

Teachers' Interpersonal Communication Patterns in Improving the Quality of Islamic Education Learning

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ABSTRACT

The process of interpersonal communication in learning has not received serious attention from Islamic religious teachers. Teachers are only busy with administrative activities. Such condition is different from that of Al-Izzah High School, Batu. To improve the quality of learning in this global era, several academic and non-academic programs have been provided. Based on this phenomenon, this study was conducted. A qualitative approach was used by employing a case study. The results of this study confirmed that first, the ethics of interpersonal communication has been applied well by teachers and students at Al-Izzah High School when conducting interpersonal communication. Second, the relationship developed in the Islamic education learning process at al-Izzah High School related to interpersonal communication is the father-child relationship and the inner-spiritual relationship which in the theory of interpersonal relationship analysis is included in the role model category. Third, the interpersonal communication model used by the Islamic education teachers at Al-Izzah High School to improve the quality of learning is dialogical and moderate.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Contextually, an interpersonal communication needed by the Islamic education teachers is regarded as a communication between two persons or few people, giving feedback, and using the senses as sensors to identify communication partners with each other. The Islamic education teachers should build factual interpersonal communication based on empirical facts. The interpersonal communication, according to Mulyana, is defined as "A face-to-face communication among people, allowing each participant to capture the reactions of others directly, either verbally or non-verbally" (Eva Patriana, 2014). Interpersonal communication conducted by the Islamic education teachers is seen as an effective way if students understand the message conveyed correctly and they can respond according to the teachers' purposes. The effective interpersonal communication will help students achieve certain goals to improve the quality of learning. Whatever the position of Islamic education

teachers is, effective communication skills are an essential starting point for both teachers' and students' success.

The purpose of interpersonal communication for Islamic education teachers will not be achieved if the communication does not work effectively. According to Fauzi Abubakar, effective communication is communication that can produce an attitude change for the people involved in the communication processes. Simply put, effective communication is exchanging information, ideas, beliefs, feelings, and attitudes between two persons whose results are in line with their expectations (Abubakar, 2015). Kumar said that there are several characteristics of the effectiveness of interpersonal communication, composing of openness, empathy, support, a sense of positivity, and equality. "Good interpersonal communication will be able to make sense of the importance of individual relationships" (Pontoh, 2013) and will also support the success of one's study.

According to Mochtar Buchori's, we will find that teachers in educational institutions are no longer able to act as educators who have authority and are independent if the educational process in our country is deeply examined, but they have had degraded status to be executors of various instructions issued by the bureaucracy. Routine activities in educational institutions are no longer meaningful educational activities (Mochtar Buchori, 2006). As a result, teachers do not have freedom, and thus, making them hard to develop teacher-student interpersonal communication that is democratic, moderate and egalitarian.

Based on a broader review of the literature, Woolfolk and Weinstein stated that teachers who have three skills are what students will choose, such as teachers who can establish caring relationships with students, teachers who can set boundaries and create a safe environment without being rigid, threatening or punishing, and teachers who can make learning fun" ((Vern Jones; Louis Jones, 2012). Wentzel emphasized the statement that "caring" teachers will always be needed by high school students (Vern Jones; Louis Jones, 2012). This implies that students will always choose teachers who can demonstrate a democratic and egalitarian communication style that can develop goals for students' behavior and achievement based on students' expectations.

Therefore, Islamic education teachers as the spearhead in the innovation process are required to have good interpersonal communication skills. Students always construct their understanding through interactions with teachers, classmates, and curriculum materials. However, few interactions contribute to the construction of scientific understanding. It is the interaction that can evoke a dialogue between students' prior knowledge and familiar scientific understanding that can help them build new understandings among students. This construction happens in a conflict, ambiguity, and surprise (Nurzaman, 2007).

Nevertheless, the interpersonal communication process has not received serious attention from Islamic education teachers. Most of them are only preoccupied with making and designing syllabuses and lesson plans. The point is that the focus only relies on administrative activities, making them forget the importance of performing innovations in improving the quality of learning. Such condition is different from that of contrast to Al-Izzah High School. To improve the quality of learning in this global era, al-Izzah High School has provided several programs, both academic and non-academic programs, such as international classes, takssus tahfidzul Qur'an classes, olympiad classes, and scientific papers, building international networks, al-Quran & science classes, developing foreign languages (Arabic and English), and applying the Cambridge curriculum. All the programs are conducted under the Boarding School system. These various programs are a form of education readiness for Al-Izzah High School, Batu, in academic and non-academic activities.

For this reason, this study focuses on finding out how interpersonal communication patterns between Islamic education teachers and students can improve the quality of Islamic education learning. This is significant to observe since the interpersonal communication between Islamic education teachers and students has a crucial role in the process of educational innovation and learning in Islamic education. Several studies are relevant to this problem, such as the study conducted by Hermansyah & Saputra (2019) "SD/MI Learning Communication Interaction Model" by employing the Library

Research pattern. The findings of this study show that the communicative interaction model is a communication model that emphasizes the presence of student relationships with one another. The model is formed by applying a theory of psychologists and education which states that a person will not be able to free himself from the process of interaction with others. Susanta (2014), in his study titled "The Development of Islamic Education Learning Innovations at SMP Negeri 1 Muntilan" show a finding that an innovation model for Islamic education learning in accelerated classes through highlighting several components, such as the SUNNI model. Another study conducted by Purwati (2011) titled "Multiple Intelligences System-based Islamic Education (A Study Case at SMP YIMI Gresik and MTs. YIMA Bondowoso, East Java)" with a qualitative-descriptive approach shows that all the schools have implemented based multiple intelligences-based Islamic education in terms of input, process, output or outcome. Thus, this study is distinguishable from the existing ones and has never been conducted before since it focuses on three aspects of teacher-student interpersonal communication patterns in improving the quality of the learning process of Islamic education related to several aspects. The first one focuses on how the ethics of interpersonal communication of Islamic education teachers in the Islamic education learning process. The second one highlights how the relationship between teachers and students in interpersonal communication in the Islamic education learning process and how the interpersonal communication model used by the Islamic education teachers at Al-Izzah High School in improving the quality of learning Islamic religious education.

2. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study at Al-Izzah High School as the research background. The researcher acted as a data collector and an instrument since it is the researcher who was active in having a thorough observation of all data related to the focus of the study. To obtain data in the field, the data collection techniques are composed of (1) interviews, (2) observation, and (3) documentation. The informants consisted of the principal, the Islamic education teachers, and the students of Al-Izzah High School. The data analysis was descriptive qualitative analysis, including description, explanation, meaning, and interpretation of the data. The discussion was performed using three methods comprising deduction, induction, and reflection.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Interpersonal Communication Ethics among Teachers and Students in the Islamic Education Learning Process

As for interpersonal communication, the term "ethics" refers to norms, values, or measures of good behavior in communication. The purpose is to keep interpersonal communication going well, without causing tension in the relationship between two or more individuals. Based on the results of this study, there was an ethic used in the learning process, especially learning Islamic education at Al-Izzah High School. The ethics were mostly unwritten but rather practiced and taught in the learning process. According to Tuty Mutiah, et al., the existence of mutually agreed ethics will be able to help someone make decisions about what actions he should take and is applicable in all aspects of human life (Tuty Mutiah, Ilham Albar, Fitriyanto, 2019).

The results of this study indicated that every person in the academic community at Al-Izzah High School has applied ethics in communicating with other people, both teacher-student relations and student-student relations. The application of ethics performed at Al-Izzah High School is described as follows;

- a. Politeness in communication. This can be seen from the culture of the Al-Izzah High School environment. Teachers or students start communication by greeting one another. Another politeness can also be seen in the way the students shake and touch the back of the hands of teachers of the same sex using their lips or chin (hand-kissing tradition). Meanwhile, the students

- do not talk seductively to the male teachers. They always use polite language in the communication process.
- b. Islamic norms preservation in communication. Teachers and students can communicate face-to-face in all places when they have the opportunity. However, a prohibition is also applicable when the students have a consultation with male teachers, meaning that both parties cannot talk to one another in person without the presence of the other party and the communication must be done in an open space. This is in line with what Syahira al-katiri said, "If there is some lesson the students do not understand, they may ask the male teacher by coming with another party, such as friend(s) and thus, it is not just the two parties in the teacher room, even both parties must have the communication in an open space".
 - c. Respect for students' privacy. In the process of communicating with students, Al-Izzah High School teachers never vilify students' privacy. They always cover up the students' disgrace. This is what makes students feel comfortable whenever they consult their problems with the teachers.
 - d. Informative and dialogic actions. Al-Izzah High School Islamic education teachers provide wise messages and explanations of information from trusted sources. They minimize the exaggeration of the diversity in religion or never offend ethnicity, race, and religion. It means that they are honest and open to diversity. It is this kind of ethics that makes the educational process at Al-Izzah High School a dialogical and communicative paradigm. This is under al-Mawardi's educational paradigm that promotes openness and dialogue because al-Mawardi criticized teachers who cover up knowledge in front of their students for obstructing the truth. If the teachers do not know the answers to their students' questions, they have to say they do not know (Alwajih, 2011).

The ethics applied at al-Izzah High School in teachers' interpersonal communication aim to maximize the quality of the learning process of Islamic education. With this ethics, communication will result in a positive value for students. This is under the finding revealed by Tuty Mutiah, et al. that if someone communicates with good and ethical techniques, the communication will then have more positive values. Communication ethics is not only related to good speech, but also must come from good and sincere intentions which are then expressed with patience, calm, and empathy in communication. Interpersonal communication will produce two-directional communication (between teachers and students) (Tuty Mutiah, Ilham Albar, Fitriyanto, 2019).

Positive interpersonal communication between teachers and students will make them more able to communicate properly and politely ((Chen et al., 2022). The communication between the two of them will be able to play an important role in the formation of existing social norms ((Geber et al., 2019). Furthermore, Nurmalasari stated that the easiest way to be able to apply interpersonal communication ethics properly is to pay attention to the local socio-cultural values or norms, everything related to rules, regulations, and provisions that have been mutually agreed upon, preserved habits, and good social manners (Nurmalasari, 2015).

Teacher-Student Relationship in Interpersonal Communication in Islamic Education Learning

Based on the results of the study, there was a good relationship between teachers and students at Al-Izzah High School. One of the causes of such good relationships is the interpersonal communication between teachers and students through mutually agreed ethics. Teachers and students know their respective rights and obligations in establishing relationships in the learning process. The teachers do not discriminate against the students. They are treated the same way between those who are smart and those who are not. Even when there are absent students, the teachers always ask the students why they do not attend class. To provide convenience to their students, the teachers treat them like their own children. This is also stated by the students as follows;

"The teacher-student relationship is like a father and a child... I've never gotten scolded because I disobeyed the rules. The teachers get angry while we, the students, don't pray when the time to pray is coming, but they just get angry normally, like asking us why we don't pray... That's what they always do." (Al-katiri, n.d.).

The above statement was corroborated by the al-Izzah high school religion teacher as follows;

“The teacher-student relationship developed at school is like a father-child relationship.” (Ari Firnando, n.d.).

Both statements illustrate the occurrence of a harmonious relationship between teachers and students in the learning process at Al-Izzah High School. A harmonious relationship is built by mutual understanding, mutual respect, kindness, and cooperation between the two in the process of improving the quality of education. The teachers try to build good relationships in schools by creating conditions that can support educational processes. Slameto stated that a reciprocal and communicative relationship between teachers and students would result in the optimal learning process. The learning process can only take place if there is educative communication and reciprocal interaction between the teachers and students (Slameto, 1988).

Also, the Al-Izzah High School teachers play a key role as educators, not just teachers in establishing relationships with students. They have their respective duty to direct the students to have a broader knowledge, good attitude, and skills needed by society. This is in line with what the Al-Izzah High School teacher said that teachers' duty is not only to teach but also to educate. If the children are guilty, they will get punishment by the guidance and counseling teachers or the vice principal who handles it or the ones who are in charge of such situations called *ustadzah*. The guidance and counseling teachers and homeroom teachers also have a key role. There is a meeting among the homeroom teachers, the guidance and counseling teachers, and the students. If the student caused a problem, both the *ma'had* and the teachers communicate with each other so that they can solve the problem (Ari Firnando, n.d.).

The role of the Al-Izzah High School Islamic education teachers in the learning processes at school is by the opinion of Oemar Hamalik who said that there are two roles a teacher should play. First, the teacher is an educator, meaning that the role is to provide services to all students so that they will have a harmonious relationship with established school goals. Second, they play as a mentor, meaning that their role is to provide guidance and assistance to all students so that they can achieve maximum understanding and self-direction needed in terms of self-adjustment to school, family, and society (Kirom, 2017). Teachers' communication process, In playing this role, they will be able to help students motivate, transfer knowledge and build students' self-reliance (İhtiyaroğlu, 2019).

In addition, spiritual relationships are also intertwined in the interpersonal communication process performed by the Al-Izzah teachers. Islamic education teachers have the most difficult duty in the learning process among other teachers. Besides having to try to maximally develop all the students' potential, they also have to educate students to make them aware of their existence as God's humans. The goal is to make students intelligent human beings both physically and non-physically related to spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and moral. The expression of this powerful inner spiritual relationship is reflected in the student's behavior. They never scold or say bad words to their teacher. They always have the hand-kissing tradition, a gesture of their reverence (*ta'dzim*). They hope that the knowledge they obtain from School Islamic education teachers in the learning processes can be of use.

This is what becomes the strength of Al-Izzah High School. The inner-spiritual relationship is a spark of light that can get into the heart of the students. This relationship needs to be built and improved continuously throughout the time in educating students at formal institutions. If this kind of relationship is lost, the teachers will be no longer able to foster and educate properly. As a result, the students do not have respect for teachers anymore and even when have graduated from school. The inner-spiritual relationship developed at Al-Izzah High School includes the following aspects:

1. There is full awareness of all Islamic teachers to guide their students to know Allah SWT and to get closer to Him.
2. The students always have the hand-kissing tradition with the teachers as a gesture of reverence.
3. The students never scold or say dirty words to the teachers.
4. There is an attitude of resignation towards teachers wherever they are.

The teacher-student relationship at Al-Izzah High School, based on the existing theory, tends to be included in the category of role model relations. "The assumption of this theory states that the relationship will run harmoniously to reach a good level of relationship which is characterized by togetherness if each acts by role expectations, role demands and avoids role conflict" (Jallaludin Rakhmat, 2007). This is what makes the al-Izzah high school Islamic education teachers' moral educators and became role models for their students. Therefore, the students will be able to learn a lot from the exemplary behavior of the teachers. This is under Bandura's social learning theory "Most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions, this coded information serves as a guide for action" (Bussard & Lawrence, 2019).

Teachers' Interpersonal Communication Models in Improving the Quality of Islamic Education Learning

The form of interpersonal communication between teachers and students will provide opportunities for students to be active in the learning process and will make the teaching and learning process more effective. This is what will cause pleasant social and emotional situations between teachers and students, and thus, they can perform their respective duties and responsibilities. Therefore, the teachers who apply this interpersonal communication model must be able to treat the students differently with different services since the students have different abilities and interests, unique characteristics, freedom to choose what suits them, and active personalities as well. In a brief, teachers in learning activities must have good interpersonal communication skills (Istanto, n.d.).

The success in forming interpersonal communication with students in improving the quality of education is mostly in the hands of communicators, in this case, the Islamic education teachers. An understanding of the self-structure of attachment patterns built by students' attachment figures is the basis for Islamic education teachers in building classroom learning programs, especially in fostering interpersonal communication skills with students. The self-structural pattern among students will be formed to be more positive if the teachers can develop consistent and sustainable student interpersonal communication. This is in line with the statement by McCartney and Dearing that "Early experience will lead and determine behaviors and feelings about the internal working model" (Maya & Psi, 2016).

Based on the results of the study, interpersonal communication models performed by the Islamic education teachers at Al-Izzah High School were dialogical and moderate. The students are allowed to develop their understanding but must do it by following the Islamic values according to the Qur'an and al-Hadits. In this regard, the interpersonal communication model developed by the Islamic education teachers at Al-Izzah High School always involves all elements in the school in a dialogic pattern. Based on the results of this study, the Islamic education teachers at Al-Izzah High School always provide space to provide comprehensive insights from various perspectives in understanding problems in society to improve the quality of the learning process. Opinions that have been developed are given and delivered to the students so that they would not be confined to an extreme understanding.

Interpersonal communication at Al-Izzah High School is built on warm relationships so that the students can optimally develop their potential in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. This is following Taibun & Kelly's theory on interpersonal relationships in "Social Exchange theory" that "relationships will be built, either friendship or romance, if the relationship brings maximum benefits" (Wisnuwardani, Dian & Mashoedi Fatmawati, 2012). In other words, "relationships in interpersonal communication is like a trade transaction that will provide benefits for individuals". This model encourages individuals to think about every advantage and disadvantage of the existing relationship. Individuals who feel that they are not getting any benefits at all will try to find other relationships that give them benefits. The underlying assumption is to voluntarily get into and stay in social relationships only as long as the relationship is satisfactory in terms of rewards and costs" (Suranto Aw, 2011).

The interpersonal communication model noted above is like the transactional communication model proposed by Barnlund. This can be highlighted since the communication model used by the Islamic education teachers at Al-Izzah Batu High School is a cooperative communication process,

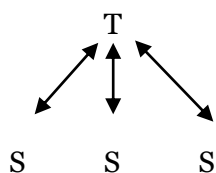
meaning that both the addresser and addressee are equally responsible for the impact and effectiveness of the communication. The transactional model assumes that when someone sends and receives messages continuously, he will deal with both verbal and nonverbal elements. In other words, the process of “negotiating” meaning is carried out by the communicator.

On the other hand, if this is seen from the interpersonal communication process model in improving the quality of Islamic education learning at Al-Izzah High School. First, the communication abilities possessed by the Islamic education teachers at Al-Izzah High School are built to develop students’ positive attitudes in learning activities. The communication process performed by the Islamic education teachers at Al-Izzah High School is not performed in the classroom, but also outside the classroom. This kind of out-of-class communication affects the academic and social-emotional development of students (Hershkovitz et al., 2019) (Elhay & Hershkovitz, 2019).

Second, there are communication abilities possessed by the Islamic education teachers at Al-Izzah High School to be flexible and open in learning activities. Third, there are communication abilities possessed by the Islamic education teachers at Al-Izzah High School to perform enthusiastic and serious learning activities. Fourth, the communication skills of the Islamic education teachers at Al-Izzah High School are built to manage students’ interaction in learning activities. Therefore, this communication model is like the interactional communication model proposed by Wilbur Schramm since the communication process determines the participants to be active, not conducting a monologue but dialogue.

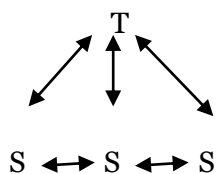
The communication models will result in a situation in the learning process. The models can also develop students’ potential. In the dialogical and moderate interpersonal communication model built by Al-Izzah High School teachers, they can combine communication patterns that are appropriate to the learning needs. At the apperception stage, for instance, the teachers use the first pattern. Once the learning is boring, the teachers may use the second pattern, the third pattern, and so on. The patterns between (T) teachers and S (students) developed by the Islamic education teachers al-Izzah High School are listed as follows (Karsidi, 2005):

- 1) Teacher – student – teacher pattern



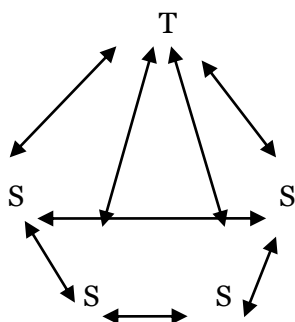
(This pattern shows interactions between teacher and student, thus resulting in feedback)

- 2) Teacher – student – student – teacher pattern



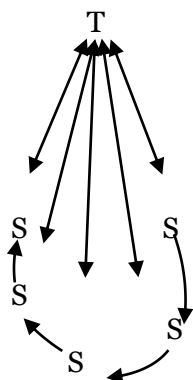
(A multi-directional communication; optimum interaction)

- 3) Teacher – student – student – teacher, student – student pattern



(A multi-directional communication pattern and the class is more lively, thus it can be of motivation for the learning atmosphere since everyone is involved)

4) Circular pattern



(Each student gets a turn to express his opinion, but may not express an opinion twice if other students have not had the turn)

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the description, the researcher concluded that the ethics of interpersonal communication have been well implemented by teachers and students at al-Izzah High School when conducting interpersonal communication. The communication was established to provide suitable services to students in the Islamic education learning process. The unwritten rules of Islamic norms and values have all been applied in this interpersonal communication process. The application of these norms and values has produced optimal results with the convenience of communication between teachers and students. Convenience results in quality in the Islamic education learning process, meaning that interpersonal communication has been properly implemented. The second conclusion shows that the relationship developed in the Islamic education learning process at Al-Izzah High School related to interpersonal communication is the relationship between father and child and spiritual inner relationship which later in the theory of interpersonal relationship analysis is included in the category of role models. The last conclusion confirmed that the model of interpersonal communication used by the Islamic education teachers at Al-Izzah High School to improve the quality of learning is dialogic and moderate.

Having provided the overall conclusion, the researcher is aware of the imperfection of this study, such as not comparing yet the communication patterns of Islamic education teachers in various existing Islamic education institutions, both modern and traditional ones, as well as those in state Islamic education institutions. Therefore, this study needs to be further developed, and thus, complete and comprehensive results can be obtained.

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