Teacher Communication Culture in Forming Students' Disciplined Character at Jabal Rahmah Mulia Plus Middle School (Boarding School)

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the forms of teacher communication culture implemented at SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia, analyze the strategies teachers use to build effective communication with students, and explain the contribution of teacher communication culture to the development of student discipline. Teacher communication culture plays a crucial role in fostering student discip line, particularly in boarding schools that require intensive supervision and guidance. SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia, as a boarding school, implements an integrated communication system between teachers, female students (musyrifah), and students, both in the classroom and within the boarding school environment. This study employed a descriptive qualitative method, with data collection techniques including interviews, observation, and documentation. The research informants included the principal, the guidance and counseling teacher who also serves as a female student (musyrifah), and students. Data were analyzed using the Miles & Huberman interactive model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings of this study are expected to provide a general overview of effective teacher communication culture practices in instilling student discipline, particularly in boarding schools. Furthermore, the results of this study are also expected to provide input for schools in optimizing teacher communication patterns for better student character development.

Keywords: Communication Culture Teacher, Discipline Character, Boarding School

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Introduction

The problem of student character, particularly related to discipline, remains a major challenge in the world of education today, both in public and boarding schools. Various reports show that in public schools, it is common to find students violating school rules, such as arriving late, not wearing uniforms according to regulations, not doing assignments, and skipping classes (Arifin, 2020). Furthermore, research by Santoso & Yulianti (2022) emphasizes that many students still display behavior that shows a lack of rescpect for teachers, such as speaking rudely, not paying attention during lessons, or ignoring teachers' directions. These cases illustrate that weak disciplinary character is not only an individual issue but is also closely related to the communication patterns established between teachers and students.

Similar problems are also found in boarding schools. Although boarding schools have advantages in terms of supervision and intensive interaction, in reality, not all students are able to adapt to strict regulations. For example, there are still students who are undisciplined in following daily activity schedules, such as being late for congregational prayers, not being serious during night study sessions (mudzakarah), or violating dormitory rules such as using gadgets beyond the allowed time limit (Friatin & Rusli, 2021). This condition shows that rules alone are not enough, an effective communication approach from teachers and dormitory supervisorsis needed so that the value of discipline is truly internalized in students.

One of the fundamental causes of weak student discipline is the communication between teachers and students that is still instructional, one-way, or lacking empathy. When teachers only emphasize rules without building warm and persuasive dialogue, students tend to obey out of compulsion rather than awareness. In fact, open, empathetic, and educational communication can foster a healthy relationship between teachers and students, making it easier for the value of discipline to be understood and practiced in daily life.

Communication is a process of exchanging message between two or more parties that is direct and personal, both verbally and nonverbally. Roem (2023) explains that communication includes listening skills, delivering empathetic messages, and the ability to build relationships based on mutual understanding in various context of education, communication between teachers and students is a very important element in creating a supportive learning environment and building trust.

Communication also plays a major role in improving students' school well-being. A study by Ariansyah, Ahyani, & Indrawati (2024) shows that open and empathetic teacher communication increases student engagement and creates a positive learning atmosphere, especially in Islamic educational settings. Communication that is open and warm can form emotional bonds that serve as the foundation for successful character education. Devito (2022) emphasizes that communication is not merely about conveying information but about shaping attitudes, perceptions, and behavior. In this regard, positive communicative interaction allows teachers to influence character formation, including disciplinary character.

In the context of modern education, character formation cannot rely solely on rules or sanctions. Teachers are required to be role models as well as mentors through consistent, humane, and exemplary communication. This is even more relevant in boarding schools, where interactions between teachers, musyrifah (female dorm mentors), and students are more intensive than in public schools. Boarding schools provide an ideal environment for teachers to instill character values, especially discipline, because the guidance process takes place continuously, both in class and in daily life in the dormitory.

The formation of disciplinary character in boarding school education is not only carried out through rule enforcement but also through the communication built between teachers and students (Friatin & Rusli, 2021). Teachers act not only as educators but also as moral mentors who help students understand moral and faith values gradually (Tumiran et al., 2024). In this regard, communication becomes the key because education is not merely the transmission of

information but a process of mutual understanding involving empathy, firmness, and listening skills (De Vito, 2016).

Discipline is part of character education that aims to shape behavior that adheres to rules and fosters responsibility for one's actions. According to Musbikin (2021), disciplinary character is formed through a continuous process of value internalization by habituation and setting examples. Teachers play a strategic role as role models in shaping disciplined behavior through guidance and supervision carried out with a humanistic approach.

The hadith narrated by Al-Baihaqi (in Syu'ab al-Iman, no. 5311), classified as hasan by Al-Albani (in Silsilah al-Shahihah, no. 1113):

$$إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ إِذَا عَمِلَ أَحَدُكُمْ عَمَلًا أَنْ يُتْقِنَهُ$$

Meaning: "Indeed, Allah loves when anyone among you performs a task, that he perfects it (earnestly and with discipline)."

And in the Qur'an , Allah says in Surah As-Saff (61): 4

$$إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ صَفًّا كَأَنَّهُمْ بُنْيَانٌ مَرْصُوصٌ$$

Meaning: "Indeed, Allah loves those who fight in His cause in rows as though they are a solid structure." (Qs. As-Saff: 4).

This verse illustrates that Allah greatly loves those who strive in His way with order and discipline, like a solid and well-structured building. Allah gives the analogy of them as a strong, unified structure, where each part supports the others. The main message of this verse is the importance of discipline, unity, and order in carrying out duties, especially in doing good or striving in the path of Allah. In the context of education, this verse teaches that strong cooperation, responsibility, and orderliness are noble values loved by Allah.

Both of these evidences affirm that Islam highly upholds the value of discipline. In education, discipline must be instilled from an early age so that students become accustomed to being responsible, organized, and earnest in completing tasks. Positive communication between teachers and students also supports the formation of disciplined behavior and social skills. Intensive interpersonal relationships become an important factor in instilling these values (Nurhalimah et al., 2019). Teachers serve not only as educators but also as role models and mentors in shaping student character (Manshuruddin et al., 2023).

Character is the key to a person's success, and one essential aspect is discipline. Discipline is important to instill from childhood, as it is the right time for character formation. Through discipline, children learn to obey rules, adapt socially, and act according to norms, making it easier for them to be accepted in society (Abdi Syahrial et al., 2020). Wahyuni (2021) states that successful character education is not only based on giving rules but also on communication approaches that build students' awareness and reflection on the meaning of discipline.

A close and communicative relationship between teachers and students has been proven to strengthen the implementation of discipline values, such as punctuality, adherence to rules, and awareness of respecting authority (Arifin, 2020). Santoso & Yulianti (2022) also emphasize that a firm yet empathetic teacher approach has a significant impact on developing students' disciplined behavior. However, in-depth studies on teacher communication patterns in the context of boarding schools are still limited, even though boarding schools have great potential for character building.

In addition to disciplinary character education, the communication culture within the school environment also influences education. School communication culture is a set of values, norms, and communication habits internalized in daily school life. Siregar (2020) states that communication culture shapes interaction patterns that can influence relationships between teachers and students and determine the success of the educational process. A communication

culture that is open, participative, and appreciative of diversity can increase the effectiveness of character building. Harahap (2024) explains that teachers' communication skills in opening and closing lessons are not merely technical procedures but part of shaping a culture of discipline and responsibility in the classroom.

Dafrizal et al. (2023), in their research at Islamic boarding schools, found that intensive and consistent teacher communication strengthens a culture of mutual respect and fosters discipline without authoritarian pressure. Such a communication culture is highly suitable for boarding school environments. In the context of boarding schools, communication culture occurs not only in classrooms but also in interactions outside the classroom. Therefore, the consistency of teachers' attitudes and communication in various situations becomes an important part of forming a strong communication culture that directly affects the success of character education.

Based on the above explanation, this study focuses on how the teacher communication culture at SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia plays a role in shaping students' disciplinary character. This research seeks to explore the communication patterns built by teachers, the strategies used to build closeness with students, and the contribution of these communication patterns to student discipline both at school and in their daily lives in the dormitory.

Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach. This approach was chosen because it aims to describe in depth how teachers' communication culture in the boarding school environment shapes students' disciplinary character. The qualitative approach is used to understand phenomena holistically and deeply through descriptions in the form of words (Sugiyono, 2020). This study is focused on SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia as the research site. The research employs a descriptive qualitative method with data collection techniques through direct observation, interviews, and documentation.

Primary data will be collected from the principal, the guidance and counseling teacher who also serves as a musyrifah, and students through interviews and observations of daily activities in both the dormitory and classroom. Meanwhile, secondary data will be obtained from documents such as school rules, character development programs, and student activity records.

Results

4.1 Interview Results with the Principal (Ustadz Erwin)

1. School Vision and Mission Related to the Formation of Disciplinary Character

According to Ustadz Erwin, "the school's vision and mission related to the formation of students' disciplinary character is to shape students who are independent and disciplined in their daily lives, both in the dormitory and at school. This is carried out through the implementation of standardized systems and regulations established by the school. In addition, the school also instills Islamic character in students through the example of Rasulullah shallallahu 'alaihi wasallam and the implementation of Qur'anic practices they have memorized in their daily lives."

2. Rules and Regulations as the Main Priority

Ustadz Erwin explained that "the main priority in school and dormitory rules is discipline. Discipline becomes the main focus because it is directly related to classroom management and the comfort of the learning process. This applies both inside and outside the classroom, including in worship activities, extracurriculars, and the school's flagship programs such as Tahfizul Qur'an. With discipline, it is expected that a conducive and comfortable learning environment will be created."

3. The Role of Teachers' Communication Culture in Building Discipline

Ustadz Erwin stated that "in supporting the formation of students' disciplinary character, teachers play an active role through good, clear, and persuasive communication. Teachers constantly provide motivation, remind students, and guide them to carry out every activity in an orderly and disciplined manner. Messages are delivered in a gentle yet firm way, so that students feel respected but still understand the importance of obeying the rules.

4. School Policy on Delivering Warnings and Guidance

According to Ustadz Erwin, "the school has clear policies regarding how teachers should deliver warnings and guidance to students. Every week, the school holds coordination meetings between teachers and staff to discuss communication procedures. In giving warnings, teachers are not allowed to discredit students or make them feel inferior. Warnings are given wisely and used as learning for other students so that they do not repeat the same mistakes. In addition, guidance is delivered clearly, in detail, and systematically, while motivation is given to encourage students' enthusiasm, both in learning and in dormitory life."

5. Coordination between Teachers, Musyrifah, and Guidance Counselors (BK Teachers)

Coordination between teachers, musyrifah, and guidance counselors is carried out intensively and continuously. According to Ustadz Erwin, "the process of supervision and the cultivation of discipline is carried out 24 hours a day through close cooperation among educators and dormitory mentors. This coordination aims to ensure that students receive consistent messages regarding rules and discipline, both in the school and dormitory environment."

6. Special Programs for Instilling Student Discipline

SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia has several flagship programs to instill student discipline, including:
a. Islamic Character Program, which instills Islamic values as the foundation for building noble character.
b. 5S Movement (Smile, Say salam, be polite, and be courteous) as part of the students' daily culture.
c. SCPT Program, an abbreviation of (Greet, Kiss Hand, Hug, and Ask How They Are), carried out with parents to build emotional closeness and habituate Islamic manners.
d. Tahfizul Qur'an Activities, which support the development of Islamic character through Qur'an memorization and implementation.

These programs are designed to shape students into individuals with Islamic character, high discipline, and noble morals.

7. Implementation of Reward and Punishment System

According to Ustadz Erwin, "the school applies a balanced system of reward and punishment. Rewards are given to students who show discipline and achievement, while punishments are given to those who commit violations in an educational manner, not excessively. Evaluation results show that this system is effective in improving student discipline because students feel motivated to obey the rules while learning to take responsibility for their actions."

8. Obstacles in Building an Effective Communication Culture

Ustadz Erwin admitted that "one of the biggest obstacles in building a communication culture is the factor of willingness. Although most teachers and staff have practiced fairly effective communication, there are still a few who need to improve their communication skills, both with students and fellow educators."

9. Examples of the School's Success in Improving Discipline

According to Ustadz Erwin, "there are many examples of the school's success in improving student discipline. One of them is the increase in student discipline due to polite and inclusive teacher communication. A positive communication culture creates a comfortable school and dormitory atmosphere, making students feel at home, motivated, and more disciplined."

10. Expectations for Teachers' Communication Culture in the Future

Ustadz Erwin hopes that "all teachers and staff can be role models in behavior and communication. With a good communication culture, it is expected that students will emulate their teachers' behavior, so that disciplinary character and Islamic values can be deeply instilled within them."

He emphasized the importance of the teacher's role as a role model because the success of character formation in students is greatly influenced by the real examples set by educators. (Interview with Ustadz Erwin, Principal of SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia, on August 27, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. WIB).

4.2 Interview Results with the Guidance and Counseling Teacher as well as Musyrifah (Umi Rahmi)

1. Teacher Communication Patterns When Facing Violations

Based on the results of interviews with Umi Rahmi as the guidance and counseling teacher and musyrifah at SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia, it is known that "the communication pattern of teachers in dealing with students who violate the rules is carried out with a clarification and coaching approach. Teachers do not arbitrarily give sanctions or harsh reprimands, but first verify the reasons behind the violations committed by students."

According to Umi Rahmi, "every violation must have a cause. Therefore, teachers need to listen to students' explanations before taking action. After that, teachers provide motivation so that students realize their mistakes and do not repeat them in the future. This approach emphasizes character building rather than mere punishment, in accordance with the principles of effective communication in a boarding school environment."

2. Stages of Giving Warnings, Advice, and Sanctions

According to Umi Rahmi, in the implementation of discipline, SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia applies "a gradual handling system based on the level of violation, which is divided into minor, moderate, and severe violations. The first stage begins with a personal summons for clarification. If the violation is repeated, the school makes an agreement letter containing the student's commitment not to repeat it.

If the violation still occurs, the school applies a quality instrument, namely a form of educational sanction without physical punishment. For example, for students who are late for breakfast, they are required to come 15 minutes earlier the next day. This approach aims to foster students' awareness, responsibility, and discipline gradually."

3. Balance Between Assertiveness and Empathy

Umi Rahmi emphasized "the importance of balancing assertiveness and empathy in teacher communication with students. Empathy is shown through care and affection,

while assertiveness is needed to maintain the authority of school rules. Teachers try to explain that rules are not a form of restriction, but a means to shape a better and more Islamic character. In addition, teachers are also expected to be role models for students. Real examples in daily behavior will make the message of discipline easier to accept."

4. Strategies for Building Closeness with Students

As a guidance and counseling teacher, Umi Rahmi "positions herself not only as an educator, but also as a friend, older sister, and even a parent to students. This approach makes students more open about personal and academic problems.

With warm, caring, and non-judgmental communication, teachers can build a strong bond with students. This is very important in a boarding school environment, where teacher-student interaction takes place more intensively than in regular schools."

5. Point System and Behavior Contract

Umi Rahmi conveyed that in enforcing discipline, the school applies a point system for violations. Each type of violation is given a different point weight, for example:
   a. Minor violations: 1–2 points
   b. Moderate violations: 3–5 points
   c. Severe violations: 25 points
   d. Very severe violations: 45 points

In addition, the school also creates a behavior between the student and the school regarding the consequences of violations committed. This system aims to foster student responsibility and awareness of the rules.

6. Delivery of Dormitory Rules

Umi Rahmi explained that "the delivery of dormitory rules is carried out flexibly and communicatively. The basic regulations have been established through mutual deliberation and ratified by the principal. However, their enforcement is adjusted to the level of student discipline.

If the level of student discipline is good, the rules can be slightly relaxed. Conversely, if violations increase, the rules will be tightened again. Teachers also explain the background of each rule so that students understand the reasons behind it. This approach makes students more accepting of rules as a means of guidance, not restriction."

7. Effective Communication in Fostering Discipline

To foster discipline, Umi Rahmi as guidance and counseling teacher carries out "consistent, persuasive, and collaborative communication. Every day, teachers remind students to obey the rules. In addition, the school collaborates with the Student Repsentative Council, which acts as the teachers' extension in maintaining student discipline.

This approach is also balanced with a reward system. Every month, the school gives awards to students, rooms, or groups that excel and have the best behavior. This system creates a balance between sanctions and positive motivation."

8. Handling Students Who Often Violate Rules

According to Umi Rahmi, "basically, there are no students who are truly naughty. The challenge is to find the right communication approach. For students who often violate the rules, teachers try to build personal relationships by positioning themselves as friends.

In addition, students who often violate are given special responsibilities to increase their self-confidencce and make them feel valued in the school environment. This strategy is effective in making students easier to direct and more motivated to change."

9. Teacher Exemplary in Forming Islamic Character

Teacher exemplary is an importantt factor in the formation of student discipline and Islamic morals. Teachers are required to provide real examples in daily behavior, both in dress, speech, and attitude. For example, if the teacher asks students to wear long hijabs and dress syar'i, then the teacher must also apply it. Consistency between teachers' words and actions makes students respect the rules more and easily emulate positive behavior.

10. Changes in Student Behavior through Communication Approach

The results of interviews with Umi Rahmi show that "a persuasive, empathetic, and trust-based communicationapproach has a significant impact on changes in student behavior. Many students who initially often violated the rules became more disciplined after teachers gave attention and built good emotional relationships. This approach proved effective in fostering discipline as well as shaping students' Islamic character."

11. Obstacles in Discipline Development

According to Umi Rahmi, "the biggest obstacle in discipline development dose not come from students, but from the lack of support and cooperation from parents. There are still some parents who do not understand or even interfere with school rules. In fact, character formation in students will be more effective if there is cooperation between teachers and parents. Good communication between school and family becomes an important factor in the successs of guidance."

12. Coodination Between Teachers and the Principal

Umi Rahmi stated that to maintain consistency in rule implementation, the school "holds coordination meetings regularly, at least once every two weeks. These meetings discuss academic development , student behavior, and emerging problems, as well as seek solutions together. This teamwork approach shows that fostering student discipline requires collaboration between teachers, homeroom teachers, the principal, and other related parties."

13. Ideal or Most Appropriate Communication Culture

According to Umi Rahmi, "the ideal communication culture at SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia is healthy, polite, and persuasive communication. Teachers try to use gentle, polite, and easy-to-understand language for students, even when giving reprimands. Such a communication culture is more effective in shaping students' discipline and Islamic morals because messages are delivered in a non-judgmental but educational way." (Interview with Umi Rahmi, Guidance and Counseling Teacher as well as Musyrifah at SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia, on September 2, 2025, at 16.00 WIB).

4.3 Interview Results with a Grade IX Student of SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia (Aida)

1. View on School and Dormitory Rules and Regulations

Aida explained that "the school and dormitory regulations are basically similar to those of regular schools. However, the rules in the dormitory are stricter than in regular schools because the number of students who need to be supervised is larger. This is done to ensure a disciplined, safe, and conducive dormitory environment for all students."

2. How Teachers or Musyrifah Deliver Warnings and Rules

According to Aida, "the delivery of rules or warnings is usually done directly and collectively through evening briefings that are routinely held in the dormitory. Teachers and musyrifah often provide explanations about the importance of discipline and remind students about the axisting rules and regulations."

3. Motivation frm Teachers and Musyrifah about the Importance of Discipline

Aida revealed "that teachers and musyrifah often give motivation about the importance of discipline, both in school and in the dormitory. This is necessary because there are still some students who lack discipline, for example in terms of punctuality and adherence to rules. According to the student, common disciplinary violations include being late to class, being late to go to the mosque for congregational prayers, and not wearing the uniform according to the rules."

4. The Influence of Teacher and Musyrifah Communication on Rule Acceptance

According to Aida,"good communication between teachers, musyrifah, and students makes it easier for them to accept and understand the rules. Rules delivered through clear and persuasive communication help students distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behavior."

5. Differences in Communication Style between Teachers in Class and Musyrifah in Dormitory

Aida "considered that there is no significant difference between the communication style of teachers in the classroom and musyrifah in the dormitory. Both deliver advice and warnings in easier for students to accept without feeling pressured."

6. Forms of Closeness between Teachers, Musyrifah, and Students

Aida stated that "one example of the closeness between teachers and students is by holding seminars on discipline. Through these activities, students become more aware of the importance of discipline, both for school life and as preparation for entering the world of work or higher education."

7. The Influence of Teacher Exemplary on Student Discipline

Aida stated :that teacher exemplary behavior has a great influence on their conduct. Teachers who are punctual, neat, and diligent in worhip set a real example for students to behave similarly. Conversely, if teachers often break the rules, students tend to imitate them."

8. The Influence of Teacher Communication Culture on School and Dormitory Atmosphere

According to Aida, "the communication culture of teachers greatly affects the learning atmosphere. If teachers and musyrifah communicate politely and create a positive atmosphire, students feel more comfortable and enthusiastic about learning. Conversely, if communication is harsh or rude, the school and dormitory environment can become tense and less conducive."

9. Suggestions for Improving Teacher and Musyrifah Communication

Aida "suggested that teachers and musyrifah should be firmer in delivering rules and advice. According to her, if teachers and musyrifah are too lenient, some students may take the rules lightly and find it difficult to develop discipline." (Interview with Aida, Grade IX student of SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia, conducted on September 4, 2025, at 17.00 Wib).

Conclusion

Based on a series of interviews with the principal, the guidance and counseling teacher/musyrifah, and the students of SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia, it can be concluded that the formation of students' disciplinary character is strongly influenced by the communication culture established within the school environment. Teachers, musyrifah, and the school consistently act as role models who provide direction, guidance, and supervision through polite, firm, and persuasive communication.From the interview results, it appears that the principal emphasizes the importance of integrating Islamic values into both the learning system and dormitory life. The guidance and counseling teacher as well as the musyrifah focus more on daily practices, particularly in providing assistance, reprimands, and constructive motivation. Meanwhile, students acknowledge that the teachers' warm, friendly, and caring communication makes them feel more respected and motivated to obey the established rules.

The communication strategies implemented include fair application of rewards and punishments, the use of a point system, behavioral contracts, and special programs such as Tahfizul Qur'an, the 5S movement, and SCPT activities involving parents. All of these strategies not only enforce discipline but also cultivate positive habits rooted in Islamic values. Teachers do not merely reprimand or punish, but strive to instill an internal awareness that discipline is part of worship and a responsibility as Muslim students.

The key conclusion that can be drawn is that the teacher's communication culture serves as the main bridge between school rules and students' acceptance of those rules. Without effective communication, the rules tend to be perceived merely as a burden. However, through persuasive, empathetic, and consistent communication, the rules are instead understood as a shared necessity for the students' own good. This is what has led to a significant improvement in students' discipline at SMP Plus Jabal Rahmah Mulia over time. Thus, it can be affirmed that the formation of discipline at this school does not solely rely on strict regulations, but also on a communication pattern that is humanistic, religious, and exemplary.This proves that teachers' interpersonal communication is an effective strategy capable of producing a generation of students who are not only disciplined in behavior but also possess strong awareness, responsibility, and Islamic moral values.

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