



Role of Parents' Religious Commitment in Character Building of the Children in Gitega District, Burundi

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to explore the role of parents' religious commitment in shaping their children's character in the Gitega District of Burundi. Fifteen couples participated, sharing their perspectives on the topic. The research focused on four questions: the role of parents' religious commitment in character building, the importance of parents' religious commitment, the contribution of parents' religious commitment to children's development, and the spiritual influence of parents in building their children's character. A qualitative exploratory methodology was used, with personal observation and interview questions guided by a descriptive design. The study found that most parents had varied experiences with their children's character, with many lacking positive participations. Factors involving parents included children's needs, role models, motivation, education, and emotional well-being support. The study also identified the importance of parents in building children's character, including interdependence, empathetic, socialization, and parenting models. The study concluded that good parenting fosters healthy psychological development, while poor parenting can lead to antisocial tendencies.

Keywords: Parents, Religious commitment, Character, Emotional wellbeing and parenting model

Introduction

In Gitega District, Burundi, the role of parents' religious commitment in shaping the character of children is a topic of profound significance. As a nation with a rich cultural tapestry deeply interwoven with religious beliefs and practices, Burundi offers a unique context for examining the influence of parental religious commitment on the development of children's character. This study seeks to explore the multifaceted ways in which parental religious beliefs, behaviours, and affiliations impact the moral and ethical formation of the younger generation within the socio-cultural landscape of Gitega District.

Background

Human education begins since birth and continues until death as consequences of ongoing interactions between the person and environment; therefore, the behavior of children may be a result of the teaching of their parents (Nair, 2018). Parents who display the potential of virtuous character strongly diffuse their ideals to their children. Typical choices and actions that are indispensable to being a person of moral character as an individual who is authentic, truthful, just, sympathetic, humble, and involved in the improved good of your family and community, your children will realize this in your ordinary actions and preferences. They will also perceive that this conduct brings a wisdom of joy, fulfillment, and concord to their home. Compassion in the parent-child rapport permits us to teach all the other character standards to our children. When your children feel that you comprehend and care deeply about them, they have the inherent motivation to study the lessons of love and character you share. In general, children take it as a habit to grow up to be like their parents. Parents with high self-confidence influence their children to uphold self-assurance in their lives. Children from happily married parents tend to manifest the same gladness in adult relationships (International Boxing Association Chairperson, 2021).

Research suggests that parental religious commitment can significantly influence various aspects of child development, including moral reasoning, prosocial behavior, and psychological well-being (King & Boyatzis, 2015; Pearce & Denton, 2011). In predominantly Christian societies like Burundi, where religious values often align with societal norms, the impact of parental religious commitment on character building may be particularly pronounced.

However, the relationship between parental religious commitment and child outcomes is complex and multifaceted. Factors such as the depth of religious involvement, parental practices (e.g., prayer, religious education), and the congruence between parental and child religious beliefs may moderate this relationship (Mahoney et al., 2003; Smith & Denton, 2005).

In Africa, religious parents are in charge of their children. They have a heavenly vocation to be examples for their children. It is significant that each trusting family knows their duty and profession to contribute to the great charge of God, that is to say, charming the world for Jesus Christ. The parents should make it clear from the beginning that it is vital for the children to join church. Besides being home-based, the church is the most fitting divine

foundation for children to study about Christian values and the reality of God, our Creator. The church is the central institution in society that offers and helps in precise spiritual aspects such as prayer, spiritual character, conviction, and self-assurance (National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, 2021).

However, children should not be understood just as the church of the future. They are the church of nowadays, seeing that the church's effect can still modify their lives, letting them make a transformation in the world. Additionally, the church does not only concentrate on the presence of God; it also involves a devotion to spiritual life. Therefore, it is central that the parents' religious commitment should clarify their children's understanding of the church as the center of the family's actions, such as praising, adoring, praying, contribution, witness, and thanksgiving (National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, 2021).

In Burundi, the parents' religious commitment has a great impact on the education of their children. Then, on the day of marriage's celebration, a man and woman make the same commitment. They promise to love and respect one another throughout happiness or in difficulties, and all of them take care of the children, as in socio-cultural development, the children understand the good culture's values, receiving them from their parents as their first environment (Ruth, 2017).

Parents play a crucial role in shaping their children's character by directing, training, and teaching them moral values. Religious parents are more committed to this due to their Christian teachings. However, many children today lack moral behaviors, such as respecting elders and caring for others. This study aims to explore the role of parents' religious commitment in character building and propose an intervention to address this issue and promote morale and youth in society.

Methodology

This study was pure qualitative approach, phenomenology design that aims to explore the lived experiences of parents and children in Gitega District, Burundi, regarding the role of religious commitment in character building. Participants were purposefully selected from diverse religious backgrounds, and the data was collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The interview protocol focuses on participants' religious beliefs, practices, experiences, perceptions of the relationship between religious commitment and character development, examples of religious teachings in daily life and parenting practices, and challenges and facilitators in transmitting religious values to children. Thematic analysis was used to identify recurring patterns, themes, and meanings related to parents' religious commitment and its influence on character building. The study also emphasizes the importance of maintaining reflexivity, obtaining informed consent, respecting cultural norms, and ensuring reciprocity. Trustworthiness was enhanced through prolonged engagement, triangulation of data sources, and peer debriefing. The findings are presented in a narrative form, providing contextual descriptions and discussing implications for theory, practice, and future research in the domain of character building and religious commitment.

Results

This section emphasizes the primary themes identified based on the research questions.

Role of Parents' Religious Commitment in Character Building of the Children

Feedback from the interviews conducted reviews the following themes:

Children's Basic Needs

A parent's primary duty is to provide for their child's basic requirements, as this is essential to their general growth and wellbeing. Taking care of these needs lays the foundation for a child's development, such as cognitive, emotional, and physical. Some participants said: "*As parents, we are responsible for our children's well-being, including proper nutrition, hygiene, and personal care.*" Ensuring our children's health and happiness through various activities.

In general, providing for children's fundamental needs necessitates a holistic strategy that considers their social, emotional, educational, and physical wellbeing. A child's whole growth is greatly aided by a loving and supportive family environment, which also sets them up for future success and fulfilment.

Role Models

Parents are children's first and most important role models, having a big impact on their values, actions, and general growth. The idea of a role model plays a critical role in forming a child's ambitions, self-worth, and character. According to some participants in this study, Christian parents follow the priest's advice during marriage celebrations, telling them to love and educate their children, acting as role models, and managing emotions. They should sit together as husband and wife in order to address and discuss their social issues, while away from their children. It was stated by participants as follow:

As Christian parents, we follow what we were told by the priest during celebration of sacrament of marriage, such as to love each other and educate the children we shall be given by God. In such a way, we must look good in front of our children, in order to play a role model in managing our emotions. For instance, when we have some social issue to deal with, we have to sit together as parents, while we are so far from our children's sight (C4, C6, and C12).

In addition, religious involvement of parents can also contribute to the regulation of children's behavior. Religious teachings often emphasize concepts of self-discipline, self-control, and adherence to moral codes. Children raised in religiously committed households may internalize these values, leading to better self-regulation and a reduced likelihood of engaging in delinquent or risky behaviors. Parents act as influential role models for their kids by modeling the morals and conduct they want the next generation to inherit. Being aware of their impact and always providing a positive example are important factors in a child's character development and future success.

Motivation

According to participants C5, C8, C10, and C15, parents play a crucial role in motivating children to love school and fostering high performance by following the lessons they learn from it. Parenting requires motivation since a child's motivation affects how they approach learning, set and achieve objectives, and deal with obstacles in life. Parents may be quite effective motivators, providing their children with a variety of forms of support and inspiration.

To encourage the children to love school is the responsibility of a parent, not a teacher. Therefore, it is our role as parents to motivate our children so that they can be good children among others with high performance. We do it by following up what children learn from school.

By establishing a positive atmosphere, defining reasonable objectives, encouraging intrinsic drive, and setting a good example, parents can greatly assist their children in becoming motivated adults. Parental support and encouragement during difficult times, together with opportunities for independence, play a critical role in fostering their children's growth and passion for life.

Research often suggests that parents' religious commitment can positively influence children's moral development. This influence may manifest through the transmission of religious values, teachings, and ethical principles within the family environment. Children raised in households where religious practices are emphasized tend to exhibit higher levels of prosocial behavior, empathy, and moral reasoning.

Education

Parents are essential to their children's education, and their involvement can have a big impact on a child's growth, academic achievement, and lifelong learning. Some of the participants said that Christian parents must educate children on appropriate behaviors, peer associations, and elder interactions due to poor parenting in their neighborhood, where parents prioritized teachers and technology over children. Encouraging children to think critically, examine information, and ask questions about a variety of topics achieves fostering intellectual curiosity and a deeper understanding of the subject's student's study. Having conversations that push a child's boundaries and giving them the confidence to voice their ideas aid in the development of critical thinking abilities.

Religious commitment is often intertwined with cultural practices and traditions, which play a significant role in shaping individuals' identities and worldviews. Parents transmit not only religious beliefs but also cultural heritage to their children, influencing their sense of identity, values, and beliefs about the world. In multicultural societies like Burundi, where religion and culture are closely intertwined, the religious commitment of parents may serve as a vehicle for preserving and transmitting cultural values across generations.

Emotional Well-being Support

It is vital for parents to support their children's emotional well-being since it has a big impact on their general mental health, resilience, and capacity to deal with life's obstacles. Some participants testified about Christian parents, saying that it is their responsibility to educate their children about family lineage and relatives, enabling them to develop a deeper understanding of their family history. Working together to solve problems with children fosters resilience and a sense of partnership. Giving children a voice in decision-making and problem-solving processes gives them a sense of agency and confidence in managing challenging circumstances.

Religious communities often provide a strong social support network for families, fostering a sense of belonging and community cohesion. Children growing up in such environments may benefit from the social capital derived from religious institutions, which can contribute to their overall well-being and character development. Moreover, the shared religious identity within the family can strengthen familial bonds and promote a sense of unity and cooperation among family members.

Importance of Parents Religious Commitment in Character Building of the Children

Interviews carried out on the topic led to the generation of the following themes, which stood out:

Interdependence model

In order to help their children develop into balanced adults, parents should embrace the important and advantageous notion of interdependence. When two people are mutually supportive of one another and retain their independence, the term "interdependence" is used to describe the connection. Incorporating the concepts of interdependence into parent-child relationships can benefit a child's character development in a number of ways.

Some participants in this study witnessed that saying: "*Our proactive collaboration as parents with our neighbors in the neighborhood where we reside sets an example for kids since they consistently observe what we do and copy it*" (C4, C7, C8, and C12).

Interdependence promotes accountability and a sense of duty. Youngsters get an understanding of the consequences of their conduct and the value of carrying out their familial obligations. This contributes to the development of an interesting personality by fostering a strong work ethic and a sense of obligation.

Empathetic Listener Model

An important and powerful role model for parents in their children's character development is to listen with empathy. Character development in children can be greatly impacted by the way parents interact with them, particularly when it comes to listening with empathy. Here are a few explanations on why parents should use compassionate listening as a role model when forming their kids' personalities. Participants C5 and C11 said that because there are certain things that kids would want to share with us, we need to listen to them well. By actively listening to our kids, we hope to foster positive cooperation between us.

One of the most important aspects of good communication is sympathetic listening. Children who learn active listening from their parents are more likely to acquire effective communication skills. This, in turn, makes it easier to respectfully and clearly express opinions and feelings.

Socialization

In order to provide parents with a model for their children's character development, socialization is essential. The process by which people, especially youngsters, pick up and assimilate the norms, values, behaviors, and skills of their community is known as socialization. Parents are important players in this process, and how they socialize their children has a big impact on how they grow as people. Participants C1, C3, C5, C7, C9, C11, C14, and C15 pointed out that: *"Since we are the ones who engage in our children's lifelong education first, Christian parents like us have a unique role in child discipline."* The process of socialization involves the dissemination of gender norms and standards. Parents have an impact on how their children interpret and internalize gender norms, which affects how features and behaviors that are seen as acceptable in their cultural environment emerge.

Parenting Model

Parenting itself acts as a fundamental and overarching model for parents in the character formation of their children. The way parents approach their role, make decisions, and interact with their children substantially influences the development of a child's character. Participants (C2, C4, C6, and C10) point out that good parenting involves instilling moral values and Christian discipline in their kids, while bad parenting occurs when parents do not have a significant role in their children's upbringing.

Contributions of Parents 'Religious Commitment in the Development of the Children

On the contributions of parents to the religious commitment and development of their children, the following was strongly brought out:

Children's Well-being

A key factor in promoting children's wellbeing is positive parenting. Parents may improve their child's emotional, social, and cognitive development by creating a loving and supportive environment. Establishing clear standards, praising accomplishments, and having positive interactions all help children feel confident and good about themselves. Furthermore, establishing a safe and caring environment promotes strong parent-child ties and a sense of trust that is essential for overall wellbeing.

According to the participants (C2, C5, and C9), children's well-being is one of the contributions of parents to the development of their children. They stated that the more they rejoice for the baby and congratulate a woman upon learning that she is expecting, the more the unborn child feels loved and welcomed in her womb. Children feel better treated, grow, and experience their parents' love and affection more when their parents, friends, and extended family have positive relationships.

Reliability

Participants in this study mentioned reliability as a quality of caregiver. One of the most important gifts parents can give their children is reliability, which helps build a foundation of security and trust. Children who receive constant support, direction, and presence feel more stable and can face life's obstacles with confidence. Reliable parents foster resilience and a positive sense of self in their children by offering a solid foundation for their emotional and cognitive growth. Furthermore, consistent follow-through and communication foster the instillation of fundamental values that have a long-lasting effect on the character and relationships of the child. Participants said that parents significantly contribute to children's development, providing attention and hope for survival. Inadequate parental attention can lead to confusion in children (respondents C1, C3, and C6).

Sense of Responsibility

It is essential for children's growth that adults instill in them a sense of responsibility. When it comes to teaching children accountability and the repercussions of their behavior, parents are extremely important. Parents help their children develop a strong work ethic and dependable character by giving them age-appropriate chores, setting expectations, and emphasizing the value of completing tasks. This trait creates the groundwork for future responsible decision-making and a balanced, competent person.

Participants in this study, said that children learn from their parents through conversation, training, responsibility, and participation in Christian groups. They imitate their parents' behaviors, such as business skills and prayer, which can lead to wisdom and growth in children. Our responsibility is to teach

children to respect God by liberating their lives and fostering good relationships with their social environment from an early age (Participants C2, C10, and C12).

Other participants testified that from early childhood, they teach children to love manual labor and work hard to protect them from crime. Parents should be responsible for their children's family affairs, teaching them the meaning of life and survival skills. Training children to love school will help them grow and achieve a better life. Parents should be open to their children's culture and expectations, ensuring they understand and respect their cultural backgrounds.

Psychoeducation

Giving children information and understanding about diverse facets of mental health, emotions, and interpersonal interactions is known as psychoeducation, and it is an essential part of parenting. Parents' involvement in psychoeducation is essential to their children's entire growth and well-being. In this conversation, keep the following important points in mind:

Parents stated that, in order to develop their children's emotional intelligence, parents' presence is crucial. Improving children's ability to identify and control their emotions is beneficial for their mental health. Parents can assist their children in managing stress and challenging circumstances by modeling appropriate emotional expression. (participants C5, C9, and C12).

Psychoeducation aids in the development of resilience, empowering kids to overcome obstacles and setbacks. In order to develop a resilient mindset in their kids, parents should emphasize to them the value of tenacity, problem-solving skills, and learning from mistakes.

What makes a healthy relationship, whether it be with friends, family, or a love partner, can be taught to children by their parents. This entails establishing limits, honoring those of others, and realizing the value of compassion and empathy.

When a child is experiencing emotional or mental health difficulties, parents should emphasize the value of getting help. Establishing a transparent and impartial atmosphere fosters children's comfort in sharing their worries and, if required, in seeking expert assistance.

Children are empowered with the knowledge and abilities necessary for optimal mental health and well-being through the dynamic and regular process of psychoeducation. Children's attitudes, behaviors, and comprehension of the complex world of emotions and relationships are greatly influenced by their parents.

Parents teach children good social behavior, table manners, and cultural respect. They also educate children on the dangers of technology and social media usage. Parents discuss body changes and help develop talents through discussions and exposure to activities. They play a crucial role in their children's lives from birth until they form families or dedicate themselves to religion. They play a significant role in their children's lives.

Spiritual Influences of Parents in Building Character of the Children

Close Relationship to God

Parents who have a strong spiritual connection to God frequently appeal to religious teachings for advice on morality and ethics. They might impart these ideals to their kids, motivating them to live by a system of rules that uphold justice, fairness, compassion, and honesty. Christian parents also play a crucial role in their children's development by guiding them through the world, explaining its stages, and providing suitable purposes for mature Christians, fostering a belief in good and evil. All this was feedback from respondents in the group.

Teaching love and forgiveness

A great deal of Christian doctrine places a premium on forgiveness and love. When it comes to teaching their kids the virtues of unconditional love and forgiving others when there is disagreement, parents who look to their relationship with God as a role model frequently make this effort. Some of the participants mentioned that Christian parents are responsible for teaching children to forgive themselves and others, pray, read God's word, and fear evil.

Balancing faith and open-mindedness

Some of the participants testified, saying that to foster love for God, they encourage daily worship through weekly mass, evening prayer with peers, and Sunday church attendance. In addition to encouraging a close relationship with God, parents should encourage respect for different ideas and an open mind. Youngsters should be allowed the freedom to pursue their own spirituality and make their own religious decisions.

Traditional Beliefs

Religious customs and rituals are frequently passed on to children by parents who are deeply committed to their religion. By engaging in these rituals, families and the larger religious community can strengthen their connection to a higher power and establish a sense of continuity. Numerous studies on how parents affect their kids' spiritual development indicate that including kids in religious activities encourages observational learning, in which kids pick up spiritual lessons from what they observe others doing and end up becoming spiritual role models (Nelson, 2014). Some of the participants (C2, C5, C6, C9, C11, and C13) emphasize teaching children's good manners and a simple Christian attitude, advising them to love God and fulfil other commandments. They initiate spiritual life through baptism, teaching them about sacramental accomplishments, encouraging them to belong to church groups, and taking them to church-founded schools for spiritual studies and behaviours.

Challenges and Contradictions

However, it's essential to acknowledge that the relationship between parents' religious commitment and children's character development is complex and multifaceted. While religious involvement can have positive effects on children's moral and behavioral development, it's not a guarantee of positive outcomes. Factors such as the quality of parental involvement, the consistency of religious practices, and the broader socio-cultural context can mediate the impact of religious commitment on children's development. Additionally, children raised in religiously diverse or secular households may develop strong moral characters through alternative means, such as secular ethical frameworks or exposure to diverse cultural perspectives.

DISCUSSION

This study explores the impact of parental religious commitment on children's character in the CNAR sector, Gitega district. According to Altalib (2023), parents provide physical care, emotional support, guidance, moral and ethical ideals, intellectual growth, and homework assistance. They set limits, provide necessary support, and impart moral and ethical ideals. Parents also encourage study and provide homework assistance. They play a crucial role in children's intellectual, social, emotional, and cultural development, promoting learning, modeling behavior, and developing emotional resilience. They also provide moral and cultural guidance, ensuring children understand and value their origins. Parents advocate for their children's needs, ensure safety, promote self-reliance, foster independence, and offer guidance.

Parents play a crucial role in their children's growth and wellbeing by meeting their fundamental needs, such as a balanced diet, housing, clothing, and regular check-ups. They also provide love, affection, and security through routines and boundaries. Parents also play a critical role in their children's education by promoting social connections, stimulating curiosity, and offering financial assistance. Trust is built on open communication and safety, and a holistic approach to physical, emotional, educational, and social well-being is essential for their future success.

Kuhumba (2020) highlights the importance of parents in shaping children's morality and behavior. They model positive traits like compassion, empathy, accountability, and persistence, and impart effective communication skills. They form a child's moral compass, guiding them towards integrity, honesty, respect, and empathy. Parents encourage their children to grow into similar individuals by setting objectives and overcoming challenges. They also encourage self-care, a positive body image, and a healthy lifestyle. They stimulate lifelong learning, fostering curiosity and a growth mentality. Parents also teach children about strength, coping mechanisms, and social duty by encouraging resilience, communication, community involvement, and a healthy balance between work, family, and personal interests. Open communication and strong interpersonal skills are also beneficial.

Motivation

Parenting plays a crucial role in shaping a child's attitude towards learning, goal setting, and overcoming obstacles (Naiz, 2018). Religious parents play a vital role in teaching, loving, caring, supporting, and setting a good example. Parents can be effective motivators by supporting, rewarding, establishing goals, improving intrinsic drive, helping, developing a growth mindset, setting an example, and providing autonomy. A supportive atmosphere, identifying unique abilities, and adjusting incentives can significantly impact a child's development and motivation.

Parents play a crucial role in their children's education by providing support, education, and nurturing relationships. They encourage curiosity, provide a rich learning environment, and impact early cognitive development through activities like reading, storytelling, and interactive play. A holistic education should include extracurricular activities, financial assistance, and exposure to moral and cultural values. Financial support and transparent communication between educators and administrators improve the standard of instruction.

Feeling warm, loving ties between parents and children is essential for influencing children's attitudes and future interactions. Emotional well-being is greatly influenced by parents, impacting their resilience, mental health, and ability to deal with life's obstacles. Building emotional connections, promoting open communication, teaching emotional regulation, modeling healthy expression, and developing empathy are essential components of supporting emotional well-being. Working together to overcome obstacles promotes resilience and teamwork.

5.2.2 The Importance of Parents' Religious Commitment in the Character Building of the Children

Interdependence is a concept that promotes harmony, teamwork, and strong bonds among family members. It fosters community and teamwork, which are necessary for success. Interdependent parents create close bonds with their children, encouraging compassion and understanding. This fosters a strong work ethic and helps children become self-sufficient. Open communication between parents and children improves social skills and builds healthy connections.

Empathetic listening is an important aspect of character development for parents. It fosters empathy, strengthens a sense of security and trust, improves communication abilities, and imparts tolerance and comprehension. It also helps children develop emotional intelligence and self-awareness.

Socialization is an important process for parents, shaping their children's character. It entails establishing gender roles, fostering social skills development, passing down cultural values, and forming moral and ethical frameworks. Parents play a significant role in shaping a child's character, particularly during infancy. They impart knowledge about civics, leadership, and duty to others, exposing children to a range of viewpoints, encouraging independence, and cultivating an open mind.

Parenting is an essential role model for character formation, influencing children's conduct, values, and attitudes. Effective parenting fosters a child's personality, empathy, independence, and responsibility. Parents respect their children's interests and skills, instill self-reliance and accountability, and promote a growth mindset. Overall, good parenting develops a solid, real character.

5.2.3 *The contributions of parents' religious commitment to the development of the children*

Respondent parenting is a parenting style that helps children reach their full potential by fostering cognitive and social development in the early years of learning (Landry 2008). Parents play a crucial role in their children's growth and wellbeing by imparting principles, encouraging a love of learning, offering guidance, discipline, emotional support, physical care, and counseling. They also help children with schoolwork and assignments, mentoring them as they grow socially.

Reliability is a vital component of parenting that has a big impact on a child's character development. It fosters emotional security, consistency in conduct, and modeling reliability. Parents play a significant role in instilling responsibility by providing an example, laying out guidelines, educating on consequences, fostering independence, and advancing problem-solving abilities.

Parents also have a significant influence on their children's character development by instilling empathy, maintaining open lines of communication, and consistently punishing their children. Psychoeducation is a comprehensive strategy that helps children learn about mental health, emotional stability, and personal growth. It helps children develop empathy, social skills, self-awareness, and coping strategies, which are essential for their character development. Psychoeducation also reduces stigma around mental health issues, empowers children to seek treatment when needed, and promotes diversity, tolerance, and global participation.

5.2.4 *Spiritual influences of parents in building children's close relationship to God*

Character development in children is significantly influenced by parents' strong spiritual impact and relationship with God. Religious teachings provide direction, guidance, and responsibility, while also offering consolation and fortitude under trying circumstances. Parents can model these behaviors for themselves, fostering compassion, empathy, virtues like appreciation, humility, and patience (Berckmoes et al., 2017).

Love and forgiveness are essential for children's character development, as they can internalize these habits and apply them to their relationships. Striking a balance between faith and open-mindedness is crucial, as it encourages tolerance, critical thinking, and open communication (Berckmoes et al., 2017). By modeling an accepting lifestyle, introducing children to diverse religious traditions, and promoting discussion and dialogue, parents can create a space where kids can express their beliefs without worrying about the consequences.

Traditional beliefs greatly influence children's character development, providing a sense of identity and a link to their cultural history. These beliefs encourage observational learning, moral and ethical principles, gratitude, and respect for elders and ancestors. Ceremonies and prayers are examples of spiritual activities that further establish a sense of spirituality and community (Nelson, 2014).

Children's traditional beliefs can help them develop an appreciation of the natural world and their stewardship and responsibility for it. However, to create well-rounded people with a solid basis in traditional values, parents should promote critical thinking and openness while striking a balance between cultural heritage and diversity and respect.

Conclusion

The study explores the impact of parenting styles on children's character development in Burundi's Gitega District. It found that excellent parenting significantly influences children's character development, promoting healthy psychological growth. Conversely, bad parenting negatively impacts character development and may lead to antisocial tendencies. The research emphasizes the importance of parents prioritizing their children's upbringing and the critical role they play in shaping their personalities.

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