

Correlation of Faith Education and Social Emotional Skills Perceived by Early Elementary Children's Parents

Nuri Sadida¹, Arif Trimran²

University of YARSI

Email: nuri.sadida@yarsi.ac.id

Abstract

All parents want to provide good education for their children, therefore a lot of parents seek for school that can provide religious basis in daily teaching method. Getting religious basis from childhood, was expected to form a strong foundation for children emotional and social development skills. This phenomenon caused the increasing amount of schools that adopt religious basis in their curriculum. One of those schools is KAF, a school that adopt maktab teaching principle as one of the earliest form of Islamic teaching. KAF also applied "Manners before knowledge. Faith before Alqur'an" principle that was adopted from Imam Malik. There are two research purposes in this study, first is to correlate Islamic faith education and children social and emotional skills, and second to compare the emotional and social skills of children who enrolled in KAF and children from other schools that did not adopt maktab principle. The measurement of children social and emotional skills contains three dimensions which are persistence, self-control, and social competence. These dimensions were measured using social emotional skills scale adopted from O'Connor, et al (2012). Meanwhile faith education by parents was measured using faith indicator summarized from faith concept of Ibn Taimiyyah in Habsyi (2010). Participants in this research are 52 parents who have children age 5-7 years old. Results showed there is a significant correlation between faith education and social and emotional skills ($r=.302$, $p < .05$), and there is no significant difference in social and emotional skills between children who submitted to KAF and to other schools, although parents who submitted to KAF show higher mean score in Islamic faith education. Some limitations of this study are the small amount and homogenous participants.

Keywords: *Islamic faith education, Maktab teaching, Social and Emotional Skills*

Introduction

All parents want to provide good education to their children. Some considerations that parents used to evaluate quality of school are school beliefs and values, school academic reputation, teaching style, and school culture (Bosetti, 2004). In the context of Jakarta where the number of juvenile delinquency is increasingly worrisome, many parents choose school based on school values and beliefs. Since that Muslim population in Indonesia is dominating, it is not surprising that parents interest in Islamic schools has increased (Ilmi,

2010). This increasing interest to Islamic school then also increased the emergence of Islamic schools in Indonesia.

One of those emerging schools is KAF, a school with Islamic based, that adopt maktab education model. Maktab is the model of traditional Islamic education since the 10th century BC. Maktab taught basic literacy (such as math, reading, writing, Islamic faith, and Qu'an) with emphasis on islamic faith education and qur'an. The illustration of maktab teaching at ancient time was a sheikh taught a group of students inside classroom, where the students are sitting across

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him on the ground. Since the 11th century, scholars Ibn Sina then redefined curriculum maktab. According to him, children learn better in the classroom with her friends, than to learn in private. This is because by being in the classroom, children get the chance to compete and at the same discussing ideas together. He later also split maktab level into two levels, which are primary education and secondary education. Basic education intended for children aged 6 to 14 years, and secondary school (madrasah) intended by children from the age of 14 years and over (Asimov & Bosworth, 1999)

KAF literally adopt students sitting on the ground inside their classroom. Learning position on the ground refer to the technique from Imam Malik by the time he was giving his teaching to caliphate Harun Ar-Rasyid. At the beginning of lesson, Harun Ar-Rasyid sat on a chair, meanwhile Imam Malik and other students sat on the ground. Imam Malik then stated that "Learning enthusiast would appreciate science. Nobody can sit higher than science". The spoke made Harun Ar-Rasyid sat on the ground together with other students. KAF apply this technique so that students do not feel proud with their knowledge. Other principle in educating Islamic faith based on Imam Malik principle is "Manners before knowledge. Faith before *Alqur'an*". This means, children should have strong faith foundation before intensively learning and memorizing Qur'an, or practicing prayer. Having a strong Faith, according to Imam Malik, means justifying inside the heart, professing by words expression, doing good deeds with all body parts (Wahyudi, 2012). The reason why Faith should be learned before learning other science is because every science learned by muslim, should be intended to fix other human beings to go to the right path, and feel closer to Allaah SWT.

The importance of teaching Islamic faith as a basis of akhlaq also considered an important teaching by Indonesian government, but Indonesian government using the term "character education". According to Kusuma (2007) character education is human activity that involves action in educating to the next generation. The purpose of

character education is to build self-improvement continuously, and practicing someone's ability to reach a better life. Recently, the President of Republic Indonesia proposing "full day school" concept as the implementation of character education at school. The implication of full day school concept means students spend longer hours in school to learn character education. In previous curriculum, government did not give high portion to manner education. But in the future, government will give higher portion to character education, around 60% portion to elementary grade, and 70% to junior high grade.

It is clearly that government thinks that character education is school's responsibility, meanwhile KAF pointed out that Islamic faith education is parent's main responsibility at home. KAF point of view refers to Hadith from Al-Bukhari:

"Every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock. The leader of people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects. A man is the guardian of his family and he is responsible for them. A woman is the guardian of his of her husband's home and his children and she is responsible for them. The servant of a man is a guardian of the property of his master and he is responsible for it. No doubt, every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock"

Sahih al-bukhari 6719, sahih muslim 1829
(from Elias, 2011)

Education by parents at home can increase the quality of positive relationships between parents and children. Positive parent-child relationships provide the foundation for children's learning. With parents' sensitive, responsive, and predictable care, young children develop the skills they need to succeed in life. Early parent-child relationships have powerful effects on children's emotional well-being (Dawson & Ashman, 2000), their basic coping and problem-solving abilities, and future capacity for relationships (Lerner & Castellino, 2002). Through these interactions, children learn skills they need to engage with others and to succeed in different environments (Rogoff, 2003). They learn how to manage their emotions and behaviors and establish healthy relationships with

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adults and peers. They also learn how to adjust to new situations and to resolve conflicts (NCPFCE, 2015).

However, there are very few psychology research about correlation of Islamic faith education with children's positive output. Therefore, this research brought two purposes:

1. To see whether Islamic faith education by parents at home have significant correlation with children's social and emotional skills.
2. Is there any difference in children's social and emotional skills among children who submitted to KAF compare with children who submitted to other school.

The reason of choosing children's social and emotional skills as variable/ positive output for further investigation in this study is because a child's social-emotional is driving an individual to communicate, connect with others and more importantly helps resolve conflicts, gain confidence and reach goals. Knowing what build a strong social emotional foundation in child will later help child thrive and obtain happiness in life, handle stress and persevere through difficult times in their lives as an adult. (Songer, 2009)

Method

The research participants consisted of parents who have children in the age of 5-7 years old (early school age). The reason to choose this characteristic, is because children in this age start to developed their social and emotional skills. A total of 52 parents participated in this study. Data were taken from offline and online channels. Parents from several online forum were asked to participate to this survey. Meanwhile offline data were collected from parents gathering forum in KAF and to one state elementary school in Tangerang. Surveys were collected over one and a half month around July to September 2016. Parents required to state how frequent they teach faith education and how they perceived their children social and emotional skills.

Islamic Faith Education was measured using a 28 items questionnaire. This questionnaire

measures frequency of giving Islamic faith education from parents to children. Islamic faith indicators itself derived from Ibn Thaimiyah Islamic faith concept (Habsyi, 2010). These Islamic faith indicators are: 1.) Feeling the supervision of Allaah, 2.) Feeling fear only to Allaah, 3.) Believing in Allaah, Prophet Muhammad and his teachings, Angels, and Quran, 4.) Worshipping only Allaah, 5.) Professing by words expression, 6.) Justifying inside the heart, 7.) Doing good deeds with all body parts, 8.) Doing what is ordered to do, 9.) Avoiding from what is forbidden, 10.) Withstanding in hardship, 11.). Feeling agitated with misdeed. According to Imam Baihaqi (from Al-Syafi'I, 2011) in Islamic teaching script "Al Jami Li Syu'abil Iman", faith contains from 69 to 77 indicators, with composition of Islamic faith 35% to qalb deeds, 10% words expression deeds, and 55% physical deeds. It would be ideal to construct Faith education measurement tool that contains 69 – 77 faith indicators. However, considering participants emotional and educational level, the questionnaire then only adapt 10 indicators of Islamic faith.

Some of the items to measure these indicators are "I give explanation to my child why we should worship Allaah SWT and not others", "I storytell positive things about Rasulullaah SAW", "I teach my children to know Qur'an (Ex. Learning to read, memorize quran). The measures using likert scale ranging from 1 = never until 4 = frequently. The alpha reliability coefficient for this scale is .935

Children Social and Emotional Skills was measured using 12 items questionnaire which measures three dimensions, persistence, social competence, and self-control. This questionnaire is adapted from Delale-O'Connor, Farley, Lippman, and Walker (2012). Self-control, sometimes called self-regulation, refers to the ability to manage one's emotions and behaviors, inhibit negative responses and delay gratification (Bandy & Moore, 2010). Some of the items to measure self-control are "waited in line patiently" and "sat still when he/she supposed to". Second dimension, persistence, is the capacity to maintain concentration on a task, question, set of directions or interactions, despite distractions and interruptions. Children who show

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persistence have the ability not only to stay focused on a task, but also to overcome setbacks and keep trying. They are able to perform a task or set of tasks with care and effort from start to finish (Delale-O'Connor, Farley, Lippman, and Walker, 2012). Some of the items to measure persistence are "kept working on an activity that was difficult", "worked on tasks until they were finished". Third dimension is social competence, a student's ability to: 1) take others' perspectives, 2) work well with peers to accomplish a task, 3) resolve problems in ways that maximize positive consequences and minimize negative consequences for the student and her/his peers, and 4) behave appropriately according to the situation and social norms. Items to measure this dimension are "Was thoughtful of the feelings of her/his peers", "Understood the feelings of her/his peers". The measures using likert scale ranging from 1 = never; until 4 = frequently. The alpha reliability coefficient for this scale is .867

Data exploration was conducted using One way ANOVA and Pearson Correlation. One way ANOVAs were used to examine differences

between Islamic faith education and social emotional skills based on highest education. Correlations were conducted between enrichment Islamic faith education and social emotional skills and selected demographic variables (age, gender, participation in routine Islamic forum study). From all the demographics variables considered, there is a significant correlation in giving Islamic faith education between parents who participating in routine Islamic forum study compare to those who is not.

Results

Demographic Characteristics. Participants ranged in age from 27 to 53, with a mean age of 35 years (SD = 5,2). 52 participants were involved in study with males (11,5%) and females (88,5%). Most of the parents graduated from undergraduate level (40,5%) and 65,4% involved in routine Islamic study forum. There are 20 parents who submitted their children to KAF school, and 32 parents to schools other than KAF. 0.926 0.867

Table 1

Variable	M	SD	Islamic Faith Education	Social and Emotional Skills
Faith Education	103.35	15.35	-	0.302*
Social and Emotional Skills	36.92	6.79	.302*	-
Persistence	9.4	1.94	.342*	.775*
Self Control	9.13	2.21	.208	.858*
Social and Emotional Competence	18.38	3.73	.248	.909*
Age			.142	.008
Gender			.198	-.013
Participation in Routine Islamic Forum Study			.346*	-.148
Submitted in KAF			.253	.056
Highest Education			.495	.410

Note: $p < .05^*$. Gender 1 = Male, 2 = Female; Highest education 1= Junior High School, 2= High School, 3= Diploma, 4= Undegraduate, 5= Postgraduate, Participation in routine Islamic study forum 1 = Yes, 2 = No; Submitted in KAF 1=yes, 2=No

Discussion

Based on data analysis, it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between faith education and social and emotional skills, significant at level $p < .05$. However the correlation itself is not strong because the correlation value is .302. More specifically, Islamic faith education has significant correlation with dimension persistence ($r=.342$). The low correlation indicates several possibilities. First, children social and emotional skills development more affected by a lot of broader factors, such as environmental factors, family factors, and also within-child factors such as a temperament, and developmental characteristic.

Second, early grade school children learn to develop social and emotional skills at this age. They start to enjoy playing with other kids, more conversational, more aware of others' perceptions, and want to behave well but are not attentive to parents directions (Morin, 2013). This indicates that social and emotional development of children needs longer time. Third, the measurement of Islamic faith education in this study mostly measuring the relations aspect of humans with Allaah SWT (hablumminallaah). Meanwhile, according to Islamic teaching script "Al Jami Li Syu'abil Iman", many of Islamic faith education teaches human relations with other human (hablumminannaas), where humans were taught to show good deeds to other human. Few behavior taught in faith education are look in to other who is sick, pray and give condolence to those who lost family or relatives, give alms to those who need, etc.

Other result of this study is that there is no difference social and emotional skills between children who submitted to KAF and to other schools, although parents who submitted to KAF show higher mean score in Islamic faith education. This means Maktab method, like any other teaching method, did not give significant influence to the development of social and emotional

skills. This result is understandable, since teaching method usually have higher influence to the development of cognitive skill, rather than emotional skill (Sammons & etc, 2008). The number of time that children spent at school also very limited, only around 5 hours. Compare to the time that children spent at home and having interaction with home environment (parents, siblings, neighbor). Therefore, school have fewer opportunities in shaping the character of children.

There is also a significant difference in Islamic faith education between parents who participate in routine Islamic study forum and those who are not. Meanwhile there is no significant difference in Islamic faith education between parents who submitted to KAF and parents who are not. Many of the parents who participate in this study already involved in weekly Islamic study forum for more than 5 years. Meanwhile, KAF parents submitted to KAF for less than 5 years. Clearly, the extensive involvement in routine Islamic study forum is a determining factor that shapes parents awareness to give Islamic faith education to the children.

There are limitations to these findings. The study was conducted with only 52 participants, and they have quite homogenous characteristics (more than half participants joining routine Islamic study forum). Most participants who submitted to KAF sent their children to this school for 1-2 years. So allegedly, the effect of maktab teaching method still can't be seen.

Conclusion

These results are important especially because there still a very few studies about Islamic faith education. Meanwhile, according to Rasulullah, Islamic faith is one essential variable that construct a muslim character. The result of this research shows that Islamic faith education given by parents at home has significant correlation to the development of social and emotional skills among children, and even has stronger influence compare to education influence

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given by school. As the consequence, parents need to develop their competence in Islamic knowledge by joining routine Islamic study forum.

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shepherd-responsible-for-his-or-her-
flock