



Parental love language and its relationship with early childhood character formation

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Abstract

Drawing on Gary Chapman's (1995) five-dimensional framework *words of affirmation, quality time, receiving gifts, acts of service, and physical touch*, this research explored how parents' modes of expressing affection relate to measurable aspects of their children's character. Child character was assessed across four indicators: honesty, discipline, tolerance, and independence, anchored in Lickona's (1991) character education framework. A quantitative correlational design was adopted, with data gathered from 30 parents of children aged 4–5 years selected through purposive sampling from a population of 89 respondents. Data collection employed a four-point Likert scale questionnaire with established validity and reliability ($\alpha = 0.812$). Pearson Product Moment correlation was applied after confirming the assumptions of normality and linearity. Results revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between parental *love language* and child character ($r = 0.740$; $p < 0.01$), classified as a strong correlation. The coefficient of determination indicated that *love language* accounted for 54.76% of the variance in child character scores, while the remaining 45.24% was attributable to external factors. Among the five dimensions, *words of affirmation* emerged as the most influential predictor. These findings highlight that emotionally attuned, language-rich interactions between parents and children constitute a foundational pillar of early childhood character development.

Keywords: *Love Language; Early Childhood Character; Parents; Character Education; Correlational Research.*

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Received 17 March 2026, Accepted 27 April 2026, Published 15 May 2026

Introduction

The family is unquestionably the earliest and most formative institution in a child's life. Long before children encounter schools, peer groups, or broader social environments, they are already absorbing values, norms, and behavioral patterns through moment-to-moment interactions with their parents and siblings (Mulyadi et al., 2016). Within Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model, the family occupies the microsystem—the innermost layer of a child's developmental ecology—and therefore exerts the most immediate and sustained influence on who that child becomes. What happens at the kitchen table, during bedtime routines, or in the quiet of an ordinary afternoon carries weight that few other experiences can match. This recognition places parenting quality at the heart of any serious conversation about child development. Yet despite widespread acknowledgment of parenting's centrality, the specific mechanisms through which parental behaviors shape character remain relatively underexplored in the Indonesian early childhood context (Massang et al., 2022; Wismanto et al., 2024).

The period between four and five years of age is widely regarded as a critical window—often called the golden age—for developmental growth across multiple domains. During this phase, neural architecture is established at a pace that will never again be matched, and the experiences a child accumulates help determine the cognitive, emotional, and social capacities that will serve them for decades (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Hurlock (1978) observed that early stimulation during this window produces effects that are disproportionately durable compared to similar stimulation at later ages. The implication is clear: intentional parenting during the preschool years is not merely beneficial—it is constitutive. Character traits that crystallize here, whether through consistent reinforcement, emotional attunement, or behavioral modeling, are far more resistant to change once a child moves beyond this sensitive period. Understanding what kinds of parental interaction best support character growth is, therefore, both theoretically interesting and practically urgent (Astuti & Kurniawan, 2022; Manurung et al., 2024).

One of the most accessible and empirically grounded frameworks for describing how parents communicate affection is Gary Chapman's love language theory, first articulated in 1995 and later extended to the parent-child relationship in collaboration with Ross Campbell (Chapman & Campbell, 2016). The theory proposes that individuals differ in the primary channel through which they most deeply feel loved: verbal appreciation (words of affirmation), dedicated shared time (quality time), tangible expressions of care (receiving gifts), helpful actions (acts of service), and physical contact (physical touch). Chapman argues that when parents consistently communicate in a child's primary love language, the child's emotional needs are met more fully, which in turn creates the psychological safety necessary for moral and social development. Though originating in popular psychology, the framework has attracted increasing scholarly attention, particularly in exploring its relevance to children's behavioral and character outcomes (Pohan et al., 2021; Zhahara, 2023).

The theoretical plausibility of love language as a predictor of character is reinforced by its alignment with Bowlby's (1969) attachment theory. Bowlby proposed that the quality of the early bond between a child and a primary caregiver establishes an internal working model—essentially a template for all future relationships—that shapes how the child relates to others, regulates emotion, and navigates moral choices. When parents express love in ways that the child genuinely registers—whether through touch, verbal affirmation, or consistent presence—they are, in effect, building the secure attachment that Bowlby identified as the foundation of healthy development (Ainsworth et al., 1978). A securely attached child is more likely to explore, take social risks, develop empathy, and internalize parental values—all of which feed directly into character formation. Recent Indonesian studies have corroborated this link, showing that warmth and responsiveness in parenting, operationalized through constructs similar to love language, are associated with stronger prosocial behavior in preschool-aged children (Beno et al., 2022; Syahputra et al., 2023).

Character, as conceptualized for the purposes of this study, follows Lickona's (1991) influential tripartite model: knowing the good, desiring the good, and doing the good. This model integrates cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions and treats character not as a fixed trait but as a set of habits cultivated through repeated interaction with one's environment. Lickona's framework is particularly well-suited to the early childhood context because it acknowledges that

young children develop moral understanding incrementally, through experience rather than abstract reasoning. Honesty, discipline, tolerance, and independence—the four indicators used in this study—represent foundational dimensions of character that begin to consolidate during the preschool years and are highly responsive to the quality of parenting received (Gunawan, 2022; Setyawan, 2021).

Empirical work on the relationship between parenting behaviors and early childhood character has grown steadily in Indonesia over the past several years. Pohan et al. (2021) reported a significant positive correlation between physical touch and words of affirmation and children's prosocial behavior and emotional development. Massang et al. (2022) demonstrated that love language practices in the home meaningfully supported character value formation among early childhood students in Islamic elementary schools. More recently, Wismanto et al. (2024) argued that a well-calibrated love language repertoire functions as an effective strategy within broader character education programs. These findings converge on the conclusion that the emotional texture of parent-child interaction—not merely its frequency—matters for character outcomes. At the same time, much of this literature has relied on qualitative or descriptive approaches; rigorous correlational analyses with validated instruments remain comparatively rare.

The gap between the ideal and the actual remains conspicuous. In practice, many Indonesian parents prioritize the provision of material needs while underestimating the importance of emotional attunement in parenting (Aisyah, 2023). This neglect of the emotional register—the precise space that love language seeks to address—has observable consequences. Children who do not feel emotionally seen by their parents are more prone to emotional dysregulation, low self-confidence, aggressive behavior, or excessive withdrawal (Giblin, 2021; Zhahara, 2023). Salami (2018) notes that parenting characterized by coldness and unresponsiveness impedes both emotional and social development in measurable ways. Taken together, these observations justify a closer examination of how specific love language practices in Indonesian households relate to concrete character indicators in young children, particularly during the sensitive developmental window of ages four to five.

Against this backdrop, the central question driving this investigation is: Is there a significant relationship between parents' application of love language and the character formation of children aged 4–5 years? This broad question is operationalized through three specific objectives: (1) to describe the extent and pattern of parental love language application toward children aged 4–5 years; (2) to describe the character levels exhibited by children aged 4–5 years; and (3) to analyze the direction, strength, and statistical significance of the relationship between parental love language and early childhood character. Beyond these descriptive and inferential goals, the study aims to contribute to the evidence base informing parenting education programs and early childhood curriculum development in Indonesia.

Methods

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative correlational design. Correlational research is appropriate when the aim is to determine the nature and strength of the relationship between two or more variables without imposing any experimental manipulation (J. W. Creswell, 2014; Sugiyono, 2019). In this case, parental love language (Variable X) was treated as the independent variable, and early childhood character (Variable Y) as the dependent variable. No intervention was administered; instead, naturally occurring variation in love language practices was measured and related statistically to naturally occurring variation in child character. This design allows for hypothesis testing and quantification of effect size—both of which are central to the study's objectives—while remaining appropriate for the social-educational context in which the research was conducted.

Population and Sample

The study population comprised all parents of children aged 4–5 years enrolled at the Kindergarten that served as the research site, totaling 89 individuals. Purposive sampling was used to select participants according to three inclusion criteria: the parent must reside in the same household as the child, the child must be actively enrolled and aged 4–5 years at the time of data

collection, and the parent must consent to participation. Applying these criteria yielded a sample of 30 respondents. While this number may appear modest, Fraenkel & Wallen (2012) specify 30 as the minimum recommended sample for correlational research, and Manurung et al. (2024) confirm that samples of this size are routinely employed in early childhood education studies in Indonesia. Nonetheless, the limited sample size constrains the generalizability of the findings and is acknowledged as a principal limitation of the study.

Research Instrument

The research instrument was a questionnaire developed by the authors, drawing directly on Chapman & Campbell's (2016) framework for the love language variable and Lickona's (1991) model for the character variable. Responses were structured on a four-point Likert scale—Always (4), Often (3), Sometimes (2), Never (1)—with the deliberate omission of a neutral midpoint to reduce central tendency bias. The love language subscale covered all five dimensions: words of affirmation, quality time, receiving gifts, acts of service, and physical touch. The character subscale assessed honesty, discipline, tolerance, and independence. Item validity was established through item-total correlation (Product Moment Pearson), with the threshold set at $r > 0.361$ ($n = 30$, $\alpha = 5\%$). Of 35 initial items, 32 met the validity criterion. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding $\alpha = 0.812$ for love language and $\alpha = 0.847$ for child character—both indicating high reliability (Iskandar, 2021; Nunnally, 1978).

Table 1. Research Instrument Blueprint

Variable	Indicator	Item Numbers	Total
Love Language (X)	Words of Affirmation	1, 2, 3, 4	4
	Quality Time	5, 6, 7, 8	4
	Receiving Gifts	9, 10, 11	3
	Acts of Service	12, 13, 14	3
	Physical Touch	15, 16	2
Child Character (Y)	Honesty	17, 18, 19, 20, 21	5
	Discipline	22, 23, 24, 25	4
	Tolerance	26, 27, 28	3
	Independence	29, 30, 31, 32	4
Total Items			32

Data Collection Procedure

Primary data were gathered through direct administration of the questionnaire to parent respondents. The researcher was present during all data collection sessions to clarify any items that respondents found ambiguous, thereby minimizing missing data and misinterpretation. Secondary data were obtained through classroom observation of children's behavior and through review of teacher assessment records; these served as triangulation data to cross-validate patterns identified in the questionnaire responses. The combination of self-report and observational data strengthens the credibility of the findings, particularly given the acknowledged limitations of purely self-report instruments in parenting research (A. Field, 2013).

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis proceeded through four sequential stages. The first stage involved descriptive statistics to characterize each variable in terms of mean, standard deviation, and distributional properties. The second stage comprised prerequisite assumption testing: normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, and linearity was examined using a one-way ANOVA table, both at the $\alpha = 5\%$ level. The third stage applied Pearson Product Moment correlation to test the main research hypothesis. The fourth stage calculated the coefficient of

determination (R^2) to quantify the percentage of variance in child character explained by love language, and a t-test was used to confirm the statistical significance of the correlation. All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 21.0. Correlation strength was interpreted according to Guilford's (1956) criteria: $r < 0.20$ (very weak), $0.20-0.39$ (weak), $0.40-0.59$ (moderate), $0.60-0.79$ (strong), $r \geq 0.80$ (very strong).

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for both research variables. The mean love language score was 49.63 (SD = 4.214) out of a maximum possible score of 64, placing the sample in the 'high' category. The mean child character score was 86.07 (SD = 8.208) out of a maximum of 128, placing children in the 'good' category. The relatively small standard deviations for both variables indicate that the sample was reasonably homogeneous—most parents showed similarly high levels of love language application, and most children exhibited similarly positive character profiles. This limited within-sample variance is consistent with the characteristics of a purposive sample drawn from a single institution, and it is worth noting that this homogeneity may have modestly attenuated the observed correlation (Cohen et al., 2003).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Category
Parental Love Language	30	49.63	4.214	High
Early Childhood Character	30	86.07	8.208	Good

Distribution of Love Language Indicators

Examining scores across the five love language dimensions reveals a clear hierarchy in the frequency with which parents applied each form of affective expression. Words of affirmation scored highest (M = 52.4), followed by quality time (M = 50.1), physical touch (M = 49.3), acts of service (M = 48.7), and receiving gifts (M = 47.6). The dominance of verbal expression likely reflects cultural norms that favor verbal communication as a primary parenting tool (Aisyah, 2023), as well as the practical accessibility of verbal affirmation compared to forms of love language that may require more time or material resources. The relatively even distribution across the remaining four dimensions suggests that parents in this sample employed a reasonably varied love language repertoire, which may itself be a contributor to the strong character outcomes observed. Figure 1 illustrates the Mean Scores per Love Language Indicator

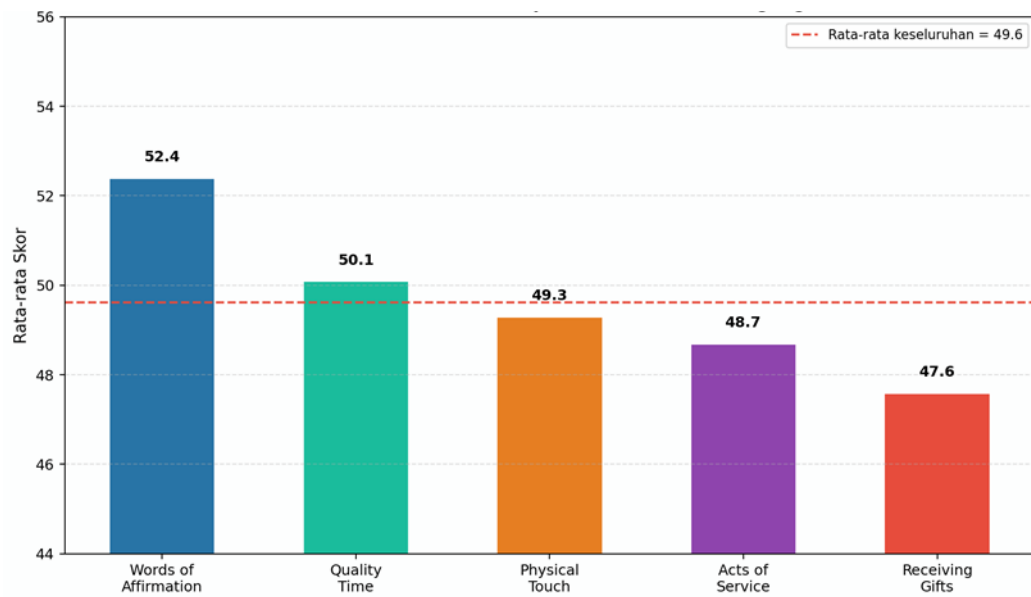


Figure 1. Mean Scores per Love Language Indicator

Prerequisite Assumption Tests

Normality Test

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied to both variables at the $\alpha = 5\%$ significance level, with the null hypothesis that the data follow a normal distribution. Results are presented in Table 3. The love language variable yielded a significance value of $0.883 > 0.05$, and the child character variable yielded a significance value of $0.516 > 0.05$. Both variables therefore satisfy the normality assumption, as expected for Likert-based scale data collected from an adequately sized sample (A. Field, 2013). This finding permits the use of parametric inferential statistics in subsequent analyses.

Table 3. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test Results

Statistic	Love Language (X)	Child Character (Y)
N	30	30
Mean	49.63	86.07
Std. Deviation	4.214	8.208
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	0.586	0.817
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.883	0.516
Distribution	Normal	Normal

Linearity Test

The linearity assumption—a prerequisite for Pearson correlation—was examined using an ANOVA-based linearity test. Table 4 reports the results. The Deviation from Linearity significance value of $0.512 > 0.05$ confirms that the relationship between love language and child character does not depart significantly from linearity, while the Linearity row significance of $0.000 < 0.05$ confirms that the linear component of the relationship is statistically significant. These results together satisfy both aspects of the linearity assumption, clearing the path for Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis (Iskandar, 2021).

Table 4. Linearity Test Results (ANOVA Table)

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Sig.
Between Groups (Combined)	1409.817	12	117.485	0.007
Linearity	1071.240	1	1071.240	0.000
Deviation from Linearity	338.577	11	30.780	0.512
Within Groups	544.050	17	32.003	–
Total	1953.867	29	–	–

Hypothesis Testing

Pearson Correlation Analysis

The main hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment correlation. Two competing hypotheses were specified: H_0 (no significant relationship between parental love language and child character aged 4–5 years) versus H_1 (a significant positive relationship exists). Table 5 presents the full results. The obtained correlation coefficient of $r = 0.740$ ($p = 0.000 < 0.01$) reflects a strong positive relationship between the two variables—strong by Guilford's (1956) conventional benchmarks and its direction is positive, meaning that higher love language application is consistently associated with higher character scores. Because $p < 0.01$, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is supported. The finding is consistent with results reported by Pohan et al. (2021), Massang et al. (2022), and Manurung et al. (2024), though the present study provides a more statistically rigorous test than several earlier descriptive investigations.

Table 5. Pearson Correlation Results: Love Language and Child Character

Statistic	Love Language (X)	Child Character (Y)
Pearson Correlation (r)	1	0.740**
Sig. (2-tailed)	–	0.000
N	30	30
Coefficient of Determination (R^2)	–	54.76%
Relationship Category	–	Strong

Scatter Plot Visualization

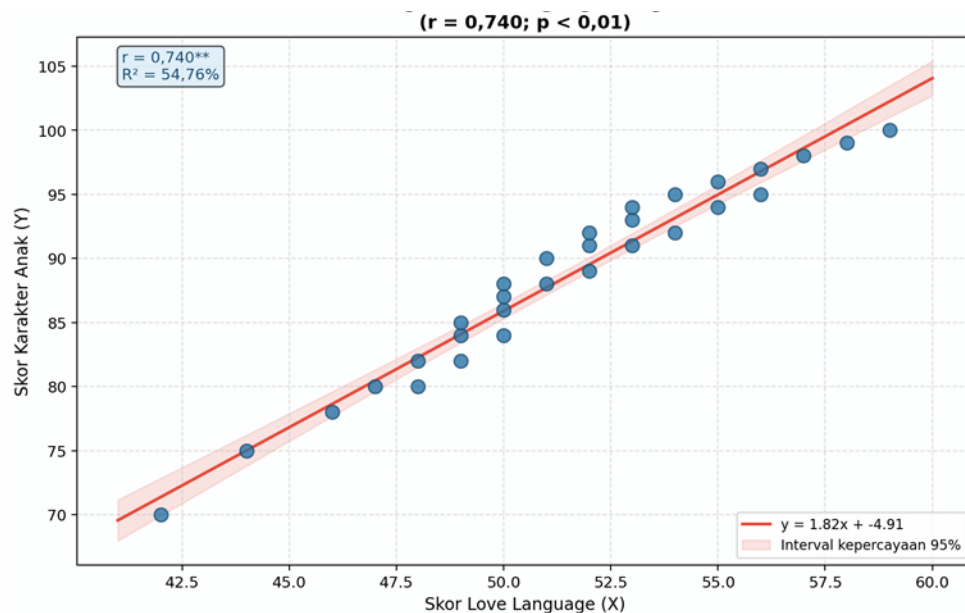
Graph 1 presents a scatter plot of the bivariate distribution of love language and child character scores, overlaid with the regression line and 95% confidence interval. The visual pattern is consistent with a moderately strong linear relationship: data points cluster around the regression line without obvious curvature or influential outliers, and the upward slope confirms the positive direction of the association. The relatively narrow confidence interval around the regression line suggests that the estimate is reasonably precise despite the modest sample size. Together, the scatter plot and the inferential statistics tell a coherent story: parents who apply love language more consistently tend to have children with stronger character profiles.

Significance Test (t-test)

The statistical significance of the correlation was independently verified using the t-test formula:

$$t = \frac{r\sqrt{(n-2)}}{\sqrt{(1-r^2)}} = 0,740 \times \frac{\sqrt{28}}{\sqrt{(1-0,5476)}} = \frac{3,916}{0,673} = 5,82$$

The resulting t-value of 5.82 exceeds the critical value of 2.048 ($df = 28$, $\alpha = 5\%$, two-tailed), confirming that the correlation is statistically significant and is not an artifact of sampling error. This result is fully consistent with the p-value reported in Table 5 and provides an additional layer of confirmation that the observed association between parental love language and early childhood character is real and meaningful.



Graph 1. Scatter Plot of Love Language and Child Character ($r = 0.740$; $p < 0.01$)

Coefficient of Determination

The coefficient of determination was calculated as $R^2 = (0.740)^2 \times 100\% = 54.76\%$. This value indicates that parental love language explains approximately 55% of the variance in child character scores—a substantial proportion that underscores the practical importance of this parenting construct. The remaining 45.24% of variance is attributable to factors not captured in this study, including peer influence, which gains salience even in the preschool years (Hartup, 1983); teacher behavior and the school environment (Supratno et al., 2021); digital media exposure (Syahputra et al., 2023); broader cultural and social norms (Zahroh & Na'imah, 2020); and innate temperamental characteristics of the child (Thomas & Chess, 1977). Future research that incorporates these moderators and mediators will be necessary to develop a more complete explanatory model.

Discussion

Words of Affirmation and Character Formation

The primacy of words of affirmation as the most influential love language dimension is not surprising when considered against the backdrop of language development in early childhood. Vygotsky (1978) argued that verbal interaction is the primary vehicle through which social knowledge becomes internalized as cognitive structure, and the period between four and five years represents a phase of especially intense sensitivity to verbal input from adults. Specific praise, words of encouragement, and verbal expressions of love function as positive reinforcement in the Bandurian sense, they signal to the child that a particular behavior is valued, increasing the probability of its repetition and eventually its internalization as a stable habit (Bandura, 1977). Research by Pohan et al. (2021) provides direct empirical support for this mechanism, linking parental verbal affirmation to self-confidence and prosocial behavior in preschool children. It is important, however, to distinguish between specific, process-oriented praise (which research consistently associates with stronger intrinsic motivation and moral internalization) and generic or excessive praise (which Dweck's (2006) work suggests can undermine the very capacities it is meant to cultivate).

Quality Time, Physical Touch, and Emotional Closeness

The second and third ranked dimensions, quality time and physical touch operate through mechanisms that are deeply rooted in Bowlby's (1969) attachment theory. When parents invest focused, undistracted time with their children, they communicate attentiveness and unconditional regard in a way that verbal statements alone cannot replicate. This quality of presence being physically and emotionally available to the child without the interruption of smartphones, household tasks, or cognitive preoccupation creates the felt sense of security from which children can venture into social and moral territory with confidence. Beno et al. (2022) have documented that intentional physical contact, including hugging and gentle touch, stimulates the release of oxytocin, reduces cortisol levels, and produces measurable improvements in emotional regulation and prosocial behavior. Field (2010) reviewed a broad body of neuroscientific and developmental evidence confirming that warm tactile contact is not merely pleasant but physiologically necessary for healthy socioemotional development. Together, these two dimensions of love language arguably address the deepest evolutionary needs of the young child, the need to feel held and accompanied and their contribution to character is correspondingly substantial (Astuti & Kurniawan, 2022; Yanti et al., 2024).

Acts of Service and the Development of Discipline

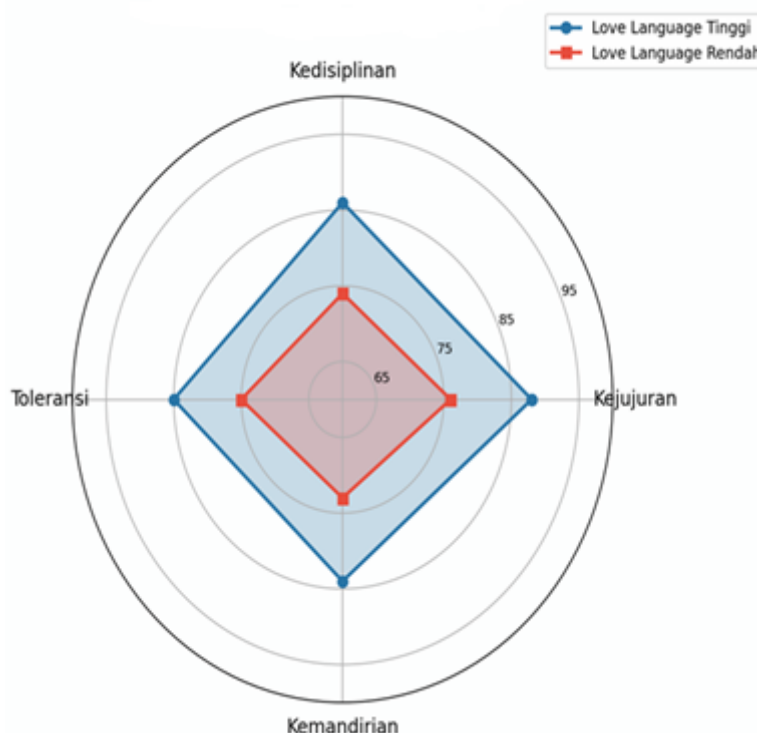
Acts of service, helping children with tasks in ways that scaffold rather than replace their own effort contribute to character formation primarily through the mechanism of modeling. When parents organize a child's environment, demonstrate how to complete a difficult task, or persist alongside a child through a challenging activity, they enact the values of diligence, responsibility, and perseverance in observable, imitable form. Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) concept is particularly instructive here: effective acts of service position parents as more capable partners who support the child's development at the frontier of their current ability without doing so much that the child's own agency is eclipsed. This scaffolded support builds not only competence but also the disciplinary habits of effort and follow-through that are essential constituents of character (Setyawan, 2021).

Receiving Gifts and the Limits of Extrinsic Motivation

That receiving gifts ranks lowest among the five love language dimensions in terms of contribution to child character is theoretically coherent and practically significant. Ryan & Deci's (2000) Self-Determination Theory offers the clearest explanation: when prosocial behavior is systematically rewarded with tangible gifts, the behavior tends to become instrumentalized—children learn to perform it because it produces a reward, not because they have internalized it as a value. Over time, this extrinsic contingency can actually undermine the intrinsic motivation that is the hallmark of genuinely formed character. This does not mean that gifts have no place in the parent-child relationship; rather, it suggests that gifts are most beneficial when they function as spontaneous tokens of affection rather than performance-contingent rewards. In character education terms, the problem with overreliance on receiving gifts is that it tends to cultivate doing the good while bypassing knowing the good and desiring the good—precisely the dimensions that sustain moral behavior in the absence of external incentives (Gunawan, 2022; Lickona, 1991).

Character Profiles by Love Language Group

Graph 2 presents radar chart profiles comparing character scores across the four indicators for children in the high love language group versus the low love language group. Children whose parents demonstrated high love language application consistently outscored their peers on all four character dimensions, though the magnitude of the difference varied across indicators. The largest gaps appeared in honesty (approximately 12 points) and discipline (approximately 12 points), suggesting that these foundational moral capacities are especially responsive to parental affective expression. Tolerance and independence showed somewhat smaller group differences, which may reflect the greater contribution of peer experience and school environment to the development of these more socially distributed character traits (Hartup, 1983; Supratno et al., 2021).



Graph 2. Character Profile Radar Chart: High vs. Low Love Language Groups

Factors Accounting for the Remaining Variance

The 45.24% of variance in child character not explained by parental love language is not residual noise to be dismissed but an invitation to model complexity more fully in future research. Peer relationships constitute one likely source: even at the preschool level, children spend substantial time in group settings where peer norms, social rewards, and conflict resolution experiences shape character in ways that complement or compete with parental influence (Hartup, 1983). The quality of the teacher-child relationship is another significant source; teachers who are warm, consistent, and intentional in their character education practices produce measurable character gains independent of home environment (Dini, 2019; Supratno et al., 2021). Digital media exposure—smartphones, tablets, YouTube content—is an increasingly significant influence that warrants dedicated investigation (Syahputra et al., 2023). Cultural context, local norms, and community social capital all shape what counts as good character and how it is modeled (Zahroh & Na'imah, 2020). Finally, temperament—the biologically grounded dimension of personality that influences how children respond to parenting—accounts for a portion of residual variance in character that no environmental model can fully absorb (Thomas & Chess, 1977). Incorporating these variables into a more integrative model of early childhood character formation is a priority for future inquiry.

Conclusion

This study has established that parental love language and early childhood character are meaningfully and significantly related ($r = 0.740$; $p < 0.01$), with parental love language practices explaining approximately 54.76% of the variance in children's character scores. The strength of this relationship—classified as 'strong' by established benchmarks—is noteworthy given the breadth and complexity of character as a construct and the modest sample size. The findings are consistent with the theoretical framework linking attachment, social learning, and character education, and they extend the empirical literature on love language in the Indonesian early childhood education context. Among the five love language dimensions, words of affirmation emerged as the most influential, followed by quality time and physical touch, with receiving gifts contributing least—a pattern that aligns with developmental theories privileging emotional security and intrinsic motivation over extrinsic reward.

These findings carry concrete implications for both parents and early childhood educators. Parents are encouraged to cultivate a rich repertoire of love language practices, giving particular attention to verbal affirmation that is specific and process-oriented rather than generic; to protecting dedicated, device-free time for interaction with their children; and to expressing warmth through appropriate physical contact. Early childhood institutions can use these findings to design parenting education programs that build love language literacy—helping parents identify not only their own preferred love language but also that of their child—and to integrate emotionally attuned interaction into daily pedagogical practice as a deliberate character education strategy. The 54.76% explained variance is large enough to justify targeted parenting intervention, while the 45.24% unexplained variance is large enough to remind educators that the school, the peer group, and the broader community are indispensable partners in character formation.

Several limitations temper the conclusions that can be drawn. The sample of 30 participants, though sufficient by correlational research standards, is small enough to limit statistical power and restrict generalizability to other populations or cultural contexts. The reliance on parent self-report introduces the possibility of social desirability bias—parents may report love language practices more favorably than they actually occur. The correlational design, while appropriate for the research question, precludes causal inference; it is possible, for example, that children with stronger character elicit more affectionate parental behavior rather than the reverse. And the single-site design limits the cultural and socioeconomic diversity of the sample. Future research should address these limitations by expanding sample size and geographic scope, adopting longitudinal or experimental designs to establish causal ordering, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to capture the lived experience of love language in families, and exploring moderating variables—such as child temperament, parental education level, and community cultural norms—that may condition the relationship between love language and character.

Acknowledge

The author is a graduate of early childhood education. He is currently researching social and emotional issues, focusing on early childhood language and the environment.

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