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The Value of Kinship in Educating Children: A Case Study of Homeschooling Practice



Abstract: - This qualitative research is a case study of HSA, which maintains kinship values in its education system. This study aimed to examine the forms of interaction within the community and how structures and kinship values form a practical learning experience for children. Data were collected through observation and interviews to see how kinship values were implemented in learning. According to this study, positive values instilled in families prepare children to cope with the real world. Then, kinship values emerge from HSA's three core values. These values are Islam, growth, and ta'awun. By teaching these values to children, they will be equipped with the necessary skills to lead successful lives to help foster strong families and communities. In addition, the valuable principle that "my children are yours, and your children are mine" further strengthens family values among HSA members. The kinship values emphasize the importance of family, focusing on mutual support and care.

Keywords: homeschooling community, kinship values, learning experiences.

I. BACKGROUND, MOTIVATION, AND OBJECTIVE

In the history of Indonesian education, homeschooling has been a common practice. It is pivotal in facilitating education for children who cannot attend regular schools. Initially, homeschooling was popular for those who lived in metropolitan cities [1] – [3]. Homeschooling received recognition from the government in the Act of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 20, the Year 2003, Part 6 about Informal Education, verses (1) and (2). In verse (1), "Informal education can be in the form of self-learning, provided by families and surroundings". Verse (2) states that "The outcomes of informal education as mentioned in verse (1) shall be recognized as being equal to the outcomes of formal education and non-formal education after passing successfully in an assessment according to national education standards" [1], [2], [4] – [7]. Thus, the author asserts that homeschooling is a legal informal home education facilitated by family and other institutions.

Under the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 129 of 2014, "Homeschooling is a planned and conscious educational process carried out by parents or families in their own homes or other settings conducive to learning". In this regulation, the government specifies that parents who wish to educate their children by homeschooling must report to the local education office at the district or city level [7], [8]. Parents can participate in observing children's learning processes and judging them. Parents can carry out a concept of Plan, Do, Check, and Act (PDCA), for example, determining the children's educational goals, values, and intelligence and skills to be achieved, curriculum, materials, methods, as well as child's learning style [3], [6], [9]. Despite expectations, the reality had not yet come to pass as expected. It has led to misconceptions about homeschooling in society. Home-based education is the last resort because children are not accepted into regular schools [1]. In addition, there is also the assumption that homeschooling is a private school for children of the elite, such as artists and public officials. Social issues also arise [7], [10], [11]. Children who study at home meet face-to-face with teachers or parents, without other learners. As a result, homeschooled students maintain high levels of individualism since they cannot socialize with their peers. Parental knowledge is another critical issue [7], [11], [12]. Unlike official schools with many teachers, parents cannot teach their children everything. Consequently, parents are forced to bring in teachers or join the community to obtain the lessons/abilities they desire, which is costlier. Nowadays, many schools follow a homeschooling model for their curriculum and redesign it to make it more exclusive. Over time, family values became distorted and replaced by social roles established by institutions.

Generally, people view homeschooling as a home-based or family-based school where children study with teachers/parents. Home-based learning can be classified into three types: single homeschooling, homeschooling compound, and homeschooling community [2], [5]. Children study exclusively with their teachers or parents at home in single homeschooling. In the case of more than one child, it is called a homeschooling compound. A

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homeschooling community integrates several compound homeschools into one. Community members' families will determine and compile the syllabus and teaching materials for their learners [5] and plan, organize, implement, and monitor the learning. Law Number 20 of 2003 Article 26 verse (4) states that communities like this have been protected by law: "A non-formal education unit consists of training centers and colleges, study groups, community learning centers, *majelis taklim*, and other education units of the similar type" [4]. In this paper, the author discusses the third type of homeschooling, the homeschooling community.

These types of communities are now common in Indonesia. Various popular instructional methods include Charlotte Mason, Montessori, the Moore Formula, and Unit Study [5]. However, it is critical to note that homeschooling communities tend to be organized by specific institutions. Based on family interviews, this program uses an equated rather than a personal curriculum. Following several case studies, homeschooling communities operate in much the same manner as schools. Several unique features distinguish it.

Recent work by [2] in Mayantara Malang community has found that the schoolhouse combines their peculiarities of activities with the activities of regular schools. There is a curriculum, syllabus, teaching materials, main activities, infrastructure, and learning schedules. The community and family balance the implementation, 50% each [13]. A homeschool is considered an alternative educational institution in the modern era since it can address various problems, incompatibility, and concerns of children and parents toward traditional schools, such as changing curriculums, teacher-centered learning, and inadequate support for diverse learning styles [2], [5] – [7], [10]. Reference [5] even contends that traditional schools often destroy creativity in children by forcing them to learn subjects they do not find enjoyable. Extensive research by [14] on SUN Homeschooling has recognized that it has a similar system to formal schools. It provides an education focusing mainly on the subjects tested in the National Examination. Apart from homeschooling, SUN organizes Package A, B, and C exams. Data from these studies show that the homeschooling system is similar to formal schools because it has a regular study schedule. What differs is the time. Unlike regular schools that start at 7 am and end at 1 pm, Anugrah Bangsa Homeschooling Package A begins at 9 am and ends at noon. The school also has supporting facilities like halls, outbound areas, sports fields, swimming pools, and others [15].

The reasons parents choose the path of homeschooling for their children are different. A survey conducted by [16] at the Charlotte Mason Indonesia Community has shown three main reasons: differences in the ideal educational concept of the family and the government, dissatisfaction with early childhood education schools, and knowledge obtained from the internet. Community values are also crucial for parents to consider. In addition, children receive a comprehensive understanding of family values since their social circle is carefully controlled [3], [6] because they get complete assistance and parental supervision [5], [7], [9].

Although extensive research has been conducted on the homeschooling community, no single study has explained the importance of kinship, as homeschooling is a family-based education. The involvement of parents in the educational process can support the development of children both materially and psychologically. Nevertheless, this role is replaced by the teacher in community schools. If parents submit their children entirely to a homeschooling community school, even if the school uses a homeschooling approach, how does it differ from a regular one?

Previous studies have only identified homeschooling communities with similar systems to conventional schools. The research to date has focused on the homeschooling community system rather than its actual value. The kinship value has been introduced by Homeschooling Arraihan (HSA). It is also organized based on children's interests and the desire to grow together, as the motto says: *Tumbuh Bebarengan* (Growing Together). HSA has combined the concept of homeschooling with traditional education, allowing children to socialize with peers and follow their own curriculum as if they were studying at home. HSA was founded by several families with the same vision and mission, each serving as a facilitator. The curriculum is adapted to the needs and development of each child. Hence, the family is the driving force behind HSA's education program. In this instance, the author will examine HSA, which offers a different model concept. The study examined how the HSA community interacted and how the community structure and kinship values shaped the members' experiences.

II. METHODS

We used an intrinsic case study to understand how the participating families manage this organization to provide their children with the most appropriate education possible through kinship values. According to [17], a case study focuses on a single unit for a detailed description of the issue and a deeper understanding of the case. An intrinsic case study examines the case because it presents an unusual situation [18]. To meet the research objective, the researchers used four steps to analyze qualitative data: (1) highlight certain information in the description; (2) identify patterned regularities; (3) contextualize with the framework from literature; (4) display findings in tables, charts, diagrams, or figures, then provide detail explanation for discussion as suggested by Wolcott (1994) in [18]. The researchers collected data by observing HSA learning processes and interviewing facilitators for a thick

description. There are six daily and weekly facilitators, including two hired facilitators, teaching three groups: *thufulah* class (3-6 years old), *tamyiz A* class (7-11 years old), and *tamyiz B* class (12 years old and up). Direct observation of the daily learning and how the facilitators facilitate it was conducted in HSA. The observation period lasted three weeks, interspersed with interviews to confirm the data we got from the preview and the written document collection. This document is given to each family as a guideline for joining the HSA.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face with the informants using open-ended questions. We used an interview protocol [19] to interview four facilitators from three families, excluding the hired facilitators. We asked the same questions, followed by different follow-up questions, depending on the informants' responses. The answers were recorded during the qualitative interview and later transcribed into verbatim data. By assigning proper codes to relevant data, the next step was to condense the data based on the researchers' purposes. To condense the number of different pieces of data, we grouped the codes into categories, which were then analyzed.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

This section summarizes the analyses of our observations, written documents, and interviews conducted in HSA. To facilitate audience comprehension, this section is organized to answer the research question in sequence. First, the researchers will describe how the interaction happens between students and facilitators. Then, this section will report on the community structure and kinship values that shape the members' experiences.

Results

The Patterns of Interaction in HSA Community

HSA is designed as a controlled environment to practice before interacting with the broader community. In its purpose, HSA is intended to be a place where children can live and interact with an environment other than the one in which they live at home. Despite being friends, children have family ties that cause them to love and care for each other like their own family. Learning is student-centered, where the facilitator assists while paying attention to the student's situation and condition. It was observed that the facilitator did not force students who were not in the mood to study to participate in the lesson. Alternatively, they were assisted in validating their feelings (in the *thufulah* class) or given a moment to be alone (in the *tamyiz* class), as one informant stated:

It's because the *thufulah* class is held by one of the facilitators, who is also a parent, so the kids can express their feelings, like if they're unhappy or upset, they can talk to the facilitator right away. So, in HSA, the bonding was even stronger since the parents (read: facilitators) were always there for the kids.

Aside from the classroom, the children conversed, joked, and played as usual. But what makes them unique is that they look out for and respect each other. There were no foul words exchanged between them. If there is an issue, friends will remind each other. If a friend cries because of another friend, he will apologize with his conscience. If someone is having difficulty, another friend will help. The facilitators explain that each family entails caring for and respecting one another. As a result, the children can implement these values in the HSA environment.

This interaction model is also illustrated in the interviews with facilitators. HSA may be the most appropriate place for their children to grow and learn, especially regarding manners. As stated by one informant, they play well and speak decently, so they can practice before becoming thoroughly accustomed to non-HSA environments. If, for instance, they come home with dirty words, watch inappropriate movies, or do inappropriate things, we don't have to worry. Children already look good, and they have no dirty words in their vocabulary. So, they start socializing in the social environment, but they still control it before experiencing socialization in real life.

Additionally, their interactions are characterized by their *ta'awun* attitude, which involves helping one another. It may be because they have similar family values and care for each other, not only fellow students but also fellow facilitators and between facilitators and students.

The HSA Structure and Kinship Values

HSA is a compound homeschool under the AR Foundation, Yogyakarta. It consists of several families who work together to educate children through homeschooling. Currently, HSA membership consists of 7 families, with 13 students (five preschool students (*thufulah*), six elementary school students (*tamyiz A*), and two junior high school students (*tamyiz B*)) as the primary lesson subject whose learning processes are facilitated by their parents, according to their interests and willingness, or by their recommendation. So far, there are two facilitators hired based on recommendation: *Tahsin* (improving the quality of Al-Qur'an reading) and swimming teachers.

As an organization, HSA is committed to three core values: Islam, growth, and *ta'awun* (the willingness to help others without being asked and expecting rewards), as well as a core mission: to empower families to educate a generation of adults who are civilized, capable, and beneficial to others under Islamic and Indonesian values. This aligns with its vision: to create a generation of civilized, capable, and valuable adults through empowered families, and missions: (1) to empower families as the primary caregivers for children's education; (2) to create a generation of mature Muslims, establish a curriculum and learning activities that are independent and meaningful; (3) to create compound activities to promote Islamic values, growth, and *ta'awun* among family members; and (4)

to build solid partnerships with institutions.

The kinship values come from the three cores. Families in HSA agree to make religion a foundation for their children's education so that the first value is Islam. HSA educational plans must not deviate from religion. From here, children are taught to make decisions from Islam first constantly. Then, from the interviews, it was discovered that these families started HSA from scratch. The current HSA is the result of various experiments conducted in the past. They are trying to find the proper structure, curriculum, and values to adopt. Therefore, the second value is growth because HSA results from learning and discussion together. In the future, HSA will continue to grow into a better homeschooling community. The third value, *ta'awun*, is based on the spirit of mutual help, strengthening the bond between family members. They apply the principle that my child is your child, and your child is my child. A facilitator later confirmed it.

Families who can handle it, those who have resources, can share and don't do it half-heartedly, they can really help everyone. Do not say, "Oh, because I'm the initiator, I'll help others more." Everyone should be willing to help.

Discussions

This study sought to examine the interaction of the HSA community and how kinship values and community structure shaped the members' experiences by reading relevant documents, observing, and interviewing the facilitators. The results generated by these methods are mutually supportive and related. As a result, the vision, mission, and values designed at the beginning are applicable and well-accepted by the families of HSA members. The homeschooling community generally places homeschooling at the center of children's learning and substitutes traditional schools for homeschooling [2], [5], [6], [10], [11]. Therefore, HSA positions itself as a place where children gather to study together, thus providing them with a social environment regularly. The purpose of this community is to provide a learning environment not only for children but also for their parents. This is the basis of HSA's core value, growth. As a participant in HSA, parents learn how to facilitate, parent homeschoolers, and other homeschooling-related skills. Similarly, children will make friends who live in the same environment and, most importantly, have similar family values, so they are more likely to mingle since they have a sense of shared interests. By interacting with each other, parents and children grow into better individuals following their values for their respective families.

According to the findings, two unique features of HSA have not previously been observed in the homeschooling community: interaction as well as family structure and values [2], [14], [16]. Therefore, this community has a compact approach to the design of learning for children. Members of the HSA consider the organization to be their second family environment after the nuclear family. This is the result of interaction and adherence to family values. As the facilitator is also the parent or family member of the students, there is an unusual interaction between the facilitator and the students. At HSA, learning is not based on a scoring system, so the parents' role is to accompany their child's education. There is a slight difference in this role in the *thufulah* class. Apart from accompanying, the facilitator assists the child by providing direction and guidance, similar to the role of a kindergarten teacher. Without a scoring system, facilitators can set low expectations for children, allowing them to follow the learning process at their own pace. In addition, facilitators face the challenge of designing fun learning sessions to attract the children's interest. If so, how does the facilitator report the outcomes of the children's learning? The learning process is of the utmost importance. Upon completion of each lesson, the facilitator will note what is good and what needs to be improved in the WhatsApp group, including any children in a bad mood. Thus, parents can approach their children at home, repeat, or continue the lesson.

A positive interaction also occurs between children. In HSA, each family has values, which based on the interviews, are similar. Parents agree that religion is the foundation of education. Therefore, this value becomes one of the HSA core values. As the core value of religion is instilled into the children, the positive interaction within the children grows, allowing them to benefit from this shared family value. The findings show children who always say kind things and help each other. This positive interaction helps to create a sense of community among the children and allows them to learn essential values and skills from each other. Therefore, HSA becomes an excellent control environment, so children get used to saying kind things and caring for needy people.

This research aligns with the results obtained by [16] that parents choose to homeschool for three reasons: different views on education, dissatisfaction with school, and knowledge obtained from other sources. Based on that, HSA maintains flexibility in the learning schedule and curriculum. The schedule is determined based on the facilitators' availability and families' needs. At the same time, the curriculum is determined depending on each child's needs. What if HSA cannot cover these needs? Parents may consider other learning resources that provide a more supportive environment if this is the case.

Finally, the foundation of HSA is kinship. As HSA was founded on a family basis, all elements are based on this value. The principle 'my child is yours, and your child is mine' provides a solid basis for the development of this community. Facilitators teach them as if they were their own children. HSA believes children can learn independently by exploring the environment and various sources. However, HSA instills manners and good

values. Therefore, HSA's three core values: Islam, growing up, and *ta'awun* are the keys to HSA's structure and kinship values. By reinforcing these values in the homeschooling environment, HSA creates an atmosphere of respect, understanding, and acceptance not found in traditional educational settings. This creates a safe and secure environment for children to learn and grow, allowing them to develop strong relationships with their facilitators and peers. The strong family bond that is formed helps to foster a sense of belonging and security that is not found in other educational settings. It is also for this reason that homeschooling differs from traditional education.

Despite these promising results, questions remain. In light of prior research not discussing kinship value, has the homeschooling community ruled out this possibility? To fully understand this value, additional studies will be needed to examine it further in other homeschooling communities. If these institutions do not impart kinship value, what values do they instill? Furthermore, although this study cannot cover the unanswered questions, the researchers have presented that kinship value should be considered in a home education program to provide meaningful education for the children so that fellow researchers might further interpret the findings in light of their experiences, contexts, and research.

IV. CONCLUSION

Founded with one common objective, HSA prepares children for life in the real world. Accordingly, it recommends the members equip their children with positive values they may apply in the HSA environment. As part of its mission, the environment is designed to be as natural as possible to help them deal with conflict and friendship in their everyday lives. Additionally, HSA adheres to three core values, namely Islam, growth, and *ta'awun*, which form the basis for all its activities.

The study's results indicate that HSA is not only intended for children but for the entire family as well. These three core values make the HSA family values even more substantial. Islam is a common foundation; they learn and develop together with an attitude of *ta'awun*. For HSA, school is a means to build morals and values in children. Even though HSA does not implement a scoring system, this can still be obtained from other learning resources. Nevertheless, at HSA, education is based on morals and kinship.

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