

# **AKSARA: Early Childhood Parenting E-BOOK as a Smart Parenting effort for Millennial Parents**

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## **Abstract**

Parenting children in the digital age has a profound influence on their character development and creativity. Millennials tend to use technology and the internet skillfully, and they often rely on online resources, especially social media, for parenting guidance. While technology can provide educational benefits, the use of the internet also poses challenges such as the spread of misinformation. Therefore, it is important for millennial parents to seek accurate and trustworthy information in educating their children. Character education is also increasingly important in building critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills in children. Early childhood character education supported by smart parenting can help instill positive traits and habits in children. This research uses the Research and Development (R&D) method and the ADDIE model to create the AKSARA E-Book which aims to help millennial parents in Malang City in parenting for early childhood. This E-Book provides valid and effective parenting guidelines for parents.

**Keywords:** parenting e-book; creativity and character; early childhood

## **1. Introduction**

Changes in parenting in the digital era have had a significant impact on children's character development and creativity. Millennials, also known as 'digital natives', are those who grew up amid the massive development of technology and the internet, so they are often associated with their ability to use the internet. Millennial parents, especially those who live in areas with more adequate internet networks, will easily access various information on the internet. A survey related to millennial parents in Indonesia has been conducted, the results show that 55.4% of respondents prefer the internet, especially social media as a source of parenting information (Setyastuti et al., 2019).

Technology, with all its conveniences, offers various resources for education and parenting. Social media in particular not only increases the ease of information dissemination but also increases the spread of fake news (Muhammed & Mathew, 2022). Parents need accurate and reliable sources of information, because along with the times, parents also need to develop their parenting knowledge in order to educate children according to their needs (Novianti & Garzia, 2020).

Character education is important to develop, because the 21st century requires children to have critical, creative, innovative, collaborative, communicative and problem-solving thinking skills (Sutama et al., 2021). Individual characters can be formed from actions that are repeated regularly, forming habits that eventually become personalities. Therefore, it is important to provide character education from an early age so that positive values can take root in children and guide them into adulthood (Kezia, 2021). Instilling character education from an early age through nurturing and being a role model is very important both in the

family, school and community environment (Purba et al., 2020). One of the values of character education in early childhood that must be applied is the creative value, carried out through creative activities in play (Yunita et al., 2021). Parents can shape children's creativity and character through smart parenting.

Smart parenting can shape children's character and personality (Utami, 2021). Smart parenting is a method or strategy of child education with parents as the main teachers, in the process parents are expected to design smart and planned strategies for children (Parwis et al., 2023). Based on this understanding, smart parenting is a method or strategy of child education designed by parents by utilizing technology to support childcare. Smart parenting in this study is defined as a way for parents to support the development of children's creativity and character through the use of digital information media.

E-book is one of the digital information media. Previous research concluded that parenting e-books have a significant impact on improving early childhood parenting skills, providing parents with an understanding of educating children with love, understanding children's uniqueness and needs, and understanding children's learning styles (Asmawati & Hidayat, 2020). The use of e-books has a tremendous increase in knowledge, attitudes and the role of mothers in dealing with child puberty (Mardeyanti et al., 2023). E-books are also effective and innovative to improve mothers' understanding of proper parenting in providing complementary food (Fatmala et al., 2024). Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that e-books related to early childhood parenting have a significant impact on parents' parenting knowledge.

A pre-research survey was conducted at RA Baipas Roudlotul Jannah Malang, the results showed that 87% of 54 respondents were interested in accessing online parenting information sources in the form of E-books, supported by the results of previous research that early childhood parenting E-books have a significant impact because they have advantages, namely small file sizes, easy to process, distribute, easy to track and quickly accessed (Asmawati & Hidayat, 2020). Based on this, researchers initiated the idea to develop digital books to develop children's creativity and character for millennial parents, especially in Malang City. Researchers developed the AKSARA E-book (Asah Kreativitas dan Karakter Anak) as a Smart parenting effort for Millennial Parents in Malang City, it is hoped that this e-book can be a valid source of information to add insight into parenting parents.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Type of Research**

This type of research is a research and development method (R&D) aimed at producing the AKSARA E-Book (Asah Kreativitas dan Karakter Anak) as an effort for smart parenting by millennial parents in Malang City to be more effective and efficient. The development model applied in this research is the ADDIE model (analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation).

## 2.2. Research Subject

The subjects of this research are parents of students at RA Baipas Roudlotul Jannah Malang, aged 20-42 years. They are capable of and actively accessing the internet, and interested in parenting knowledge accessed online. These criteria are determined based on the assumption that millennial parents living in Malang City have good internet access, are capable of and actively using the internet, and frequently seek parenting information online.

## 2.3. Research Procedures

This research consists of the following 5 stages: a) analysis stage, researchers conducted initial observations at the target institution of the research object to analyze needs and determine the level of initial knowledge of parents related to early childhood parenting material; b) design, researchers designed a solution as well as making storyboards and product prototypes to overcome problems in the field; c) development, researchers developed products with consideration of the assessment of media expert validators and material experts; d) implementation, researchers conducted user trials; e) evaluation, at this stage researchers evaluated media development according to product specifications as well as formative evaluation of content, design, effectiveness, and implementation processes for further improvement. The research subjects consisted of two media experts, two material experts, users as many as 60 parents. The data collection technique used a questionnaire addressed to expert validators and users filled in by parents who have early childhood in Malang City. The use of questionnaires aims to obtain accurate data related to the feasibility of the AKSARA e-book developed. The collected data were analyzed using a descriptive quantitative approach to obtain quantified data with straightforward data descriptions. AKSARA e-book products are said to be successful and can be utilized as smart parenting for millennial parents if they reach very feasible criteria with a percentage of 81%-100%, so AKSARA e-books are very feasible to use as digital parenting media.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Result

The results of this study will discuss the concept of smart parenting media and AKSARA e-book validation. The concept of smart parenting media was developed with the ADDIE model which goes through 5 stages of development namely analyze, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. Some of the things developed in this e-book include three parts, namely the beginning, content, and end. **First**, the initial part contains a cover that contains an identity in the form of a logo as a visual identity that makes it easier for users to recognize and remember the product. The front cover is made simple but attractive which can give a professional impression. The initial part also contains a preface, table of contents, and instructions for using the product which can be accessed through a barcode and YouTube video. **Second**, the content section is a compilation of parenting materials, this space can be useful to increase parents' understanding of the material presented. The material presented can be accessed online in the form of articles and videos through digital platforms. The presentation of the material is made in series so that it can be used on an ongoing basis with parenting needs in everyday life. **Third**, the final section contains a glossary and bibliography to support the ease for users to understand the terms and know the reference sources used.

Researchers have determined the content of parenting materials needed by millennial parents. Meanwhile, validity is used to determine the feasibility of the AKSARA e-book conducted by early childhood material experts.

**The first stage** of needs analysis, researchers conducted a survey to RAA Baipas Roudlotul Jannah Malang City related to parents' understanding of parenting with the aim of knowing the problems faced in the early childhood parenting process. The results of the survey found that one of the problems in parenting children is the source of parenting information used is through social media where there is a risk of misinformation and doubt its validity. In the acquisition of parenting information, parents are interested in parenting e-books that provide early childhood parenting tips. Therefore, it is necessary to develop AKSARA e-book specifically designed as a smart parenting media for millennial parents. AKSARA e-book is designed with technology integration so that parenting materials can be accessed via smartphone. The aim is that parents can easily access parenting materials that are more interactive, adaptive, and in accordance with the times.

**The second stage** of design, researchers design and develop a product design or blueprint that contains story boards, layout designs, material content, digital tools, and videos. This story board will be used as a guideline in continuous product development. **In the third stage** of development, researchers make products based on the story board that has been compiled. At this stage, researchers are also looking for references to parenting materials to support media needs. Then select materials that are in accordance with the parenting theme developed. Researchers also develop products based on reviews from media expert validators and material experts. After being said to be feasible, the researcher continued to test 60 users totaling 60 parents of early childhood. The results of the AKSARA e-book development will be presented as follows:



**Figure 1. AKSARA e-book design**

**The fourth stage** of implementation, at this stage the researcher conducts product tests on users. This aims to obtain responses and user responses in terms of the suitability and usefulness of the content as well as opinions regarding the attractiveness and efficiency of the media. **The fifth stage** of evaluation, researchers conducted a formal evaluation related to product specifications, content, design, effectiveness, and implementation processes. Evaluation aims to analyze the success or suitability of product development by considering responses from experts and users. The evaluation process is integrated and carried out in each

stage in the ADDIE development model. The evaluation results include the validity of AKSARA e-book development. In summary, the validity results will be presented in the following table:

**Table 1. Percentage of validation results**

No	Expert Validation Description	Tse	Tsh	P
1	Media expert validator	87	90	96%
2	Material expert validator	136	160	85%
3	User expert validator	2117	2400	269%
Sum of the scores obtained		2340	2650	269%
Average				89%

The accumulated results in table 1 obtained data on the overall validation results of the AKSARA e-book reached a total empirical score (Tse) of 2,340 with a percentage of 89% which has very feasible criteria. This AKSARA e-book development is considered very feasible to be used as a smart parenting media for millennial parents because it provides a variety of interesting materials and content according to the needs of parents with easy access that can be accessed digitally.

### 3.2 Discussion

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that "E-Book Aksara" successfully meets the needs of millennial parents in Malang City for a modern and practical parenting guide. Interactive design and relevant content are the main factors that make this e-book well received by users. In the growing digital era, the need for educational media such as e-books will continue to increase, especially among parents who want easy and fast access to information.

This research also shows the important role of technology in supporting parents' education. E-books as digital media offer flexibility and ease of access that cannot be found in traditional media. Parents can utilize their free time to learn about various parenting topics without being tied to a specific time and place.

However, keep in mind that the effectiveness of e-books as smart parenting media also depends on the quality of the content and the way it is presented. Therefore, e-book developers must continue to innovate and improve the quality of their products to ensure that the content presented remains relevant and easily understood by users.

E-Book AKSARA as a smart parenting media for millennial parents in Malang City was rated very well by media experts, material experts, and users. With an average assessment of 89%, this e-book shows great potential as a parenting education tool in the digital era. Nevertheless, there are some aspects that still need to be improved, especially in terms of delivering information that is easier to understand. Overall, this e-book is a positive step in utilizing digital technology to support parents' education and children's development.

## 4. Conclusion

The research highlights the substantial influence of digital-era parenting on children's character development and creativity. Millennial parents, who are adept with technology and frequently use online resources, especially social media, to seek parenting guidance, face

challenges such as misinformation. Therefore, it is essential for these parents to rely on accurate and trustworthy sources to effectively support their children's growth.

Character education is critical in fostering essential skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving. Early childhood education, bolstered by smart parenting practices, can help instill positive traits and habits in children. The development of the AKSARA E-Book, using the Research and Development (R&D) method and the ADDIE model, provides a structured approach to creating a digital parenting resource tailored to millennial parents in Malang City.

The findings indicate a strong interest in digital parenting tools, suggesting that the AKSARA E-Book can serve as a valuable and effective resource. To build on these findings, future research should explore the long-term impact of such e-books on parenting practices and child development. Additionally, expanding the study to include a broader range of millennial parents and different regions could provide further insights into the effectiveness of digital parenting resources.

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