

# PARENTS PERSPECTIVE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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**Abstract.** This paper analyses parents' perspectives on the formation of moral values in pre-school children, in the wider context of early moral education. It explores the role of parents in shaping moral reasoning through direct instruction, behavioural modelling and other strategies, considering values such as fairness, honesty, empathy and responsibility. The research combines quantitative data from questionnaires and direct observations of children's moral behaviour. The sample includes parents from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, ensuring a diversity of perspectives. The results show that parents who engage in ongoing discussions about moral principles, provide clear behavioural guidance and model prosocial behaviours contribute to children's stronger moral development. Parents who emphasise reasoning over punitive discipline encourage moral autonomy, and inconsistent reinforcement of moral norms is associated with weaker internalisation of moral norms. There are also discrepancies between parental expectations and actual practices, with parents sometimes overestimating the influence of formal education and underestimating their own contribution. Differences in educational strategies are influenced by socio-cultural factors, with some families emphasising obedience and respect, and others emphasising moral reasoning and independent ethical decision-making. The findings of the study underline the need for active parental involvement in moral education, promoting collaborative programmes between families and schools for a coherent educational framework. Future research could examine the long-term impact of early moral education and cross-cultural differences in parental attitudes towards ethical education

**Keywords:** moral values, empathy, early childhood education, preschoolers, parents, teachers