

## Teacher's Islamic Communication Strategy in Character Education through Parenting Program at SDIT Al Fityan Medan School

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### Abstract

*The main character education is not only the responsibility of teachers at school, but also must be a concern of parents at home. For this reason teachers need to convey the importance of character education for all of students' parents through parenting programs. This study aims to describe how the character education communication strategy through parenting programs will be reviewed by students' parents from the aspects of communication planning, program implementation and program evaluation also. This research uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. The data collection techniques uses participant observation and focus on interviews. The technique of guaranteeing the validity of the data uses source triangulation. The results showed that the character education of students through parenting programs organized by schools in the aspects of planning, implementation and evaluation of the program was good enough. Parents have the benefits from this parenting program in educating their children at home.*

### Keywords

character education; student; parenting; parents



## I. Introduction

Nowadays, people live in this era of sophisticated technology. Some benefits and conveniences of life have been obtained by people. But from that aspect itself, there are some negative impacts arising from the negligence of the users. Internet communication technology has made it easier for humans to connect with abundant information. Through a smartphone communication which is completely sophisticated, access to information is just a finger touch and can be accessed in seconds. Many useful science and knowledge can be obtained, but unfortunately there are also a variety of negative information such as pornography, liberal culture, free sex life, fraud, drugs, various acts of crime and so forth presented in the mass media such as television, magazines, newspapers, and also through mobile devices.

This situation must be handled and vigilance. If this situation is not anticipated, then the moral of future generation will not be avoided. Some negative information must balance with a positive information flow. The next generation must be protected from the bad influence of environment in cyberspace and in real world by providing character education that is deeply rooted in their personalities. These character values will become guidelines in determining how to think and how to behave their daily lives.

The definition of character according to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia is interpreted as behavior, psychiatric traits, morals or character that distinguishes from person to others. According to Kertajaya, character is a someone's specialty which is fundamental in that personality, so if someone behaves or responds is influenced by the character will be able to respond for every situations.

The education of character values should be carried out in the family environment, but due to various preoccupations and parents' negligence, the school must be empowered to be able to provide the best students character educations. Why does it have to be at school? Because schools are the ones who have quality human resources, namely is teachers as the facilitator. Supported by a variety of law enforcement, various school programs and a conducive school environment, the education of optimistic character values will be more successful. But in reality it must be admitted that not all schools have a clear vision, mission, and commitment about the need to instill the values of students character. The implementation of parenting program needs full funds. Then, invite the parents come to school is also has a lot of parental intervention. Therefore, almost every schools not implementing parenting programs. So, this has become one of the reasons which character education is not running effectively.

Sekolah Dasar Islam Al Fityan is a school which very concerned about the student character education. Almost all activities of students while at school are full of character education. Islamic cultural values that are characterized by Islam are very much felt in this school. Various programs and school activities are carried out to transform students into intelligent human beings, but who believe in and fear God Almighty and have maintained etiquette and communication ethics.

Character values that have been positioned to SDIT Al Fityan students should also get support from the family environment as a form of affirmation so as to create a synchronization process between the character values that they get at school and what is reinforced by parents at home. This is what underlies the need for schools to carry out parenting programs to provide parents with guidance in educating their children at home. The point is that the success of character education must be supported by 3 aspects, namely are family, school and community (state) institutions.

Life as a parent is actually a life that has the responsibility of not only providing housing, education, food and clothing for their children, but also the responsibility to produce sons and daughters of character who will become the next generation of quality people. Even though a child has been educated in a good school, the character values he has obtained from his school environment must get confirmation in the family environment, so that conformity occurs.

But the problem is many parents don't have the right understanding of the best ways to educate children at home. The parents come from different family backgrounds, customs and different socioeconomic levels, will certainly have different parenting and understanding different values. Some parents who prioritize democratic aspects, gentle and affectionate, there are also those who apply authoritarian parenting, and full of restraints and punishment. There are those just let in their children interact with gadgets freely, there are also very restrained for fear of the impact. Related to the obligation to perform the 5 prayer times that have been taught at school, if parents are not accustomed to at home it will be a waste. It can be that their children pray at school, but at home do not pray, because there is omission from parents. This is one of the causes of the failure of student character education.

What is the role and responsibility of the state in this matter? The government has also anticipated by issuing Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education system in Chapter 2 article 3. According to this article national education should function to develop the character and civilization of the nation. National education is directed at developing the potential of students to become human believers who are devoted to God Almighty, besides that they also have noble character to be able to become qualified citizens. Thus the

government has set the task of establishing the morality of the younger generation charged to the world of education.

The education world is also preparing itself to prepare a variety of the best character education communication strategies for its students. The school arranged various character education programs, one of which was through the parenting program. Etymologically parenting can be interpreted as parenting in language Indonesia. In English the term origin is said parenting is parent which means parent's spouse. Parenting activities can be interpreted as parenting activities carried out by parents. For this reason, the school prepares provisions for childcare knowledge in order to educate the child's character by educating his parents as well.

The character education communication strategy through parenting activities requires careful management of activities. In implementing the communication strategy, it is necessary to plan who the communicator is, what message content is in accordance with the needs of the communicant audience, what media are used to convey the message and what effects are expected. If an evaluation of an activity is carried out, then the evaluation will become input for formulating a strategy in the future.

SDIT Al Fityan is one of the schools that organizes education with its vision of forming a generation of Muslims who are superior, moral, intelligent and have life skills. In line with this vision SDIT Al Fityan has created a series of character education programs, one of which is through a parenting program that is routinely held at the school at least 2 times a semester.

The parenting program at SDIT Al Fityan aims to synergize the vision and mission of the school with the understanding of parents in educating children at home to become children who have superior character. This study aims to describe how the character education communication strategy through school parenting activities in terms of program planning, program implementation and evaluation. This is important to study because well-managed character education programs will produce maximum results. Thus the school and parents will have the same vision in the character education of their students.

## **II. Review of Literatures**

### **2.1 The Definition of Communication Strategy**

According to the Indonesian General Dictionary a strategy is a careful plan regarding activities to achieve specific goals, planning and management to achieve goals. An organization can use various strategies needed to achieve its objectives. The more important the objectives to be achieved the more complex the strategies are arranged. Various decisions can be made to be implemented in accordance with the situation and conditions and problems encountered. A strategy needs to be carefully thought out to anticipate various problems that may arise.

If related to communication activities, the communication strategy according to Middleton is the best combination of all communication elements ranging from communicators, messages, channels (media), communicants to influences (effects) that are designed to achieve the communication goals to be achieved. So before organizing an activity a communication plan should be made that takes into account who the communicator is first, how to prepare the communicant, and what message content is appropriate to the situation and conditions of the communicant being faced. Furthermore, it is also necessary to evaluate the organization of activities so that in the future the activities carried out can be even better.

The implementation of communication activities that aim to produce changes in attitudes and behavior need to take into account the communication strategy so that the communication activities run smoothly. The implementation of activities that do not pay

attention to the use of good communication strategies, in general will not be effective. Mistakes in determining communication strategies can also be fatal in the form of losses in terms of time, energy and costs of conducting activities. For this reason, it is necessary to calculate how to develop an effective communication strategy before implementing a program/activity.

## **2.2 The Defenition of Character Education and Parenting**

In the Indonesian dictionary the word character is defined by nature, the nature of the mental nature or character that will distinguish a person's attitudes and behavior from others. Terminology character education began to be introduced since 1900 where Thomas Lickona is considered as its bearer.

Indonesia is very concerned about character education. Even the values of character education are contained in the basic state of Indonesia, namely the precepts of Pancasila such as the values of mutual cooperation, godliness, justice, the principles of deliberation and consensus and so forth. Character education is very necessary to shape the nation's personality to become a man of faith and devotion to God Almighty. In line with this the Ministry of National Education issued Law No. 20 of 2003 in chapter 2 of article 3 which explains national education functions to develop capabilities and shape the character and civilization of a nation which is dignified in the potential of students to become human beings who believe in and fear God Almighty , noble, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent and become citizens who are democratic and responsible. Based on this article the world of education in Indonesia is expected to be able to educate students not only to become intelligent men but also to be people of noble character.

The integrated Islamic elementary school is one of the schools that adheres to the Fullday school system, where students have longer hours of study at school than other public schools. The addition of learning hours is needed for the benefit of Islamic character values education to students. The integrated Islamic elementary school realizes the importance of character education so that the character values of the provisions of the national ministry of education are combined with the Islamic character values that characterize this school

Integrated Islamic schools also feature a variety of excellent character education programs in their curriculum such as reading the Koran, tahsin, mabit (bina insan and taqwa nights, Islamic parenting etc.) Parenting is one of the flagship school programs that provides debriefing to students' parents in Islamic ways in educating their children in the family, the parenting activity held by the school allows teachers to meet with students' parents so that they can get acquainted more closely to perpetuate friendship. his role as the main educator in the family environment.

The rationale for the need to hold a parenting program at school is because not all parents have sufficient knowledge and insight in providing character education to their children. The school felt the need to help provide equipping to students' parents so that the character values that had been taught at school could be continued at home. If there is no harmony between what is taught at school and what is taught at home, then character education will certainly not be effective.

## **2.3 Character Education in Islamic Concepts**

Islam provides concepts or directions related to children's character education. According to the Islamic concept of character values and methods of application there are guidelines in the Qur'an and Hadith. In Islam character education is known as moral education. The first morality that needs to be taught in an Islamic perspective is the morality of Allah, that is, the character of monotheism as stated in Surah Luqman verse 13:

“and (remember) when Luqman said to his son, when he taught him: O my son, do not associate partners with Allah, indeed associating partners with Allah is truly great tyranny”.

This verse tells how the prophet Luqman taught his son's character by conveying a message about the prohibition of associating partners with God. If you review the contents of the Koran many verses whose contents forbid human worship of God other than God. This means that the main character of a servant to his Lord is to eat it. This is supported by Surah Luqman verse 17 which reads:

Hy my son, establish prayers and tell people to do good and prevent them from unjust actions and be patient with what befalls you. Truly this includes things that are required by God”.

### **III. Research Methods**

This research was conducted with a qualitative approach using descriptive methods. Data collection techniques using participant observation and in-depth interviews. Participant observation is an observation in which the researcher engages in ongoing activities and interactions in the observed parenting meeting situation. Participant observation makes it easier for researchers to get more in-depth data about the interaction situations that occur between the teacher and parents of students, as well as among fellow students' parents. Informants were selected using a purposive technique consisting of the principal's teacher and parents of Al Fityan students. The technique of guaranteeing the validity of the data uses source triangulation.

### **IV. Discussion**

#### **4.1 Parenting Program Communication Planning**

Al Fityan SDIT is an integrated Islamic school located in Asam Kumbang sub-district, Medan Sunggal area, which was established in 2007. Al Fityan SDIT has a vision to form a generation of Muslims who are superior, moral, intelligent and have life skills. This vision gives enthusiasm and direction to SDIT Al Fityan in carrying out the mandate of producing students of superior character. Achieving this vision requires SDIT Al Fiityan to create various character development programs. One of the programs that is routinely implemented is the parenting program.

This parenting program is implemented to provide parents with instructions on how to educate children in the family. The program runs routinely every semester, at least 3 times per semester. The purpose of organizing this parenting program is to equalize perceptions between schools and parents about the best ways of educating children at home which is a continuation of the education of values at school. The school hopes that with the provision of parenting, parents of students will be more cooperative and participatory in supporting character education activities in schools through strengthening the character values in the family.

In carrying out parenting activities SDIT Al Fityan made careful preparations. At the beginning of the semester the teachers had a meeting to discuss the budget needed, the time to carry out the activities and the parenting themes to be raised. Selected speakers were also adjusted to the theme. This was revealed from the results of the interview with the principal, Fitriani, as follows:

We have a planned parenting activity program that has been going very well so far. Usually the plan to procure this parenting program is held in teacher meetings at the

start of the semester. In the meeting the parenting activities were evaluated the previous semester, then based on that evaluation the theme of the next parenting material was prepared. Then the homeroom teacher made a proposal for the activity that contained a special team and its financing.

SDIT Al Fityan views that this parenting activity is very necessary because the school wants the character education process of students who have been taught at school to be supported and strengthened by parents at home. If only students are well-educated in school, but their parents don't understand how to do character education for children at home, then of course what teachers do at school will be in vain.

According to the headmaster of Al Fityan School, Ibu Fitriani, being a parent, there is no school. So parents must be equipped with the knowledge of how to become good parents through the science of parenting. The school views that parenting education for parents cannot be done by teachers, because it is feared to be ineffective because parents feel patronized. This is what underlies the need to organize a parenting program which is given by competent speakers in their fields. In this way the parenting science given by schools is delivered with convenient way for parents of students. The goal is that the character education of students who have been formed at school is no longer raw when students are at home.

#### **4.2 Implementation of the Parenting Program**

The parenting program is implemented by inviting speakers and parents of students. This activity was announced through a letter entrusted to students to be conveyed to their respective parents. Invitations to activities were also announced on the social media groups of students' parents and teachers. The parenting program runs at least 2 times in each semester. Preparation for the parenting program is carried out by a special team which is the committee and person in charge of the activities. The activity is carried out based on communication planning that has been done at the beginning of the semester. The following are the results of the interview with Ms. Nurjannah who was one of the participants in the parenting program.

As a parent, I feel a pity if I miss this program. Because in this parenting program we get a lot of knowledge about how to educate children. Besides that the speakers who were present were competent in their fields even on a national scale. The parenting topics discussed were the latest topics often faced by parents and teachers in educating children, for example the topic of LGBT, how to educate children in the digital era addicted to games and the internet, how recognize and explore the potential of children, develop positive character of children and others. Oh yes, the speakers were also very friendly and fun when answering participants' questions.

When viewed from the aspect of the credibility of the communicator, the informant who became the main communicator in parenting activities has a fairly high credibility based on the perception of Nurjannah because she explained that the resource person was competent in his field. The communicator also has a positive self-image because of his ability to be friendly and be pleasant in answering participant questions. A resource person who is competent in his parenting activities can be one of the attractive factors for the success of the parenting program at SDIT Al Fityan.

Furthermore, when viewed from the aspect of the message or theme chosen, it is also in accordance with the development of the age where advances in communication technology often cause problems for parents in educating their children. This was revealed in Ms. Nurjannah's answer which said that parenting topics were the most current topics that were often faced by parents of students. This means SDIT Al Fityan has done a good message content planning because it is able to recognize the parenting knowledge needs of students'

parents. The introduction of parents' knowledge needs will make this parenting activity easy to understand and interesting for parents of students.

Furthermore, related to the media used to deliver parenting material according to the observations of researchers, this parenting program uses LCD screen media and short film screenings to better visually illustrate the mistakes that parents often make in educating their children, as well as how to correct.

The Parenting Program also aims to establish closer togetherness between teachers and parents of students. When the event takes place interpersonal communication occurs between the teacher and parents of students. Based on the observations of the research participants, the parents used this meeting to ask the teachers about the activities and development of their children in school. The teachers also seemed very enthusiastic about welcoming the wishes of parents and very friendly answering the questions of parents. Besides that, parents are also given the freedom to ask questions and answer questions with the speakers of parenting activities in a warm and full of intimacy, but still use the ethics of Islamic communication.

The ethics of Islamic communication in the use of clothing can also be seen in this event where both the speakers, teachers and parents of students who were present all used neat and polite Islamic clothing. Questions to speakers must also begin with greeting *assalamualaikum*. At the end of the parenting event a group prayer was held. Based on the observations of researchers even though the event was closed but still continued with a friendly gathering between parents of participants who acquainted with each other and exchanged friendly greetings. The teachers also mingled and used this meeting to establish closeness and familiarity with parents of students as well as discuss with parents about the next parenting topics that should be needed by students' parents. According to the observations of researchers this parenting event was not only successful in providing parenting knowledge to students parents, but also has a positive impact on opening a close relationship between parents of students and teachers and between fellow parenting participants.

### **4.3 The Evaluation of Parenting Implement**

The parenting activity is evaluated at the end of the semester. The evaluation of activities included the competence of the interviewees, the number of parents present as participants, and the enthusiasm of the questions asked. The results of the interview with the principal, Ibu Fitriani, are as follows:

Regarding the evaluation of parenting activities, we held a meeting to discuss how the parents responded to the activity, what questions parents asked the speakers, and how enthusiastic they were. We evaluated everything so that in the future we could make parenting activities more tailored to the needs of parents and school needs as well.

Evaluation of activities is held at the teacher meeting at the end of the semester. In the meeting also discussed the next parenting topics that need to be held by the school to harmonize between the character education of students in schools conducted by teachers with parenting knowledge provision for parents to educate the character of their children at home.

This means that every parenting program that has been implemented will be evaluated at the end of the semester in a teacher council meeting. This shows that there is already an evaluation method applied to assess the success of the parenting program so that the implementation of the next program will be better and can be adjusted to the needs of the school and parents of students.

## V. Conclusion

The parenting program held at the Al Fityan School has implemented appropriately. Program planning through talks in the meeting at the beginning of the semester and considers the results of the evaluation on previous parenting program activities. The implementation of the parenting program always pays attention to the communicator aspects that have competence in accordance with the theme of parenting activities. The theme of parenting activities is designed in such a way as is in line with the development of problems faced by parents and what is needed by the school in order to convey the values of children's character education that parents need to know.

The parenting program is also a gathering place for teachers and parents of students and between parents of students who are present as participants. Parents get parenting knowledge that is very useful and able to fill the limitations of parents' knowledge in children's character education at home. Parenting knowledge provision for parents of students is also useful in supporting school programs related to student character education so that through this program efforts are made to align knowledge about the methods and values of character education between the school and the parents of the students.

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