

The Role of Parents in Supporting the Soul camp Program as an Effort to Improve Students' Independence (Case Study at SMP IBS Ar Rohmah Putra Malang)

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Keywords

Parental Role

Soulcamp

Character Education

Abstract

Independence is one of the crucial aspects of character development and preparing students to face future challenges. This study aims to analyze the role of parents in supporting the Soulcamp program as an effort to enhance student independence at SMP IBS Ar Rohmah Putra Malang. The research employs a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using thematic analysis techniques.

The research shows that parents play a main role through material, emotional support, and collaboration with the school. Parental support significantly impacts the improvement of students' independence, particularly in decision-making skills, responsibility, and managing daily tasks. However, challenges such as the lack of understanding of the program, and differences in home education patterns were identified.

To address these barriers, the school builds intensive communication with parents. The Soulcamp program proves to be relevant as an Islamic character education initiative that integrates spiritual, social, and intellectual values. This study explains the importance of strong collaboration between schools and families in shaping students' character to become independent and responsible.

1. Introduction

Education is a crucial component in shaping an individual. It encompasses not only academic knowledge but also psychological and social aspects. Education is an effort to develop the human potential of learners, including physical, cognitive, emotional, and volitional capabilities, so that these potentials become tangible and functional throughout their lives (Nurhuda, 2022). Furthermore, education aims to bring about positive changes in students as they grow toward maturity, in terms of attitude, behavior, and thinking (Desri, 2021), which manifest as independence.

Independence is the ability of children to perform various activities, regulate, choose, and make decisions confidently and responsibly. Children need to be taught independence because it prepares them to take responsibility for their own lives, trains them to make their own choices, and does not develop naturally; thus, parents need to cultivate it. The benefits of independence for children are numerous, including fostering self-confidence, cultivating responsibility, developing physical and mental resilience, and encouraging creativity in thinking and acting (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017). This aligns with Utami's argument that independence is a critical factor that must be present in an individual because it aids in achieving life goals, success, and earning recognition (Utami et al., 2019).

Several factors influence a child's independence, including daily parental behavior, teachers, the environment, and habitual practices within the family, school, and community. Additionally, children's experiences in making decisions and taking responsibility for those decisions play a significant role (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017).

Thus, parents play a significant role in shaping the process and outcomes of a child's independence. Parents first contribute to basic behaviors and skills such as religious education, proper manners, and etiquette (Yusutria et al., 2019). Additionally, parents are crucial in education by providing encouragement and motivation to enhance and increase their child's intelligence and independence (Saragih, 2022). Another parental role in fostering children's independence is creating a safe home environment for exploration and adventure, guiding children, involving them in various

activities, avoiding ultimatums or commands that pressure children, and showing affection (Ramadhani, 2019).

The development of a child's independence is a significant and fascinating phase. Independence not only impacts their performance but also contributes to achieving life goals, success, and self-recognition (Khotimah, K et al., 2023). The progress of independent attitudes in children from an early age is reflected in their behavior and habits. Independence in young children is demonstrated through physical responsibility, self-confidence, self-reliance, discipline, willingness to share, and emotional control (Sulistianah et al., 2020). By encouraging independence from an early age, children grow into adults who can make decisions more easily, are less dependent on others, are responsible, and can adapt to their environment (R. Lestari, 2018).

Based on the above, it can be concluded that student independence is a vital aspect of education that plays a significant role in character building and preparing students to face future challenges. Education aims not only to enhance academic ability but also to instill values of independence, responsibility, and self-confidence. Therefore, collaboration between educational institutions and families, especially parents, becomes the key to creating an environment that supports character development in students.

Parents' efforts to develop independence in children include providing opportunities for them to do things on their own, fostering a sense of responsibility and reducing dependence on their parents (Ramadhani, 2019). However, children may not always develop well in other aspects of independence, such as responsibility, sociability, confidence, sharing, discipline, and emotional control (Fabiani et al., 2020). To foster independence, parents must support their children by giving them opportunities to explore and discover new things (Khotimah, K et al., 2023). Children's independence can be achieved when parents invest in activities that encourage their development (Asmanita, 2019).

This drive has led SMP IIBS Ar Rohmah Putra Malang, an Islamic-based educational institution, to implement an annual flagship program called Soulcamp. This program is designed to enhance student independence through various activities that integrate spiritual, intellectual, and social aspects. However, the effectiveness of this program heavily relies on the active role of parents in supporting and reinforcing the lessons students learn during the program. Parental involvement is a crucial element in ensuring that the values instilled in Soulcamp are applied in daily life. Therefore, parents should provide opportunities for their children to act independently without undue worry (Ramadhani, 2019).

This study aims to explore the role of parents in supporting the Soulcamp program and its impact on enhancing students' independence. The role of parents in fostering children's self-confidence can be realized by providing opportunities for them to practice independent attitudes (Fabiani et al., 2020). Through a case study at SMP IIBS Ar Rohmah Putra Malang, this research also seeks to provide an empirical illustration of the synergy between schools and families in shaping independent, responsible, and character-driven young generations.

This study is expected to contribute positively to the development of character-based educational programs, particularly those involving collaboration between schools and families. Additionally, it can serve as a reference for other educational institutions in implementing similar programs.

2. Method

This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore the role of parents in supporting the Soulcamp program as an effort to enhance student independence at SMP IIBS Ar Rohmah Putra Malang. The case study method was chosen because it allows the researcher to analyze the topic in depth within a specific context, namely parental involvement in supporting the school program.

This study was conducted at SMP IIBS Ar Rohmah Putra Malang, an Islamic-based school located in Malang Regency, East Java. The school is renowned for its character education approach

through various flagship programs, one of which is Soulcamp. This program is designed to develop student independence through outdoor activities, character building, and strengthening Islamic values. The location was chosen due to the uniqueness of the Soulcamp program as a student development model that actively involves parents in its success.

The research subjects were selected using purposive sampling with specific criteria to ensure the relevance of the data obtained. The subjects are parents of students who participated in the Soulcamp program, students who were participants in the Soulcamp program, and teachers and mentors involved in Soulcamp.

The number of research subjects was not predetermined, as the qualitative approach emphasizes the depth of data rather than the number of respondents. Subjects were selected until data saturation was reached, meaning no new information emerged.

In this study, primary data types are used, which include the views, experiences, and contributions of parents, students, and teachers related to the implementation of the Soulcamp program. Secondary data includes relevant documents, such as Soulcamp activity modules, student evaluation reports, and notes related to character education and student independence. This data supports the analysis of the role of parents in supporting the Soulcamp program as an effort to enhance student independence at SMP IIBS Ar Rohmah Putra Malang. The data sources used by the researcher are parents of students, students, program mentors of Soulcamp, as well as documentation related to the Soulcamp program, such as modules, program objectives, activity reports, and evaluation results, which are used to complement and validate the data obtained from interviews and observations.

Data collection was conducted using in-depth interview techniques with informants, assisted by interview guidelines and audio recording devices, participatory observation, documentation studies, field notes, group discussions, and source triangulation. This aims to obtain in-depth and valid information regarding the role of parents in supporting the Soulcamp program at SMP IIBS Ar Rohmah Putra Malang.

The research instruments are the researcher as the main research instrument, interview guidelines that include questions related to the research topic, observation sheets, supporting documents, recorders, and field notes. In addition, field notes are used to record direct observations, social context, and dynamics that occur during the data collection process.

Data analysis was conducted qualitatively using a thematic analysis approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. Each piece of data obtained was recorded and documented to maintain accuracy and facilitate the analysis process. The researcher then performed data reduction.

This step involved filtering data that were relevant to the research focus, which was the role of parents in supporting the Soulcamp program. Irrelevant or redundant data were removed, so that only information directly related to the research remained. Data reduction was done in stages to organize the information in a more structured manner.

Next, data categorization was carried out, where the reduced data were grouped into specific categories based on the main themes identified. This categorization process helped uncover patterns or relationships between the data.

Thematic analysis was then implemented, where the categorized data were analyzed to identify key themes. Thematic analysis was done by reading and understanding the data as a whole to get an initial overview. Identifying initial themes based on frequently occurring information from interviews, observations, and documentation. Linking these themes to the theories of character education and student independence to gain a deeper understanding. Once the main themes were identified, the researcher developed conclusions based on the patterns and relationships found. Conclusion drawing was performed inductively, relying on the empirical data that had been analyzed.

To ensure the accuracy of the findings, the researcher performed data verification through triangulation (of sources, methods, and time) and member checking. The results of the analysis were then cross-checked against the raw data to ensure that there were no biased or erroneous interpretations. Data validity, source and method triangulation techniques are used. Source triangulation is conducted by comparing information from various informants, while method triangulation is carried out by combining data from interviews, observations, and documentation.

With this method, the research is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the role of parents in supporting the Soulcamp program and its impact on the improvement of student independence.

3. Results and Discussion

The Soulcamp program at SMP IBS Ar Rohmah Putra Malang is designed as a character education activity aimed at enhancing student independence. As an Islamic-based school, SMP IBS Ar Rohmah Putra Malang emphasizes the importance of Islamic values in shaping students' independence. The Soulcamp program not only teaches life skills but also integrates spiritual values such as sincerity, responsibility, and discipline.

This program is held annually at SMP IBS Ar Rohmah Putra Malang, and the location for the Soulcamp is Campsite Coban Rondo Batu.

This program consists of a series of activities, such as life skills training, spiritual strengthening, group work, and problem-solving simulations. Students are also taught to make decisions, take responsibility for their actions, be accountable for personal belongings as well as inventory, and improve their interpersonal communication skills.

This program is also designed to enhance relationships among students, where students are grouped into several family groups, each consisting of students from grades 7, 8, and 9. Each family works well together in carrying out the Soulcamp programs, so the goal of holding Soulcamp as an effort to enhance student independence can be achieved effectively.

3.1. The Role of Parents in Supporting the Soulcamp Program

The Soulcamp program is a collaboration between schools and parents. Parental support has a significant impact on the implementation and success of the Soulcamp program.

Research results show that the role of parents is very important in supporting the success of the Soulcamp program. These findings are in line with Bronfenbrenner's theory of human development ecology, which emphasizes that the family, as a micro-system, plays a direct role in the formation of a child's character. Parental involvement provides an emotional and social foundation that supports students in internalizing the values of independence taught at school.

Parental involvement provides an emotional and social foundation that supports students in internalizing the values of independence taught at school. Parental involvement is not limited to providing material support but also includes emotional support and moral reinforcement. This support serves as motivation for students to be more confident in participating in the program and applying the values learned during the Soulcamp activities. Thus, the role of parents becomes a key factor in strengthening the success of character education programs like Soulcamp.

Based on the results of interviews, questionnaires, and observations, the role of parents in supporting the Soulcamp program can be categorized into three main aspects:

3.1.1. Facilitation and Material Support

The role of parents in this regard is in the form of support such as providing the needs of students during the program, such as activity supplies, pocket money, and other logistics. This shows that parents understand the importance of material contributions as a form of direct support for the sustainability of the program.

3.1.2. Emotional Support and Motivation

Parents actively provide motivation to their children to fully participate in the Soulcamp program. Through intense communication, parents encourage students to engage in the program with enthusiasm and focus. Some parents also appreciate their children's positive development after participating in this program, such as increased self-confidence and decision-making skills.

3.1.3. Collaboration with the School

Parents establish good communication with the school, including teachers and Soulcamp program facilitators. By reviewing the Soulcamp location and engaging in informal discussions, parents provide feedback and receive student progress reports, creating synergy between.

3.2. The Impact of Parental Support on Student Independence

The support provided by parents greatly influences the improvement of student independence. In the perspective of character education, the synergy between school and family is very important to create a consistent learning environment. The values taught at school will be more effective if reinforced by parenting patterns at home. These results also support previous research that emphasizes the positive impact of parental involvement on the development of students' non-academic skills, including independence.

In this study, several changes were observed in students after participating in the Soulcamp program, including:

3.2.1. Decision-Making Ability

Students became more confident in making choices, both in the school environment and at home.

3.2.2. Independence in Daily Life

Students showed improved ability in completing personal tasks, such as managing study time and finishing homework without parental assistance.

3.2.3. Strengthening the Value of Responsibility

Active participation of students in group activities during Soulcamp helps them understand the importance of responsibility for the roles and tasks they undertake.

3.2.4. Improving Leadership Skills

Students showed changes in attitude and leadership spirit that were previously less prominent.

3.2.5. Improvement in Socialization Skills Improving Leadership Skills

The collaborative program in Soulcamp encourages students to actively work together with their peers, fostering active communication among them. Students who initially had difficulty socializing have shown significant improvement in their socialization skills.

3.2.6. Increased self-confidence Improvement in Socialization

Students show improvement in building self-confidence. The presence of competitions in various fields as part of the Soulcamp program requires students to perform representing their respective families. Thus, students' self-confidence can be enhanced through this Soulcamp program.

The increase in student independence identified through this research shows that the Soulcamp program successfully facilitates the development of student independence character, especially when supported by the active role of parents.

3.3. Obstacles in Implementing Parental Support

Although the role of parents is generally positive and full, there are obstacles such as some parents feeling less involved in the Soulcamp program.

3.4. Efforts to Optimize Parental Involvement

The existence of obstacles such as parents feeling less involved in the Soulcamp program necessitates a more intensive communication and collaboration approach between the school and parents, making it a potential solution to overcome these obstacles.

The steps taken by the school to address these obstacles include providing effective communication channels, such as WhatsApp groups and discussion forums, to facilitate coordination between the school and parents. This way, the obstacles faced by parents can be well addressed, and with better understanding, parents can optimally play their role in supporting the Soulcamp program.

3.5. Conclusion

This research provides important implications for schools and parents. For schools, it is important to continue developing character education programs that actively involve parents. The existence of discussion forums and more open communication between schools and families can serve as a platform to align visions in educating students.

For parents, the results of this research emphasize the importance of their involvement in supporting school programs. Parents not only play the role of facilitators but also as strategic partners who ensure the continuity of character education at home.

Research results show that students who receive full support from their parents are more capable of internalizing these values, which is reflected in their daily behavior. This shows the relevance of Soulcamp as a holistic character education approach, which combines spiritual, social, and intellectual aspects.

The research results also show that the role of parents in supporting the Soulcamp program has a significant impact on students' success in enhancing their independence. Parental support that includes material, emotional, and collaborative aspects has a positive impact on student development. However, this success also requires a stronger synergy between the school and the family to overcome existing obstacles.

This research shows that the role of parents is very important in supporting the success of the Soulcamp program as an effort to enhance student independence at SMP IIBS Ar Rohmah Putra Malang.

Theoretically, these findings support various character education theories that emphasize the importance of collaboration between family and school. Practically, the Soulcamp program becomes a relevant model to be implemented in other schools, especially in the context of Islamic character-based education. However, it should be acknowledged that the success of such programs heavily relies on the full support of various parties, including parents.

Overall, this research emphasizes that collaboration between parents and schools is a key element in shaping a generation of young people who are independent, responsible, and have character. For the sustainability of the program, stronger synergy among all related parties and innovation in character education strategies are needed.

In conclusion, the Soulcamp program has proven to be relevant in the context of Islamic character education, as it integrates spiritual, social, and intellectual aspects to shape independent students. The success of this program provides a model that can be adapted by other schools wishing to develop similar programs, especially by involving parents as strategic partners. The Soulcamp program has successfully enhanced student independence with significant support from parents. However, the sustainability and success of this program require a stronger synergy between the school and families to overcome existing obstacles.

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