from vulnerable families working in the red -lighting sector. Apart from that, in order to compare parenting activities, data was collected from several families from the middle sector. This is done to obtain data regarding parenting activities and whether they are gender-responsive. The following is data on parents who became informants. Information about the characteristics of parents is presented in the following table.

Table 1. Informant identity

No	Name	Sex	Work	Child Age	Gender of Child
1	R1	M	Palm Farmers	5	M
2	R2	M	Driver	4	F
3	R3	M	Construction laborers	5	F
4	R4	F	Food seller in the school canteen	5	M
5	R5	F	Housewife	4	F
6	R6	F	Palm Farmers	5	F
7	R7	M	Village Apartment	6	M
8	R8	M	Stone Breaker	6	F
9	R9	M	Government employees	6	M
10	R10	F	Household assistant	6	M
11	R11	F	Housewife	6	F
12	R12	F	Household assistant	6	M
13	R13	M	Construction laborers	5	F
14	R14	M	Honorary Teacher	4	M
15	R15	M	Workshop mechanic	3	M
16	R16	F	<i>Cleaning Service</i>	5	F
17	R17	F	Farmer	4	M
18	R18	F	Housewife	3	M

The table above displays the informant data interviewed in this study. The informant's identity information was disguised according to research ethics. Each informant lives in a rural area in Bengkulu, Indonesia. The informants are the husband and wife. R1 is the husband of R4, R2 is the husband of R5, and further.

DISCUSSION

Family characteristics and conditions

This research took place in the Rural area of Bengkulu, Indonesia. Rural areas here are rural settlements of economic circles with mountainous areas; plantations are generally "difficult" because of the many disturbances from natural factors and economic activity (Wang, Ou, and Chen 2023). Agreeing with this, people in rural areas rely on their survival in the agricultural sector, plantations, and several other temporary jobs. Women in this area are described as individuals who do not have permanent jobs or do not work at all. On the other hand, married women have jobs but have to play multiple roles in parenting activities. This research will describe the role of women and the resulting gender inequality. Research proves that women can perform work activities more productively and creatively (Behrman 1999). The patriarchal solid culture of this

society means that women need more independence and specific skills to continue their lives when their husbands are gone.

With the objectives at the beginning of the study, an analysis was carried out regarding the productive work carried out by each family. The goal is to understand the stages of work, who does the work, and how long the work takes. The following table shows the stages of husband and wife productive work.

Table 1

Stages of a husband and wife's productive work

Productive Work		
Stage/Job	Who does (M/F)	Time Working (Hours)
<p>Driver One of the parents who entrusts his child to a non-formal education unit carries this work. Work as a driver between cities between districts. Several series of driver activities are carried out, such as: Ensuring the vehicle's condition has no damage so it is safe to drive. Check the completeness of the vehicle papers. Parents who work as drivers start their activities at 06.00 in the morning and return at 20.00 WIB, but the activities as drivers are not fixed if someone orders out of town even the day after they return.</p>	M	18 Hours
<p>Food seller in the school canteen The stages of work carried out by the informant representatives were trading in the school canteen. This merchandise is packed at dawn. The merchandise sold by this informant is sachet drinks, fried foods, and some packaged snacks (<i>snacks</i>). After completing the work concerned, prepare the child's equipment to be able to go to school. Furthermore, when the child has been delivered to the education unit, parents continue their activities at school until 12.00 WIB. When the child finishes activities in the education unit, the parent picks up the child and includes the child to wait for a while until it is time to go home from school at the trading place.</p>	F	5 hours
<p>Palm farmers. This work is done by clearing the vegetation area around the oil palm plantations. Next, plant maintenance is carried out by watering, fertilizing, and pruning trees/plants that are not needed in the oil palm area. If a palm is ready to be harvested, it is taken with an <i>orchid tool</i> that helps the smallholders work in the oil palm plantations.</p>	M and F	9 hours
<p>Motor Workshop mechanic This work is done to repair damage to the motor. The stages of work carried out are identification of motor damage, repair, and maintenance of motor damage. Furthermore, the work that is often done is repairing leaks in motorcycle tires.</p>	M	8 hours
<p>Construction laborers This work is done to assist in the construction of the development. Mixing cement, placing bricks, and arranging bricks/stones to make a building</p>	M	9 hours
<p>Household assistant</p>	F	2-3 Hours

This work is done whenever clothes are to be ironed, or a house is to be cleaned.

Taking care of household

This activity is carried out by taking care of daily needs, for example, cooking, bathing children, washing clothes, and activities at home as deemed necessary

F 12 hours

Cleaning Service

This activity was carried out in government offices around the Karang Tiggi sub-district. The workers are women

F 8 hours

Honorary Teacher

The work carried out by this housewife is teaching activities at school as a non-permanent teacher.

M 6 Hours

Village Officials

This work is carried out by village people interested in village administration. Representatives of the parents work as operators in the village government.

M 8 hours

Government employees

Parents are assigned to the district government office to help with the mobility of activities in the office.

M 7 hours

The work table above is information on productive activities by husband and wife. Women choose productive jobs that are not sedentary or full-time jobs. Three of them care for the household because the husband works as a laborer, driver, trader, and oil palm plantation farmer. There were informants who, when interviewed, revealed that the intensity of the work, which had a long duration, resulted in the husband returning home every two days. This job representation is expected to provide an overview of parenting activities from home. Families in rural communities carry out the work above to make ends meet. The impact is on parenting activities and interactions with children in the family. Both parents carry out the roles and responsibilities. However, child care is still borne by women. Research reveals that psychologically, work conflicts affect marriage outcomes directly and indirectly, reducing family harmony (Matthews, Conger, and Wickrama 1996). In addition to carrying out a series of domestic activities, women who become informants work to supplement their daily needs. This is still the case; there are still assumptions about traditionally feminine tasks by partner members, such as washing, ironing, shopping, cooking, or cleaning (Cerrato et al., 2018 (Cerrato, Cifre, and Dåderman 2018). In addition, men do not feel obligated to carry out a series of domestic activities as do women because they perceive them more as hobbies or free choices (Martínez Martínez editor, 2009). This also results in different meanings of household chores for men and women. It has not been seen that household chores and childcare are considered shared responsibilities carried out by both parents.

Before entering parenting competence, an analysis was carried out regarding the gender profile of each family by analyzing the husband-wife partnership in the

household. This initial information determines the division of tasks and responsibilities within the family, the time needed to complete domestic and productive work, the parties involved, and assistance in domestic activities within the family. This information will later become the basis for analyzing the role of parents in providing care for girls and boys and those who work on different matters in the household.

Gender inequality is a cultural, social, and legal situation in which gender determines different rights and dignity for men and women, manifested through biased access to or enjoyment of their rights and stereotyped expectations of social and cultural roles (Kim, 2021). There are various reasons for women working disproportionately/having low-quality jobs. The patriarchal culture that still often appears in society results in the perception that women should take care of children at home to the extent that social activities are limited. Another reason is the family *mindset*, where women, even if they work in the low sector, are paid less than men, which is not a problem. Although true, the mother provides physical and psychological protection (Ceka 2016). This way of thinking is correct, but wrong assumptions result in multiple roles. Pay attention to the table regarding the proportion of work usually carried out by women is heavier, but the pay is not following the series of work performed. Most working rural women are paid ± Rp. 15,000-Rp. 30,000/day with eight to twelve hours of work per day. If examined psychologically, the income from the work results from heavy work, which tends to increase stress and fatigue in women. In addition to working outside the home, women must complete domestic work. Women get a dual role in the family with the obligation to complete their domestic work again, such as taking care of children, cooking dinner, etc.

Generally, men (research informants) work as casual daily laborers in rural areas. These jobs include construction workers, stone breakers, honorary workers, and small farmers. In addition, some have jobs as civil servants and village apparatus. These two middle and upper jobs were used as informants to determine children's parenting styles and whether they were gender-responsive.

Table 2

Distribution of Duties and Roles of Husband and Wife

No	Activity at Home	Husband's Role	The Role of the Wife
1	Head of household	The husband is the head of the household and the decision-maker.	The role of the wife as a family member who does housework.
2	Breadwinner	The husband works as a breadwinner to support the family.	The wife is not required to work. However, some of

		The husband does the work as a freelance daily worker.	them work in the low sector.
3	Financial Manager	Husbands hand over all income to wives without knowing the financial transparency used.	The wife carries out financial management. There is no reporting of financial expenses. For several reasons, the money given was only enough for that day.

The division of roles above is a division between masculine and feminine roles. Society assumes that masculine and feminine attributes and behaviors cannot be compared (Spence 1984). However, this pattern is considered normal in community groups, so it is carried over to the family environment. This role is formed based on responsibilities and qualifications from gender. If seen from the data presented, there is still an unequal distribution of roles, starting from the primary decision-making in the hands of the husband. At the same time, the women work on household matters and manage finances. This data becomes a supplement in analyzing the parenting style passed on by families to their children so that it can measure gender responsiveness in the family. The following table displays information from informants ranging from domestic work to productive work.

Table 3

Activities of domestic activities

Domestic Jobs		
Work	Who does (L/F)	Long time working
Cook	F	2- 3 hours
Wash dishes	F	4.5 hours (3 times per day)
Washing clothes	F	3 hours
Bathing Children	F	10-15 minutes
Parenting	F	8 hours
Sweeping the house	F	1 hour
Water plants	F	2 hours (2 times per day)
Take care of pets	M	2 hours
Cleaning the home page	F	20 minutes

*(*This table can be printed separately to help write answers)*

Prescriptive gender roles are socially constructed and are constantly being debated (Drury and Bukowski 2013). The table displays information about domestic activities carried out by the family in one day of activities. The table above illustrates how tasks and responsibilities are divided within the household, and the roles and contributions of each parent can be identified in the childcare process. For example, is there a more dominant role of one parent in caring for and educating children, or are both parents actively involved in this process? This expectation limits women's choices and opportunities, such as education, career, and personal development, even though the

positive change process in women's welfare is obtaining the right to life choices and achieving women's self-aspiration (Haley and Marsh 2021).

Furthermore, data mining was carried out regarding the activities and distribution of parenting roles for domestic work within the family. Mothers play a crucial role in parenting activities. Some working families entrust their children to non-core family members, such as grandparents, siblings, and neighbors. However, some things must be considered when entrusting children to families, namely, a need for more understanding about parenting. In rural areas, children are mostly cared for by grandparents, who usually have lower health literacy and may lack proper parental knowledge and skills (Zhao et al., 2022 (Zhao et al. 2022)). Another fact is that parenting done by fathers still needs to be higher. So that inequality in the division of domestic roles still needs to be balanced in the family.

The interview results were also similar to those conveyed by other respondents. The wife is the financial controller in the family, so the husband only provides the results of the income earned on that day so that the wife then manages it. This shows that society's views on gender roles and traditional responsibilities can influence the division of tasks within the family. Even though this constantly changes, some families still follow the traditional pattern of placing the woman or wife in financial management (Rosada, Nurliani, and Amran 2021).

Furthermore, information gathering concerns conflicts that arise or often arise in the household. The conflict in question originates from the family (between husband and wife, children), which often arises because of problems managing family tasks and finances. Extracting information is done by finding out the resolution of the conflict.

Husband and wife conflicts at home are triggered by various little things that can accumulate over time. Although each pair has unique dynamics, here are some analysis results regarding the triggers of conflict in the family obtained from informants: (1) An imbalance of domestic roles in the family still often occurs, such as cleaning the house, cooking, washing, and caring for children, which can be a source of tension. The feeling of injustice or exhaustion arising from these differences triggers a family conflict between husband and wife. (2) Inability to communicate effectively and openly. This results in tension and conflict in the relationship. Misunderstandings often occur in the family, and the unclear message can lead to fights. (3) Disputes related to finances, such as spending, and budgeting for meeting daily needs, are also triggers for conflict. (4) Loss of time

together, Busyness between husband and wife due to work demands, and many answers often arise from several couples. And (5) Feelings of not being understood or supported emotionally can exacerbate conflict within the family.

Interaction and Communication in the Family

Interaction and communication are important in forming healthy and harmonious family dynamics. Establish healthy, supportive, and positive communication between family members. This helps create a harmonious family environment, forms strong relationships, and supports overall well-being. Through communication and interaction, the family transmits family values, beliefs, traditions, and identity to family members. Interaction within the family can create reciprocal social relations between parents and children, husband and wife, which are by the rights and obligations of each individual (Rosada and Nurliani 2016).

In daily life, informants revealed that the mother still dominates communication with children. Several informants said that after coming home from work (the husband) prefers to rest because he is tired and, in the evening, gathers at the village security post. The following is an excerpt of the interview from the informant.

"..I usually sleep after work for a while; my wife wakes me up and eats, then I go to Poskamling. Sometimes children are also asleep; they are still small. Usually, this is how it is in Hamlet, sleep..." (R3, Interview 11 June 2023).

The point of R3's answer is that after coming home from work, the informant usually takes a nap because he feels tired after work activities. Later, his wife woke him up, and they ate together. After eating, the writer proceeds to attend poskamling (neighborhood security post), which may be a routine activity or a responsibility that must be carried out as part of the neighborhood where they live. The informants also mentioned that their children, especially the young ones, were sometimes asleep when the informants came home from work and did these activities. Informants noted that this was common in their hamlets, which may have different environments and routines from urban or suburban areas. This reflects everyday life in the village or hamlet, where daily activities such as poskamling and family lifestyles differ from the busier and denser urban environment. This shows a typical habit or pattern of life in rural areas, where napping, eating with family, and participating in neighborhood activities are part of the common routine of the inhabitants.

Further interviews were conducted with further informants. The following is an excerpt from an interview delivered by R8.

".....I very rarely talk to children; all the needs of the wife are handled (R8, Interview 12 June 2023)."

R8 answers that the husband rarely talks to his children, meaning that R8 needs more communicative interaction with his children. Instead, all the wife's needs are handled by himself. This shows that the informant is more focused on the relationship with his wife and his responsibilities towards her than spending time communicating with his children. The informant is also busy with work or other tasks, or family dynamics or traditional roles may affect the division of tasks and interactions within the family.

If concluded, of course, this impacts families related to unique dynamics and ways of interacting, and how the informants (husbands) handle their family's needs may match the circumstances and agreements in their household. However, it is important to remember that communicating with children is important in developing the parent-child relationship. Good interaction and communication with children are valuable for forming emotional bonds and understanding their needs in their growth and development process.

The following is an excerpt from Interview R10 at the informant's house to dig up information about the husband and wife partnership.

"I usually continue with unfinished work at the office, when usually talking when a child needs it or I want to ask for help buying cigarettes" (R9, Interview 18 June 2023)."

Busy parents make togetherness in the family limited. This resulted in all information regarding the child's needs being met by the wife/mother, and even some children were entrusted to the grandmother/close family when the parents were active so that the needs were known from outside the nuclear family. Children owned by families are included in the toddler criteria, so from 08.00 WIB to 11.00 WIB, children carry out their daily activities in the PAUD Unit. Furthermore, many children are entrusted to their grandmother/grandfather after returning from the education unit. This is what makes information on children's needs known through the closest relatives of the family (grandmother/blood relative).

Parenting activities carried out are still very low. Parents still feel awkward interacting with children. Apart from allocating only four to five hours a day to play with children, information was also found that there were no activities related to learning activities, such as literacy activities, reading fairy tales when the child is going to sleep, and playing together in the house. Furthermore, in interacting, parents often utter words that can hurt children's feelings; for example, the terms *you are lazy child, naughty child,*

stupid child, are unknowingly conveyed to children. Some parents agreed that they had told their children directly when they continued pre-literacy play activities at home. When a child needs help

"....Why don't you understand imitating the letter patterns on this worksheet" (R11, 22 June 2023).

The following is the meaning of R11's answer, which seems to show an angry expression at his child, asking why the other person cannot understand or imitate the pattern of letters that should be copied in the discussed worksheet. R11 expresses dissatisfaction or disappointment with their child's ability to imitate or follow the expected letter pattern. This sentence indicates that the informant may feel frustrated or annoyed because his child cannot carry out tasks or instructions correctly, especially in terms of imitating the letter pattern that should be done on the worksheet. Informants may expect better or more accurate results from their interlocutors, and their reaction is to be angry or disappointed because the results are not as desired or expected.

Communication within the family to introduce gender roles to children is still not implemented. This is because the understanding of gender is minimal in the family; there are even differences in the treatment of boys and girls by both parents. This difference in treatment indicates that gender communication influences interpersonal relationships. Finally, this behavior has an impact on the child's closeness and only occurs to the mother (wife). The child loses a father figure in the family. Fathers play an important role in children's gender development; this depends on how much communication is built with children. Parents play a role in developing masculinity and femininity in girls and boys.

Fathers are essential for children's gender development, so the absence of a father is expected to result in typical gender role behavior (Golombok 2004). However, the father figure, who is strict and rigid, is reflected in the husband because his attitude is considered cold, so communication does not go well. From some of his experience, Husband has not been able to create a space for communication so that children can speak assertively; even being able to open opportunities for discussion with children since childhood has yet to be realized.

In parenting activities, there are patterns of interaction that determine the formation of parenting styles. Communication and interaction within the family are part of children's socialization by parents. Parents must do three things in the socialization process, namely: behavior patterns that are socialized, agents who participate in the socialization process, techniques, and implementation of socialization (Puspitawati 2020).

Families with a system that emphasizes the dimensions of family interaction. These interaction activities can be two-way (*dyadic interactions*) or a combination of interactions between all subgroups (*dyadic, triadic, tetradic*). Communication is a condition for interaction. For this reason, the type of communication that occurs in the family is generally direct communication, both verbal and non-verbal.

Table 4

Communication in the Family System

Family system	Nature of inter-family communication
Morphostatic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively closed: difficult to change • Strict supervision • Boundaries that are difficult to penetrate 	predictable; stiff ; Ritualistic
Morphogenic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries that are easy to penetrate • Flexible: Responsive to changes 	Open interaction: disclosed spontaneously Self-explanatory: Congruent and Direct/Terrific
Random: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfixed boundaries • Less structured 	Congruent Unpredictable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Messages are cut into pieces • <u>Stay away from mistakes</u>

The table above is a pattern of communication that occurs within the family. Parental education affects the effectiveness and efficiency of communication within the family; besides that, the nature and system of the family also influence the nature of communication, interaction within the family, and parenting style within the family. In general, creating a gender-responsive family can be done by establishing a good relationship between fathers, mothers, and children, namely talking and listening to each other, creating pleasant interactions, giving each other a sense of security about each other's relationships, and caring for each other, giving each other support and encouraging each other.

Parenting style in the family

Every family has its parenting style. Parenting style has an impact on child development. Agree with this; positive parenting styles contribute to higher self-efficacy in children, which is associated with higher subjective well-being (Ding et al. 2023). Some families interviewed provided information about the parenting style set at home. Some parents carry out parenting activities by remaining actively involved in their children's lives and showing interest in their activities. Even though it is still in the category of "

guiding " with full firmness, parents maintain open communication and continue to be involved in conversations with children. Parents set clear rules and boundaries for activities at home,

The results of interviews with several families provide a parenting style providing treatment that starts with asking but does not give control over what the child does. This parenting style is shown by the low attitude of parents in identifying children's needs to know children's play activities within one day. Researchers ask questions about things done to children when they just come home from playing or come home late. Informants respond with answers.

".....just ask the child occasionally about the activities the child is doing; the rest will be allowed to continue playing" (R16, Interview 9 June 2023).

The meaning of the answers above is that R16 only occasionally asked their children about the activities they were doing. However, the rest of the time, they let the children continue to play without much contribution to children's play activities.

Parenting style has an impact on habituation in children. Agreeing with this, the results from rural communities in America show that parenting is critical in rural America, and good parenting is the primary medium for the relationship between poverty indicators and child development. For example, previous researchers found that the father's actions during childhood were necessary for predicting schoolchildren's achievement in rural areas (Vernon-Feagans and Swingler 2020). Household chaos is negatively related to positive child development outcomes, although this also seems to be mediated through parenting. Parenting that provides a treatment that starts with asking but doesn't give too much control over what the child does results in a low ability of the child to apply positive discipline and even the treatment of parents when the child cries to the point of "tantrums" wanting a toy or food is shown in an indifferent attitude until the child stops *crying*. Parenting styles that do not restrain children but still provide control still need to be practiced by families who are the informants of this study.

The following is an excerpt from the analysis of families who apply the parenting style of their respective families. Here are some results of the analysis of treatment in raising children in families in the rural area of Bengkulu R1-R18.

" The family has an upbringing pattern that leads to intervention in every action and treatment. Parenting behavior spoils children excessively. The family assumption here is that education must provide for all the child's needs because if it is not given, the child will cry continuously.

some also say that:

" The parenting pattern that is applied is reluctant to help children when they need something. Families assume that boys must be independent at an early age so that they are required to adapt to the environment and social interaction both at and outside the school environment. If a child makes a mistake, they are advised and scolded to give a deterrent effect to the child so they don't repeat the same mistake.

Parenting patterns for boys. Boys with an authoritarian parenting style in the sense that boys are more likely to get used to being independent; for example, they are not anxious and do not find out where their sons are when they have not come home from playing activities because they believe that boys can take care of themselves. Meanwhile, the pattern of parenting girls is democratic because girls are given more attention than boys. It can be said from the parenting style analysis above as follows: (1) Families apply parenting patterns that tend to spoil children excessively. They believe that all children's needs must be met because if not, children will cry continuously. (2) Families apply parenting patterns that require children to be independent early on. They are reluctant to help their children when needed and think boys must adapt to their surroundings. If children make mistakes, they will be given advice and scolded to give a deterrent effect. (3) The family adopts an authoritarian parenting style for boys, which tends to make children independent and not anxious if they have not come home from playing activities. However, they adopt a parenting style for girls, which makes girls get more attention than boys.

There are several parenting styles from the pattern applied by the community in the rural area of Bengkulu. Of course, parenting has its impact. For example, authoritarian parenting involves low responsiveness and coercive control in children (Wang et al. 2022). Ideal parenting tends to favor a form of awake interaction characterized by discussion, adaptability, flexibility, and agreement (Imig et al. 1997). The uniqueness of upbringing in the family shown in some of the excerpts above illustrates the formation of children's character in the future. Gender is multidimensional, and its causes are multifaceted. For that, it is necessary to fully understand the developmental systems involved in the development of gender-related characteristics to understand further human gender development, for example, the development of gender role behavior (Hines, 2020 (Hines 2020)). Thus, a solid emotional connection between a child and their caregiver is essential for their social, emotional, and cognitive development. Parenting means providing consistent attention to form a secure attachment relationship and promote the child's healthy development.

Gender Equality and Justice Behavior in the Family

Gender inequality remains challenging for many societies (Anisman-Razin, Kark, and Saguy 2018). In knowing the behavior of gender equality and justice in the family, interviews were carried out by obtaining information from each group of informants regarding the behavior of gender equality and justice in the family. Gender equality behavior results in equal resources and access to resources and opportunities for women and men (García Coll et al. 2002). Researchers conducted information-digging regarding preparing public/ productive roles for boys and girls.

The findings of the analysis on collecting data regarding gender equality and equity in the family have yet to be found. In this activity, the family still needs to prepare for the children's daily needs related to the unique/specific needs and the child's general needs. Informants revealed that they did not include children in extracurricular activities.

"...Why do I join extracurriculars? Just staying at home is enough; my child is still small" (R13, Interview 10 June 2023)."

Then, if you don't participate in other additional activities, are there any activities you can do at home to explore your child's potential?

"I only give children toys; I also have no achievements, so I cannot explore the child's potential" (R6, interview 9 June 2023)

The purpose of the R6 interview excerpt stated that they only gave toys to their children but did not provide support or opportunities to explore children's potential. They also feel that the family has no achievements, so it is challenging to help children develop their potential.

In the implementation of early childhood education in Indonesia, children are usually allowed to get additional play activities to increase the achievement of children's growth and development. Extracurriculars function as activities that can explore the potential of children in education units. The reluctance of parents to provide additional learning opportunities to their children is expressed not only because of time constraints but also because of limitations in paying extracurricular activity fees.

The next question is the family's availability of children's learning facilities. Parents do not provide children's study desks. Usually, children can study at the dining table or living room table. The family still needs to complete the standardization of learning facilities. Parents also support the ideals that children want. However, achieving

these goals is different from effort through additional learning activities. Dreams remain wishful thinking for children and parents who still do not need to be planned.

In preparing for domestic roles, the family has yet to divide roles within the family. Findings in the field reveal that *labeling* of children still occurs frequently in some families. Fathers and mothers give toys to children because of stereotypes; for example, boys' cars, while girls are synonymous with household toys, such as dolls, cooking utensils, and various other household miniatures. Suppose you look at children learning traditional gender roles where such roles help maintain gender stereotypes, for example. In that case, men are considered aggressive, independent, and task-oriented, while women are considered more sensitive, emotional, person-oriented, and dependent (Hussain et al., 2015). The father still dominates decision-making activities as the 'head of (Hussain et al. 2015)

Parents unknowingly commit violent actions against children (Putra et al. 2020). This study found that fathers and mothers pinched children excessively, labeling *children* if they could not do things beyond their abilities (*weak, boys should not cry, boys should not play in the house, etc.*). This makes children indirectly victims of parental violence. The interviews with informants revealed that parental literacy towards acts of verbal and non-verbal violence is still very low. Even this ignorance becomes commonplace for activities that take place in childcare activities in the family.

Parents' Needs and Expectations Regarding Gender Responsive Parenting.

Families living in rural areas need a strengthening of gender-responsive parenting competencies. Research reveals that parents think they care about internal changes (competence) in carrying out their role as parents (Hunter et al. 2019). As the smallest unit in society, the family plays a vital role in producing quality generations with quality development. The gender profile of the family, forms of communication and interaction in daily life, parenting style, and gender equality behavior cannot be gender-responsive. In a gender-responsive context, parents go through this by creating a good partnership between husband and wife and building a psychological attachment to both father, mother, and child. The impact of care given to children includes child development domains such as mental health, behavioral development, physical development, identity development, social and emotional development, and academic achievement (Zhang, Miller, and Halgunseth 2023).

The interviews revealed that some families practice gender inequality, for example, behaviors that occur in society, such as labeling boys and girls. Some summaries of gender injustice can be seen in the table below.

Table 5
Actions of Gender Inequality in Rural Areas Communities

Boy	Girl
Strong Aggressive, Daredevil Must be able to defend himself	Weak Melancholy Coward You don't have to be able to defend yourself because you are with your parents.

The roles of husband and wife in the family still need to be balanced. Women in parenting activities still feel the double burden. During the interviews, the respondents agreed that the family has a division of labor. This can be seen from the father's role in an *instrumental role* or related to earning a living, dealing with outsiders, and so on. Meanwhile, mothers play an *expressive role*, such as affection and attention. In parenting, Of course, this affects parenting actions. In essence, a child at every phase of his life needs an ideal role model in order to grow well socially, psychologically, and physically. Parenting that is applied in the family is care that is prohibited in the principle of gender-responsive parenting.

The indecisiveness of parents makes one party to be disadvantaged. Good parenting can stimulate significantly related cognitive, language, and overall parenting development (Ma et al. 2023). The ability to educate in rural areas within the family is the biggest challenge because the child's ability to respect the opinions of others makes it difficult to make wise decisions. Information about communication, parenting styles, and children at home is an initial provision in developing learning for parents to improve gender-responsive parenting competencies.

CONCLUSION

In summary, there are still distortions from families and communities regarding a conscious understanding of gender in rural Bengkulu. This distortion shows a lack of accurate understanding and awareness of gender issues in parenting that is implemented in the family. The observed consequence of the distortion in understanding gender is the lack of child-parent interaction, especially in the household, so children lose a father figure in their family, especially in rural areas. This suggests that certain gender-related

beliefs and norms can hinder effective parent-child relationships. Also, traditional gender roles and stereotypes can influence parenting practices in rural areas, impacting the support and guidance children receive from their families. Gender responsiveness is still limited by stereotypes, with certain activities and roles considered only for specific genders. The importance of literacy about gender responsiveness for people in rural areas implies that education and awareness about gender equality and responsive practices are still lacking. There are still gender roles with traditional conceptions, where different responsibilities are given to women and men. It is important to address gender responsiveness in rural areas to improve parental education and promote more inclusive and equitable parenting practices. The distortions and challenges identified underscore the need for targeted interventions and policy measures to foster gender-responsive attitudes and behaviors in rural communities in Bengkulu, Indonesia.

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