

CULTIVATION OF LEADERSHIP CHARACTER ON EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH THE STORY OF QUEEN BALQIS

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Abstract: This article aims to know how the method of planting leadership character into early childhood through the story of Queen Balqis. The story of Queen Balqis is recounted in the Qur'an surah an-Naml. The story of Queen Balqis originated from the news brought by the bird Hud-Hud to the Prophet Sulaiman about a country led by a woman. The land of Saba ' was called by God in the Qur'an as the country of *Baldatun thoyyibatun wa robbun ghofurun* (a safe and prosper country and receiving forgiveness from God). There are several characteristics of Queen Balqis, namely: have a big effect, democratic, intelligent, giving priority to the safety of her people and the Knights-at-heart. The period of early childhood is the period of the golden age, which at this time is very important to develop the character of children's leadership to become qualified leaders and private. The method of planting leadership character into early childhood through the story of Queen Balqis could be through the way of watching movies, talking, conversation, role-playing, and the example method of conditioning.

Keywords: Leadership Character, Early childhood, The Story of Queen Balqis

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is the figure of the individual who is undergoing a process of rapid and fundamental developments with for later life. Early childhood is in the range of 0-8 years.¹ The article 28 of constitution number 20 the year 2003 about National Education System reveals that which includes early childhood is children in the age range 0-6 years.²

In early childhood, it was called the Golden Age, where at this time the child's brain development increased rapidly. Based on neurological studies, when children are born, the baby's brain contains around 100 billion neurons that are ready to make connections between cells during the first years. The baby's brain develops very rapidly by producing trillions of connections between neurons that

¹Yuliani Nurani Sujiono, *Konsep Dasar Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, (Jakarta: PT. Indeks, 2012), p. 6.

² Undang-undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional, p. 20.

exceed the number of needs. The connection of the trillions must be strengthened through various psychosocial stimuli. Because if the connection is not reinforced by psychosocial stimuli will experience atrophy (shrinkage) and destroyed which in turn will affect the level of intelligence of children. In another study, it was revealed that about 50% of the capabilities of human intelligence occur when a child is four years old. 80% has occurred at the age of 8 years and reached the culmination point when a child is around 18 years old. One essential thing to do at this time is the formation of early childhood leadership character, especially in leading oneself to become an independent, honest, fair and quality person.

Leadership is a relationship that affects each other between leaders and followers to achieve a goal. Queen Balqis is a great leader who is told in the Al-Qur'an Surah An-Naml. He is a wise leader, unhurried in making decisions, democratic, intelligent, concerned with the interests of the people, influential, and spirit of knights. By understanding the story of Ratu Balqis's leadership told in the Qur'an, students are expected to be able to become good leaders in the future, especially in leading themselves. The purpose of this paper is to find out how the method of planting early childhood leadership characters through the story of Queen Balqis.

THE CHARACTER OF LEADERSHIP

There are 400 definitions of leadership; some say that leadership is an activity to influence others. Other explanations also reveal that leadership is a process to affect group activities to obtain agreement on common goals. Different opinions reveal that leadership is a relationship that affects each other between leaders and followers.³ But according to the author, the leadership is a process to control the behavior of other people or other people to achieve a goal, but that does not mean that everyone who affects others for a purpose is called a leader.

According to Kadar Usman, the leadership is divided into three, namely: (1) Self Leadership; (2) Team Leadership; and (3) Organizational Leadership. The self-leadership that is meant is to lead yourself so that you don't fail to live your life. Team Leadership is defined as leading others. The leader is known as the team leader who understands what the responsibility of his leadership is, explores the condition of his subordinates, his willingness to merge with the demands and consequences of his duties, and commits to bring each of his assistants to explore their capacity to produce achievements highest. Whereas organizational leadership is seen in the context of an organization led by organizational leaders

³ Fridayana Yudiaatmaja, "Kepemimpinan: Konsep, Teori dan Karakternya", *Jurnal Media Komunikasi FIS* Vol 12, No 2 Agustus 2013, p. 29-30.

who are able to understand the business breath of the company they lead, build their vision and mission of business development, willingness to merge with the demands and consequences of social responsibility, and high commitment to make the company he leads as a bearer of blessings for the community both at the local, national and international levels.⁴

The following are the ten characters that need to be owned by a leader of the future, which is often expressed by the leading experts in the fields of leadership, namely:

1. Be honest. Showing sincerity and integrity in all its actions. The manipulative behavior will not foster trust;
2. Competent, namely the action of the leaders based on the minds, attitudes and moral principles or not making decisions based on desire, feeling, or other emotional factors which is too subjective;
3. Think ahead. Having goals and vision of the future. Effective leaders to imagine (having an obsession and imagination) what they want and how to get it. They usually choose priorities that come from their fundamental values. The totality of the organization must own such a vision;
4. Inspire, able to demonstrate credibility and originality in everything he did. Show the example and resilience in mental, physical, and spiritual stamina, which is armed with the credibility of this leader will inspire others to reach for new achievements, and will be risking his reputation when necessary;
5. Smart, greedy and fond of reading, learning, and ever hungry looking for a challenging task;
6. Fair (fairness), able to demonstrate fair treatment for everyone. Recognizing that prejudice is the enemy of Justice. Be empathetic and sensitive to the feelings, values, interests, and well-being of others;
7. Broad-minded, love the diversity, rich perspective and have foresight;
8. Brave-have the perseverance to achieve the goal, despite facing risks or obstacles. Always showing poise and confidence although in stressful conditions;
9. Straightforward – Has good judgment about a variety of issues, and use it to make the best decision at the right time; and
10. Imaginative–being able to make changes promptly, using forethought, planning, and the correct method anyway. Also capable of showing creativity

⁴ Ibid.,

by creating new goals better, as well as find innovative ideas and solutions or new resolution to solve the problem.⁵

CHARACTERISTICS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING

According to Mbak Itaz, early childhood is a child who is in the age range 0-6 years⁶ or age range 0-8 years according to the description of Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP).⁷ This age is a significant age (golden age) where stimulation of all aspects of its development plays a vital role in the task of further age development. Mansur also stated that early childhood is a group of children who are in the process of growth and development that are unique. The opinions above indicate that at this age children experience growth and development which includes all aspects, both aspects of language, emotional, intelligence, gross motoric and excellent motor skills.

Solehuddin identified some characteristics of early childhood as follows:

1. Children are unique.
Children as individuals are different from other individuals. This difference can be seen from the innate aspects, interests, motivations, and experiences gained from their respective lives. It means that even though there are references to the pattern of child development in general, and the reality of children as individuals developing with different potentials.
2. Children express their behavior relatively spontaneously.
Spontaneous expression of behavior by the child will show that the behavior raised by the child is original or not covered up. In other words, no barrier can limit the expression felt by the child. The child will argue or oppose if he feels dislike. So it is with anger, pleasure, sadness, and crying if a situation that matches that expression stimulates him.
3. Children are active and energetic.
Moving actively for preschoolers is a pleasure that sometimes looks as if there is no end. This active and energetic attitude will appear more intense if he faces a new and enjoyable activity.
4. The child is egocentric.

⁵ Faisal Afiff, 10 Karakter Kepemimpinan Masa Depan, http://www.feb.unpad.ac.id/upload/file/kepemimpinan_masa_depan_faisal_afiff.pdf, diakses tanggal 3 September 2018.

⁶ Mbak Itadz, *Memilih, Menyusun dan Menyajikan Cerita Untuk Anak Usia Dini* (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2008), p. 1.

⁷ Bredekamp, *Developmentally Appropriate Practices In Early Childhood Program, Serving Children From Brith Through Age 8*, NEAYC, Washington, 1978, p. 98.

The egocentric nature of the child causes him to tend to see and understand things from his point of view and interests.

5. Children have an energetic and enthusiastic curiosity about many things.
Children at this age also have the nature of paying much attention, discussing and questioning various things that are seen and heard especially regarding new things.
6. Children are explorative and adventurous.
There is an urge for the curiosity that is very happy to try, explore, and want to learn new things. This characteristic, for example, can be seen when children wish to dismantle existing toys.
7. Children are generally rich in fantasy.
Children love imaginative things. Therefore, they can tell stories beyond their experience. This nature has implications for learning that storytelling can be used as a method of learning.
8. Children are still easily frustrated.
The nature of frustration is indicated by anger or crying when an event does not match what he wants. This trait is also related to other characteristics such as spontaneity and egocentricity.
9. Children still lack consideration in doing something.
Whether an activity can be dangerous or not to him, a child of danger does not have careful consideration for it. Therefore the child's environment, especially for the sake of learning, needs to be protected from dangerous things or circumstances.
10. Children have a short attention span.
Children generally have a short attention span except for things they like.
11. Children are the most likely learning age.
By learning some traits and potential that exist in children, such as curiosity, being active, explorative and having a stronger memory, it can be said that at the age of children there is a potential learning opportunity. It is said potential because at this age the child can quickly experience a change which is the essence of the learning process. Therefore, the learning environment for children needs to be developed according to their potential.
12. Children increasingly show interest in friends.

Children have a high desire to be friends. Children can get along and work with other friends.⁸

Learning in early childhood is more oriented on the development of (Developmentally Appropriate Practice/DAP). Three essential things underlie this development-based learning, i.e., age, characteristics of the children individually, and socio-cultural context. In its application, learning-based development focuses on the following points: (1) child development holistically, (2) individual program, (3) the importance of children's initiatives, flexible (4), (5) played as a vehicle of learning, curriculum (6) integrated, continuous assessment (7), (8) partnered with parents and the community to support early childhood development.⁹

With the learning activities in early childhood, the approach can be used for the adoption, i.e., the approach process, concrete, holistic and discovery. Approach the process realized in the form of granting special aid and motivation while doing the learning activities. A holistic approach was made in the style of contextual learning. Learning implementation strived to stimulate all the dimensions of child development comprehensively. Discovery approach can give the opportunity to the children to develop the ability to observe, identify, experiment, explore, interpret, and concluding observations.¹⁰

THE STORY OF QUEEN BALQIS

The story of Ratu Balqis is told in the Qur'an surah an-Naml, the story of Queen Balqis stems from the news carried by the Hud-hud bird to Prophet Solomon about a country led by a woman. The Qur'an does not mention the name of the leader of the country, but the commentaries have explained that the name of the leader of the country is Balqis. Al-Hasan al-Basri said that the leader of the Saba'country was named Ratu Balqis bint Syarahil, his father named Syarahil bin Dzil Jadn. Qatadah said that Queen Balqis's mother was a female genie in Saba's country because it was the heel of Ratu Baqis's foot like a horse. Zuhair ibn Muhammad said that Balqis bint Syarahil ibn Malik ibn Rayyan, his mother was a female fari'ah jin. Ibn Juraij said that Balqis's mother was named Balta'ah.¹¹

'Saba' is called by Allah in the Qur'an as a country that *Baldatun thayyibatun wa robbun ghofurun* (a safe country, sure to be prosperous and forgive from God).¹²

⁸ Solehuddin, *Konsep Dasar Pendidikan Prasekolah*, (Bandung: IKIP Bandung, 1997), p. 26-28.

⁹ Anita Yus, *Model Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, (Jakarta: Kencana, 2011), p. 67-69.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 69.

¹¹ Ibnu Kasir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an an-Najm Juz 19*, terj. Bahrul Abu Bakar (Bandung: Sinar Baru Algensindo, 2004), p. 281.

¹² Al-Qur'an, 34:15.

Hearing that expression would certainly not be far from the leadership role of the ruler of the state of Saba', namely Queen Balqis. Although at that time Queen Balqis was a sun worshiper she had an extraordinary character of leadership. Balqis is a leader who is democratic, full of empathy, fair and prioritizes the welfare of his people. There are several characteristics of Queen Balqis as a leader, namely:

1. Have a Great Influence.

Ratu Balqis is a leader who is highly respected and adhered to by his followers, the prosperous Saba 'kingdom describes a leader who has a large area in managing his people. Every decision given by the Queen is strictly adhered to by her people. Narrated in the Qur'an when the royal dignitaries consulted with the Queen and expressed their opinions, they still gave the final decision to the Queen.¹³ When the Queen ordered them to worship the sun, they were also submissive and obedient to the Queen and after the Queen received the preaching of the Prophet Solomon the people also followed the Queen's decision to worship Allah SWT.

2. Democratic.

A good leader is a leader who wants to listen to the voice of his people, maybe that is reflected in the leadership of Ratu Balqis. It was told when Queen Balqis received a letter from Prophet Sulayman; then he gathered his authorities to ask for opinions in the deliberation. "Balqis said: O princes, give me consideration in my affairs, I have never decided on an issue before you are in my assembly." Ratu Balqis never decides a matter before hearing in advance the opinions of the royal authorities, regardless of whether or not opinions which will be put forward by the royal superior of Saba 'the Queen will still hear it. Deliberation is the essence of Islamic teachings that must be applied in the social life of Muslims. Pre-Islamic Arabic traditions that have been passed down for generations. In Islam, this tradition is maintained because shura is a constant demand of human nature as a social being. Although Queen Balqis is still an infidel, she has been able to instill a government that is in accordance with what is taught by the government in accordance with what is taught by Islam. This command to pray is as found in the Qur'an of the Surah Ash-Shura': 38, "and (for) those who receive (obey) his Lord shout and established prayer, are their affairs (disconnected) and deliberation among them; and they spend most of the money that we give to them. " (QS. Ash-Shura: 38)

¹³ Al-Qur'an, 27:33.

3. Smart.

The intelligence of Queen Balqis was reflected when she considered her dignitaries when responding to a letter from Prophet Solomon. The royal princes tend to want to wage war and resistance to the Prophet Solomon, but the Queen is more aware of the consequences that will occur if they fight with war. Ratu Balqis said that "Indeed when kings conquer a country, they certainly destroy it, and make their noble inhabitants despicable; and so will they do. "The words about kings are based on past historical experience. Usually, they kill or captivate and expel the royal authorities or the government they defeat, thereby insulting and humiliating them."¹⁴

Queen Balqis chose to send gifts to Prophet Sulaiman, the gifts sent could be regarded as bribes or peaceful appeals for not fighting. The intelligence of Ratu Balqis was tested by Prophet Solomon when the throne of the Queen's kingdom was moved to the kingdom of Prophet Solomon. When Queen Balqis arrived in the kingdom of Prophet Solomon, Solomon asked the Queen "is this your throne?". Indeed, the throne which was in the kingdom of Solomon was indeed the throne of Queen Balqis, but how could a throne guarded by a door closed and guarded tightly by its bodyguards could be in the kingdom of Solomon. Answering Prophet Solomon's question, Queen Balqis was very careful, because Prophet Solomon's question invited "yes" or "no" answers. And the answer given by the Queen was right, "He replied As if this throne was my throne," he did not reject and did not set.¹⁵ It shows how smart the Queen was to respond to the question and greatness of Prophet Solomon.

4. Noting the Safety of the People.

Queen Balqis is a leader who prioritizes the safety and welfare of the people. The queen who likes peace because she knows the impact of the war that will destroy her people, so she chooses to send a gift in return for a letter given by Solomon. This policy, in addition to referring to a graceful political strategy, also reflects the personality of women who do not like war, anarchism and prefer to use deceit and subtle ways before deploying weapons.¹⁶

5. Soulless Knights.

¹⁴ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Misbah, Pesan, Kesan dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* Vol. 9, (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2007), p. 440.

¹⁵ Sayyid Quthb, *Tafsir fi Zhilalil-Qur'an Jilid 8, Terj. As'ad Yasin* (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2004), p. 402.

¹⁶ Asgar Ali Engineer, *Perempuan dalam Pasungan*, Terj. Agus Nuryanto, (Jogjakarta: LkiS, 2003), p. 77.

Queen Balqis proclaimed herself to be the person who surrendered to Lord Solomon after Prophet Sulayman showed terrific wonders. After feeling confident about what she saw, Queen Balqis did not think again to express her faith because it took into account feelings of prestige or other tendencies related to her position as a leader. In this context, Queen Balqis is a mirror of the ideal of a leader, because the strategic position that she holds as a leader does not prevent her from behaving as she is and knight in distinguishing truth and falsehood also acknowledges the mistakes she has been doing.

METHODS FOR PLANTING LEADERSHIP CHARACTERS IN EARLY CHILDREN THROUGH BALQIS QUEEN STORY

Etymologically, the method means a systematic mechanism to facilitate the implementation of activities in achieving an objective. The learning method is defined as a systematic way to perform the action or activities promoting the achievement of the purpose of learning objectives that are desired. Planting early childhood leadership character through the story of Queen Balqis could be through the method of watching movies, the storytelling, conversations, role-playing, exemplary, and habituation conditioning method.

1. The method of watching movies, namely the process by which students and teachers are gathered in a room with various learning media such as laptops, projectors, and sound systems to watch the story of Queen Balqis with Prophet Solomon.
2. Storytelling method tells the story of an event to students. This method is beneficial given to students to convey educational values or character values of leadership.
3. The conversation method, which is activities include conversations or question and answer between children and teachers or between children and children.
4. The role-playing method, namely the method of learning to play a role to solve problems related to social phenomena, problems involving relations between humans and so on.
5. Exemplary methods, namely methods that are based on examples of behavior shown by parents and educators. This method will be easier to apply to early

childhood, considering that one of the characteristics and uniqueness of early childhood is to imitate what he sees and will do.¹⁷

6. Habitual methods. Habit is individual behavior that is automatic without the students being planned first and for granted without thinking about it. With the habituation of education provides an opportunity for students to get used to practicing the character of leadership, both individually and in groups in everyday life. Starting from this habituation, students familiarize themselves with following the rules that apply in the community. In fostering attitudes, habituation approaches conducted by educators to students; it will be easy for these students to do what they are accustomed to. When students are still young, they are always accustomed to be a good leader, so the students will be accustomed to implementing it.

CONCLUSION

Some conclusions in this paper include the **first** early age is a significant age for children's development, so it is called the "golden age." At this time the cognitive development of children has reached 50% when children are four years old, 80% when children are eight years old, and even 100% when children are 18 years old. Second, one significant thing to do at this time is the formation of early childhood leadership character, especially in leading oneself to become an independent, honest, fair and quality person. Queen Balqis is an excellent leader figure told in the Al-Qur'an Surah An-Naml. She is a wise leader, unhurried in making decisions, democratic, intelligent, concerned with the interests of the people, influential, and spirit of knights. Third, by understanding the story of Queen Balqis's leadership told in the Qur'an, students are expected to be able to become good leaders in the future, especially in leading themselves. Fourth, planting leadership characters to early childhood through the story of Queen Balqis can be through methods of watching movies, storytelling, conversation, role-playing, exemplary, and habituation.

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Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir Online.

¹⁷ Muhammad Fadlillah, *Desain Pembelajaran PAUD: Tinjauan Teoritik dan Praktik*, (Jogjakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media), p. 163-175.

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