THE IMPLICATION OF PARENTING STYLES ON THE AKHLAK OF MUSLIM TEENAGERS IN THE SOUTH OF MALAYSIA

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between parenting style with the akhlak of Muslim teenagers. A total of 92 teenagers from one Islamic School in southern Malaysia was selected as respondents in this study. Three types of parenting styles were highlighted namely authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. The akhlak questionnaire has been designed by the researcher based on The Quran and Hadith and focused on three domains comprising akhlak towards Allah, oneself and mankind. The data was analyzed by using the 20.0 SPSS version. Descriptive analysis shows that most of the respondents' parents practiced authoritative parenting style. The correlation analysis shows that there is significant relationship between the authoritative parenting style with the adolescent akhlak towards Allah and oneself. It is also discovered that there is a significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and the adolescent akhlak towards oneself.

Key words: Implication, parenting styles, akhlak, Muslim teenagers;

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1. Introduction

The family is important (Getswicki, 2007) and continues to be an enduring human social institution (Smith, 2006). One of the family’s functions is to nurture children where the most important members of the family are the parents (Nik Azis, 2002). In fact, Bohannan (1985) believes that the ultimate purpose of the family is parenting. Hoghugh and Long (2004) further assert that parenting is the most fundamental and universal concern of every society. Baumrind (1991b) suggested several types of parenting styles, namely authoritarian, authoritative and permissive which focus on parental demandingness and responsiveness. Authoritative parenting is both warm and firm (Kaplan, 2004). This parenting style limits and controls the children’s behaviour and decision, simultaneously giving freedom for their children to explore and discover their own interest. Children from authoritative parents will become independent, socially competent and responsible (Nancy, 1999; Papalia, Olds and Feldman, 2009). In comparison, the authoritarian parenting style shows little warmth and is highly controlling. This parenting style employs the punitive and disciplinary style and insists that children follow the...
parents’ commands. As a result, the children will tend to have low self-esteem, poor social skill and high level of stress. They are more likely to be involved in social problems and be mediocre in their academic performance (Nancy, 1999; Papalia, Olds and Feldman, 2009). The final parenting style, the permissive parenting refers to parents who are very warm but undemanding (Kaplan, 2004). These parents are very lenient towards their children and always fulfill the children’s desires. The children will face difficulty with self-control and become individualistic as they grow up (Nancy, 1999; Papalia, Olds and Feldman, 2009). Thus, an appropriate parenting style is vital to promote children’s emotional, social, cognitive, physical, and other aspects of development. Parents’ failure to discipline and nurture their children may lead to social and behavioural problems (Jacobvitz and Bush, 1996).

2. Background of the Study

Nowadays, behavioural problems such as free sex which tend to result in baby abandonment, bullying, gambling, stealing, drug addiction and trafficking, sexual harassment, threatening and truancy and others are becoming more critical in Malaysia. Such behaviour problems generated by adolescents have been directly linked to inefficient parental control and practice (Ibrahim Saad, 1983). Kaplan (2004) asserts that parents play a major role in supervising their children to be involved in positive activities which ultimately minimizes the children’s involvement in delinquency. Hence, this study aims to investigate the relationship between parenting styles with the adolescents’ akhlak.

3. Objectives

The specific objectives are:

1. To examine the parental style practiced by most of the parents.
2. To identify adolescents’ akhlak that is practiced in their daily life.
3. To identify the relationship between parenting style with the akhlak of their respective children

4. Previous Study

A study was conducted by Salasiah Khairollah (2011) with regards to the influence of parenting styles to the development of students’ Islamic personality. The study involved 302 students from secondary 1 to 5 of SMK Dato’ Sulaiman, Batu Pahat. It aimed to investigate the influence of parenting styles on the development of students’ Islamic personality from several aspects namely ibadah (worship), ilmu (knowledge) and amanah (trust). The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between parenting styles and students’ Islamic personality. The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between parenting styles and students’ Islamic personality. It is also revealed that most of the parents practice an authoritative parenting style.

Another study conducted by Syuaibatul Islamiah Roeswardhi (2012) looked at the relationship between the adolescents’ single mother parenting styles with the personality profile of the adolescents in SMK Dato’ Usman Awang, Taman Perling Johor Bahru. This study involved 82 participants from the remove class to form 5 classes. The study analysed five traits of personality namely extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness to experience and conscientious. The finding shows that most of the mothers practice authoritative parenting style. The study also reveals that the authoritarian parenting style has a significant relationship with the positive personality traits namely openness to experience and conscientious.

Martinez and Garcia (2007) did a study about parenting styles and adolescents’ self-esteem in Brazil. The sample consists of 1239 Brazilian adolescents. Participants were examined in terms of five domains of self-esteem, namely academic, social, emotional, family and physical. The adolescents’ family were classified into one of four groups’ namely authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent or neglectful. The finding shows that adolescent from the
authoritative family scored higher than adolescents from the authoritarian and neglectful families in three domains of self-esteem which are academic, social, and family.

Alegre (2008) carried out a study on the influence of parental behaviour and adolescents’ adjustment to the emotional intelligence. A group of adult ranging from 18-22 years old from three universities in New Jersey and Pennsylvania participated in the research. The finding reveals that parental unfriendliness, detachment and general lack of care will create insecure emotional reactions. This finding also reveals that parents who employ harsh punishment will lead to adolescent’s development of unconfident emotional state with aggressiveness and delinquencies. Parental warmth and affection on the other hand are claimed to bring positive outcomes to the adolescent’s emotional condition. This concurs with the findings of a study conducted by Cummings and Davies (1995) which reveals that children felt uncertain if their parents did not express their warmth, support and affection. These parents use only punishment to control the children. Children exposed to this parenting style lack the confidence to deal with life, challenges and the world in general, and tend to develop depression and misery. They will also have problem in recognizing their own emotions, tending to be confused with the meanings of emotions and discarding emotional information (Gottman, Katz and Hooven, 1997). This is because parents of such children do not attend to the children’s emotion since young. The children thus consequently will find it difficult to establish a good relationship with people as they do not know how to deal with emotional information within themselves and others (Goleman, 1995).

5. Methodology

5.1 Research design

This study applies a quantitative approach because it specifically involves numerical and computable data that can be changed into numbers. This study is also a correlational study. It is because it attempts to determine the existence and degree of relationship between independent variables namely parenting styles with the dependent variable namely adolescent akhlak.

5.2 Sample and population

The sample is selected by using a simple random sampling method. Black (1999) asserts that this method is used to eliminate bias. This sampling techniques enables every student to have an equal probability to be chosen as a sample. A number of 92 students were identified as sample of this study. This study focuses on Form 4 students of one Islamic School in the South of Malaysia to identify the relationship between parenting style and emotional intelligence with the adolescent akhlak based on the sources of the Qur’an and hadith.

5.3 Instruments

The researcher uses questionnaire as the research instrument due to its convenience and accurate (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2001). In this study the demographic information of the respondents, parenting styles of the respondents’ parents and the respondents’ akhlak were examined.

6. Findings

6.1 Parenting Style

The highest mean value of parenting style among the parents of respondents was the authoritative style which showed a mean of 3.90, followed by the authoritarian style with a mean value of 3.74 and permissive with a mean value of 2.40. This data implies that majority of the parents practice the authoritative parenting style. This was followed by authoritarian and permissive parenting styles.
6.2. Akhlak of Respondent

The highest mean value is akhlak towards oneself which is 3.82. The second highest is the mean score for akhlak towards Allah that is 3.51. Akhlak towards mankind obtained a mean value of 3.38.

6.3. Correlation Between Parenting Style of parents and Akhlak of Respondents

There is a significant relationship between the authoritative parenting style and the adolescent akhlak towards Allah. \( p = 0.02 < \alpha = 0.05, r=0.24 \), the authoritative parenting styles and the adolescent akhlak towards oneself \( p = 0.00 < \alpha = 0.05, r=0.38 \), the authoritarian parenting style and the adolescent akhlak towards oneself \( p = 0.00 < \alpha = 0.05, r=0.34 \). However, there is no significant relationship between the authoritarian and permissive parenting styles with akhlak towards Allah. This study also reveals that there is no significant relationship between authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting style with akhlak towards mankind.

7. Discussion and Recommendations

The findings indicate that majority of the respondents think their parents are authoritative, which are warm, responsive, demanding and involved (with mean score 3.90). These parents are also considerate and give due attention to their children’s point of view and allow the children to give opinions and make certain decisions. Some of the parents have an authoritarian parenting style which shows little warmth and are highly controlling (mean= 3.74). Only a few of respondents deemed their parents to have a permissive parenting style which are very warm but undemanding (mean= 2.40). This is in lined with the findings of several studies done previously. For example, Salasiah Khairollah (2011) found out that most of the respondent’s parents in her research practice an authoritative parenting style (mean= 4.44) followed by authoritarian (mean= 2.89) and permissive (mean= 1.67). Syuaibatul Islamiah Roewardhi (2012) also obtained the same result when she examined the relationship between adolescents’ and single mother parenting styles with the personality profile of the adolescents. She discovered that most of the respondents’ mothers practice authoritative parenting style with mean score of 1.33. Some mothers practice authoritarian (mean= 1.03) and only a few of them practice permissive parenting style (mean= 0.99).

The result of this study is also in lined with the findings obtained by Tay and Tam (2010). In their study entitled, “The Relationship between Perceived Parenting Styles and Stress Levels among Malaysian Secondary School Students”, it was found that the students perceived both their father and mother as authoritative. Besides that, Norhayatunnisha’ Hj, Nordin (2011) investigated two types of parenting style namely authoritative and authoritarian. She stated that the authoritative style was mainly used by parents to nurture their children as compared to authoritarian with mean values of 3.62 and 3.14 respectively.

From the findings it is revealed that there is a significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and authoritarian style towards Allah. In addition, there is also a strong connection between authoritative parenting styles with the adolescent akhlak towards oneself. The result of this study is lined with the study conducted by Salasiah (2011) and Norhaytunnisha (2011) which revealed that there is a positive relationship between authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles with the Islamic personality and spiritual intelligence of the students. This finding is not surprising as authoritative parenting has benefitted adolescent in many aspects. Baumrind (1991) suggests that authoritative parents who favour, responsiveness and nurturing with reasonable control, to be most facilitative in children’s growth of social skill in comparison to authoritarian and authoritative parenting style. It is also helpful in improving the adolescents’ self-esteem, confidence and adaptability enabling them to meet challenges in not only the academic context, but also in other context. Abdorreza and Rozumah Baharudin (2010) also concur with the view that the authoritative parenting style has a positive relationship to the students’ academic performance. Besides that, a study conducted by Kauffmann et al. (2000) which studied the relationship between parenting style and children’s adjustment, also study confirmed that the authoritative parenting style is positively connected with healthy adjustment and decreasing maladjustment as compared to other types of parenting.
In conclusion, this study reveals that majority of the respondents’ parents practice the authoritative parenting style. This is followed by authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. Besides that, the study found the students have good akhlak with high level of akhlak towards oneself. However, actions need to be taken to improve their akhlak towards Allah and mankind.

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