

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN SELF-HELP SKILLS FOR PHYSICAL MOTOR DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

Muhammad Naufal Fairuzillah^{1*}, Nesa Hasbi Maryam², Muhammad Nasir Khan³

¹Universitas Negeri Surabaya, ²UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, ³International Islamic University Islamabad

muhammadfairuzillah@unesa.ac.id, nesashasbimaryam@gmail.com,
muhammad.nasirkhan@iiu.edu.pk

Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Received May 16, 2025 Revised May 18, 2025 Accepted May 23, 2025</p> <p>Keywords: Self-help Parents Development Skills Motor</p>	<p>This study aimed to explore the role of parents in developing children's self-help skills and how different parenting styles affect their physical motor development. This research used a library research method to explore the role of parents in self-help skills and their impact on children's physical motor development. Self-help skills are a crucial aspect of the physical motor development of early childhood, encompassing activities such as eating, dressing, using household tools, and using the toilet, which require fine and gross motor coordination. Parents play a crucial role in developing these skills through different parenting styles: permissive, authoritarian, and democratic. Parents play a crucial role by modeling usage and guiding children in daily practices, thereby enhancing their comfort and responsibility in maintaining personal hygiene. Active parental involvement is essential for helping children develop self-help skills and achieve optimal physical motor development. Appropriate parenting styles and consistent guidance lay a strong foundation for children to become independent, confident, and capable individuals, effectively navigating life's challenges.</p>

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.



Corresponding Author:

Nesa Hasbi Maryam
UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung
nesashasbimaryam@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Self-help skills are a crucial aspect of the physical motor development of early childhood, encompassing activities such as eating, dressing, using household tools, and using the toilet, which require fine and gross motor

coordination. These tasks require the coordination of fine and gross motor skills, which are foundational for independence and later academic abilities. Fine motor skills involve the precise use of small muscles in the hands and fingers, enabling children to perform tasks like feeding themselves, dressing, and manipulating tools. Gross motor skills, on the other hand, involve larger muscle groups and are crucial for activities that require whole-body movement (Logan, et al., 2012). The development of these skills is supported through various activities that promote dexterity, strength, and endurance, laying the groundwork for self-care and academic readiness.

Parents play a vital role in fostering self-help skills in children. The parenting styles adopted by parents, whether permissive, authoritarian, or democratic, significantly influence the development of children's independence and physical motor skills (Sobrebiga & Medez, 2020). Permissive parenting gives children considerable freedom to explore their surroundings, although the lack of supervision can lead to unhealthy behavior or injuries. In contrast, authoritarian parenting emphasizes discipline and obedience, which can limit children's opportunities to learn through direct experience and develop creativity. Democratic parenting, which balances freedom and supervision, can provide optimal support for the development of children's motor skills (Khanum et al., 2023).

Moreover, parental involvement in teaching and guiding children in self-help activities is essential. Parents can help children develop these skills through various daily activities that can be done independently, such as self-feeding, self-dressing, using household tools, and toilet training. Positive reinforcement, good habits, effective communication, and consistent discipline are some strategies that parents can use to foster independence in their children (Amini, 2017).

A holistic approach to parenting and parental involvement in training self-help skills will significantly impact a child's physical motor development. This study aimed to explore the role of parents in developing children's self-help skills and how different parenting styles affect their physical motor development. With a deeper understanding of the roles and strategies of parents, it is hoped to improve the quality of parenting and overall child development.

2. METHOD

This research used a library research method to explore the role of parents in self-help skills and their impact on children's physical motor development. This method was chosen because it allows researchers to collect, analyze, and synthesize various literature relevant to the research topic. The research process began with determining the topic and research objectives, focusing on the role of parents in developing self-help skills in early childhood and its impact on their physical motor development.

Data were collected from various relevant literature sources, including books, journal articles, research reports, and official documents that discuss self-help skills, parenting styles, and children's physical motor development. These sources were identified through research of academic databases.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Self-help skills are crucial in the development of young children as they are directly related to the child's physical motor skills. These skills encompass daily activities such as eating, dressing, using household tools, and using the toilet, which require both fine and gross motor coordination. Through these activities, children develop muscle strength, hand-eye coordination, and overall physical flexibility. This, in turn, enhances their ability to perform more complex physical tasks as they grow older.

A. Parenting Styles and Child Independence

Parents play a crucial role in fostering self-help skills in their children. The involvement and guidance provided by parents can significantly influence the development of child independence and physical motor skills. According to Sunarty (2016), parenting style refers to the way parents interact with their children through caregiving, nurturing, teaching, educating, guiding, and training. According to Diana Baumrind's theory in the 1960s, there are three types of parenting styles: permissive, authoritarian, and democratic (Kang & Guo, 2022).

Permissive parenting is a behavior exhibited by parents in interacting with their children, allowing the children to do whatever they want without questioning. Permissive parenting allows children to make their own decisions without much intervention from parents. This parenting style does not impose demanding rules on children, and children are given the freedom to make decisions on their own without parental consideration and control. In permissive parenting style, parents only provide facilities without exerting control over children, resulting in limited

communication between parents and children. This parenting style can shape children's personality development in an undirected manner and make children less disciplined towards prevailing norms. However, if children can use their freedom responsibly, this parenting style can shape children with independent, creative personalities, capable of realizing their potential.

Authoritarian parenting style is characterized by parents who enforce strict rules and boundaries that must be obeyed by children. Parents act as controllers, and children are not given freedom and opportunities to express their opinions. If children fail to comply with the established rules, they are threatened and punished. This may result in disciplined and obedient children, but it can also diminish creativity, initiative, and self-confidence. Children raised in an authoritarian environment may feel oppressed and less inclined to explore their abilities. However, this parenting style can instill strong discipline and obedience to rules. Parents should strive to find a balance to ensure that children feel supported and valued, even within a framework of strict rules.

The democratic parenting style is characterized by freedom and order. Parents provide guidance and non-binding input to their children. They maintain objectivity by offering attention and monitoring their child's behavior according to their abilities. This parenting style involves understanding guidance and intense interaction between parents and children. Parents do not restrict their children from developing their creativity but still monitor them to ensure they behave within applicable norms. They do not impose their will on their children to become what the parents desire and support all positive desires of the child. The democratic parenting style can shape children's characteristics to be independent, self-controlled, and have good and cooperative relationships with peers or others.

In practice, parents often use a combination of parenting styles in educating, guiding, and directing their children (Catalano et al., 2024). There are various parenting styles applied in raising and guiding children. At times, parents may apply authoritarian, permissive, or democratic parenting styles. Indirectly, there is no pure type of parenting style applied by parents. They apply parenting styles flexibly and loosely, according to the situation and condition.

In the physical development of children, parental parenting styles have a significant impact. Permissive parenting style provides freedom without strict boundaries, allowing children to explore physical activities extensively. Children tend to engage in various physical activities, such as playing outdoors, running,

and playing with peers. Although this can aid in their motor development, such as coordination and muscle strength, lack of supervision can also increase the risk of injury or unhealthy behavior. On the other hand, the authoritarian parenting style often involves tight control over children's physical activities, with an emphasis on discipline and obedience. This may limit children's opportunities for physical exploration and learning from direct experiences, which could affect their motor skill development. Conversely, the democratic parenting style creates a balance between giving children the freedom to participate in physical activities and providing appropriate guidance and supervision. This allows children to develop their motor skills well while still receiving direction and support from parents (Ndari, Mujtaba, & Ananto, 2019).

In the context of parenting, the parenting style applied by parents plays a significant role in shaping various aspects of child development, including independence and self-help skills. Permissive, authoritarian, or democratic parenting styles can influence how children develop their physical skills and independence over time (Sari & Rosyidah, 2019). From their experiences with parenting styles, children gain an understanding of boundaries, responsibilities, and ways to overcome daily challenges. This impacts their ability to hone self-help skills, such as eating independently, dressing, using household tools, and toilet training. Therefore, it is important for parents to understand how their parenting styles affect their child's development in various aspects of life, including independence and self-help abilities.

B. Forms of Self-Help Skills

Parents can assist children in developing self-help skills that encompass various daily activities that children can learn independently (Taras & Matese, 1990). These skills include eating skills, dressing skills, using household tools skills, and toilet training.

1) Eating Skills

Eating skills involve using eating utensils, controlling food, and drinking from a glass. Parents can support these skills by providing appropriate eating utensils for children and giving them the opportunity to eat on their own, even if it may be messy at first. Praise and encouragement during this process are important for building the child's confidence. Teaching eating skills to children involves a patient and guided approach. Some

strategies that can be applied include providing children with easily held and eaten foods, such as pieces of fruit or vegetables; modeling behavior by demonstrating how to pick up food with a spoon or fork; and encouraging children to try eating on their own by giving positive praise and encouragement each time they succeed.

2) Dressing Skills

Dressing skills involve putting on clothes, fastening buttons, and tying shoelaces. Parents play a crucial role in helping children develop the skill of dressing themselves. Parents can assist by selecting clothes that are easy to put on and providing step-by-step guidance. It's important to give children time and patience to try on their own. Some steps that parents can take include letting children choose their own clothes to enhance their confidence and independence. Additionally, parents can provide a variety of clothing so that children can learn different ways of putting on clothes. Placing clothes within reach of children also facilitates their ability to pick and wear clothes themselves, teaching them to be more independent and responsible. Providing direct examples by demonstrating the correct way to dress is very helpful, as children learn a lot through observation. Parents also need to give children opportunities to try on their own, providing support and guidance when they attempt to dress themselves. Patience is crucial here, as the learning process takes time. Additionally, avoiding laughing at children if they make mistakes is essential for creating a positive and supportive environment, while offering praise and positive reinforcement when they succeed can boost their confidence. By following these steps, parents can help children effectively develop the skill of dressing themselves as well as their fine motor skills.

3) Using Household Tool Skills

Household tool skills involve using items such as toothbrushes, combs, and other hygiene tools. Parents can teach children how to use these tools by providing clear examples and guiding them in daily practice. Making this activity a routine will also help children feel more comfortable and independent in maintaining personal hygiene. Teaching children how to use household tools requires patience and precision. Some steps that parents can take include providing direct examples and guidance on using household tools. Parents can demonstrate the correct way to use each tool, ensuring that children understand the steps involved. Additionally, let children practice

using household tools under the supervision and encouragement of adults. Giving children the opportunity to try on their own is crucial, even if initially it may not be perfect. Praising and rewarding children when they successfully use household tools correctly are also essential for boosting their confidence and motivation. By following these steps, parents can help children effectively develop the skill of using household tools, enhancing their independence and responsibility in maintaining personal hygiene and the environment.

4) Toilet Training

Toilet training is an essential skill that helps children use the toilet independently and maintain personal hygiene. Parents play a significant role in providing consistent and patient guidance throughout this process, ensuring that children understand when and how to use the toilet. Offering praise and encouragement every time children succeed in doing it on their own will strengthen their independence. Teaching toilet training to children requires a gentle and consistent approach. Some steps that parents can take include helping children understand the habit of using the toilet through stories or pictures that children enjoy, as well as paying attention to signs when children need to use the bathroom and taking them to the toilet each time it happens. Parents can also demonstrate the process of using the toilet to children clearly and remind them to always use the toilet with discipline, praising them when they succeed. Additionally, accompanying children to the toilet whenever needed and providing full guidance and support are crucial. Creating a comfortable and enjoyable atmosphere in the bathroom for children and assisting them in cleaning themselves with attention and affection are also part of this process. Continuing to provide motivation and support to children throughout the toilet training process, without ever becoming bored or discouraged, will help children achieve independence in using the toilet with more confidence.

With patience and consistency, parents can help children master these important skills. Teaching children to eat on their own, dress themselves, use household tools, and toilet train not only enhances their independence but also builds their confidence and sense of responsibility. Parents need to provide support, praise, and positive encouragement throughout this learning process,

as well as understand that each child learns at a different pace. With the right approach, children will grow into more independent individuals ready to face various challenges in daily life.

C. Parenting Strategies in Developing Child Independence

There are several steps that parents can take to foster independence in children:

1) Building Confidence

Self-confidence is crucial for children during their developmental years as it influences their initiative and problem-solving abilities (Rahman, 2013). Parents play a significant role in building their child's self-confidence. This can be achieved by being a good role model, providing opportunities for children to solve their own problems, allowing them to make decisions, encouraging courage, and teaching discipline and responsibility. Instilling confidence in children that they can handle tasks on their own, even if they make mistakes, is also crucial. Parents need to provide emotional support and motivate children to try again if they fail. A child's self-confidence does not only come from within themselves but is also influenced by the perceptions and expectations of those around them. Therefore, parents should avoid excessive praise, focus solely on outcomes, and harshly criticize their children, as these can damage a child's self-esteem. By giving genuine and specific praise and educating with patience, children will grow with a strong sense of confidence, adaptability, and optimal physical, intellectual, and psychological health.

2) Creating Safe Environment

The second way to foster child independence is by ensuring a safe environment for them to try new activities while minimizing potential hazards. According to the official Instagram account of the Directorate of Early Childhood Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, several important steps should be taken by parents (Adit, 2020). Firstly, provide a comfortable play area with clean air circulation and sufficient lighting, ensure the room temperature is appropriate, and include desks and chairs for learning as well as space for free movement. Secondly, avoid noise that may disturb the child's concentration. Thirdly, engage in discussions with the child. Discuss and make agreements with the child on how to organize their play environment according to their preferences. Fourthly, prioritize health and

safety in creating a play environment for the child by providing safe tools, materials, and media for exploration. Lastly, provide tools, materials, and media that can be explored by the child so that they can freely express their creativity. By following these steps, parents can support their child's independence and creativity in a safe and comfortable environment.

3) Positive Reinforcement

The third way to cultivate independence skills in children is through positive reinforcement. Encouraging and appreciating children's efforts is crucial to strengthen their self-confidence and desire to be independent. Parents can provide genuine and specific praise every time a child attempts or successfully accomplishes something independently. For example, when a child successfully dresses themselves or uses household tools correctly, give clear and joyful praise. By providing appropriate appreciation, children will feel valued and motivated to continue learning and growing. Additionally, parents can also use small rewards as a form of recognition for the child's efforts, such as giving stickers or small meaningful gifts. These steps will help children understand that their efforts are valued and encourage them to continue striving for greater independence in various aspects of life.

4) Developing Habits

In the effort to foster independence in children, the fourth crucial aspect is to familiarize them with age-appropriate and developmental habits, such as personal hygiene and environmental cleanliness (Sukatin, 2019). Parents play a primary role in shaping these positive habits by being good and consistent role models. By providing a consistent and positive example, children are more likely to imitate and incorporate these habits into their daily routines. This helps them understand the importance of maintaining personal hygiene and cleanliness in their surroundings, as well as teaches them responsibility for their actions. With consistency in instilling these good habits, children will become accustomed to them and feel comfortable performing them independently, thus aiding in their development into more self-reliant and responsible individuals.

5) Communication

In supporting children's independence, it's important to communicate with them effectively. The fifth way to do this is by explaining the importance

of independence in language that is easily understood by the child. Parents need to speak clearly and patiently, as well as listen to and respond to the child's needs well. By communicating positively, children will find it easier to understand the importance of independence and feel supported in achieving it. Good communication also helps build a strong relationship between parents and children, so the child feels comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings.

6) Discipline

The sixth way to foster independence in children is through the introduction of the concept of discipline. Parents can teach discipline by providing consistent supervision and guidance, as this helps children understand the importance of responsibility and consistency in their daily lives. It's important for parents to establish clear and consistent rules, so children have clear guidelines on expected behavior. Additionally, providing fair and appropriate consequences for children's behavior will help them understand the consequences of their actions. Consequently, children will learn to take responsibility for their own actions and become independent in the future.

By implementing these steps, parents can help children develop strong independence and confidence in facing various life challenges. Fostering independence in children requires patience, consistency, and full support from parents. By providing trust, creating a safe environment, applying positive reinforcement, instilling good habits, communicating effectively, and teaching discipline, parents can help children grow into independent, responsible individuals ready to face the future with confidence. Success in nurturing independence not only enhances children's ability to care for themselves and manage their environment but also shapes positive character and attitudes that will be beneficial throughout their lives.

D. Developing Independence of Children

Kartono in Wiyani (2013) highlighted several aspects of independence that parents should develop in their children, including emotional, economic, intellectual, and social independence. This indicates that parents are not only responsible for fostering independence in children in terms of physical motor development but also in other aspects.

Emotional independence, emotional independence involves a child's

ability to manage their emotions without relying on parents. Parents can assist children in developing this aspect by teaching emotion management techniques such as deep breathing, discussing feelings, and finding solutions to emotional problems. Providing children with the opportunity to express their emotions without fear of judgment is also important for supporting emotional independence.

Economic independence, economic independence refers to a child's ability to manage finances and not rely on parents for economic needs. Parents can teach children about money concepts, saving, and creating simple budgets. Involving children in small financial decision-making, such as choosing toys within a certain budget, can help them understand the value of money and the importance of good financial management.

Intellectual independence, intellectual independence involves a child's ability to solve problems independently. Parents can support this aspect by providing age-appropriate intellectual challenges and encouraging them to think critically. Praising the child's effort and thought process, not just the end result, can encourage them to feel more confident in facing challenges and finding their own solutions.

Social independence, social independence involves a child's ability to interact with others without needing a prompt. Parents can help children develop social skills by encouraging them to play with peers, participate in group activities, and teach basic social etiquette such as sharing, listening, and respecting others' opinions. Supporting children in building positive relationships with others will help them feel more confident and independent in social environments.

Based on the four aspects mentioned above, it can be said that independence for young children is closely related to their ability to solve problems. Independent character is demonstrated by the ability to take initiative and address challenges, showing perseverance, finding satisfaction in their efforts, and having the desire to do things without assistance from others.

Parental involvement is defined as the actions parents take to participate in their children's lives. This includes helping children develop positive behavior, setting rules and discipline for them, and assisting them in learning. Parents who are actively involved in their children's lives not only provide guidance but also

set a good example. Consequently, children can learn the importance of responsibility, discipline, and independence, all of which contribute to their overall development.

4. CONCLUSION

This study underscores the pivotal role of parental involvement in cultivating children's self-help skills and enhancing their physical motor development. Self-help abilities, such as eating, dressing, using household tools, and toilet training are fundamental aspects of early childhood development that necessitate both fine and gross motor coordination. Parenting styles; permissive, authoritarian, and democratic significantly influence children's independence and motor skills. Permissive parenting offers extensive freedom, fostering physical exploration but potentially lacking adequate supervision. Authoritarian parenting emphasizes discipline and obedience, which may suppress creativity and initiative. Conversely, democratic parenting strikes a balance between freedom and guidance, facilitating effective motor skill development through appropriate direction and support. Parents contribute to fostering independence by building self-confidence, creating a safe environment, providing positive reinforcement, instilling good habits, communicating effectively, and implementing consistent discipline. This independence encompasses not only physical aspects but also emotional, intellectual, and social dimensions. Mastery of using household tools, such as toothbrushes and combs, is integral to a child's independence. Parents play a crucial role by modeling usage and guiding children in daily practices, thereby enhancing their comfort and responsibility in maintaining personal hygiene. In summary, active parental involvement is essential for helping children develop self-help skills and achieve optimal physical motor development. Appropriate parenting styles and consistent guidance lay a strong foundation for children to become independent, confident, and capable individuals, effectively navigating life's challenges. Therefore, it is imperative for parents to understand and apply parenting styles that align with their children's needs and characteristics, continuously supporting their development across various life aspects.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank all those who have helped in the process of preparing this research, especially the supervisor for his direction and support, the school and students who participated in the research, as well as the family who always provide support and prayers.

REFERENCES

- Adit, A. (2020, August 21). *Orangtua, Begini Menciptakan Lingkungan Nyaman bagi Anak Selama BDR*. Retrieved June 7, 2024, from kompas:
<https://edukasi.kompas.com/read/2020/08/21/051700671/orangtua-begini-menciptakan-lingkungan-nyaman-bagi-anak-selama-bdr>
- Amini, M. (2017, December). Parental Involvement in Improving Independence in Early Childhood. In *International Conference of Early Childhood Education (ICECE 2017)* (pp. 190-192). Atlantis Press.
- Catalano, H., Rus, A., Dohotaru, A. I., & Jeder, D. (2024). Parenting styles and children's wellbeing. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*, 16(4), 231-255.
- Fadila, S. N. (2023, February 28). *Melatih Kemandirian pada Anak Sejak Dini di Rumah*. Retrieved June 7, 2024, from paudpedia:
<https://paudpedia.kemdikbud.go.id/galeri-ceria/ruang-artikel/melatih-kemandirian-pada-anak-sejak-dini-di-rumah?ref=MTQ2OC00MmZjNzFmOA==&ix=NDctNGJkMWM0YjQ=>
- Kang, J., & Guo, H. (2022). The effects of authoritative parenting style on young adult children's prosocial behaviour: the mediating role of emotion-regulation. *China Journal of Social Work*, 15(2), 162-177.
- Khanum, S., Mushtaq, R., Kamal, M. D., Nishtar, Z., & Lodhi, K. (2023). The Influence of Parenting Styles on Child Development. *Journal of Policy Research*.
<https://doi.org/10.61506/02.00022>.
- Logan, S. W., Robinson, L. E., Wilson, A. E., & Lucas, W. A. (2012). Getting the fundamentals of movement: A meta-analysis of the effectiveness of motor skill interventions in children. *Child: Care, Health and Development*, 38(3), 305–315. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2214.2011.01307.x>
- Ndari, S. S., Mujtaba, I., & Ananto, M. C. (2019). Children's Outdoor Activities and Parenting Style in Children's Social Skill. *Jurnal Pendidikan Usia Dini*, 13(2), 217-231.
- Rahman, M. M. (2013). Peran Orang Tua dalam Membangun Kepercayaan Diri pada Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam*, Vol. 8, No. 2.
- Sari, D. R., & Rosyidah, A. Z. (2019). Peran Orang Tua Pada Kemandirian Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Pendidikan : Early Childhood*, Vol. 3 No 1.

- Sobrebiga, P. J. T., & Medez, S. R. G. (2020). Parenting Styles and Self-Help Skills of Kindergarten Learners. *Philippine Social Science Journal*, 3(2), 71-72.
- Sukatin, Karmila, P., Marini, Hidayah, R. N., Nursavitri, R., & Pratiwi, S. V. (2019). Mendidik Kemandirian Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*, Vol. VI. No. 2.
- Sunarty, K. (2016). Hubungan Pola Asuh Orangtua dan Kemandirian Anak. *Journal of EST*, Vol. 2, No. 3.
- Taras, M. E., & Matese, M. (1990). Acquisition of self-help skills. In *Handbook of behavior modification with the mentally retarded* (pp. 273-303). Boston, MA: Springer US.
- Wiyani, A. N. (2013). *Psikologi Pendidikan: Teori dan Aplikasi dalam Proses Pembelajaran*. Yogyakarta: Ar-ruzz Media.