

**CHILDREN INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION TOWARDS  
PARENTS IN *AL-ADAB AL-MUFRAD* BY MUHAMMAD BIN ISMAIL  
AL-BUKHARI**

***Komunikasi Interpersonal Anak Terhadap Ibu Bapa Di Dalam Al-Adab Al-Mufrad oleh  
Muhammad Bin Ismail Al-Bukhari***

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**Abstract**

This article explains the proper *adab* of communication towards parents based on the teaching of the Prophet (PBUH) as recorded in the chapter of “*Adab towards Parents*” in *al-Adab al-Mufrad*. Communication between child and parents are important as it strengthen their relationship with each other. This study highlighted the proper communication towards parents as most of the Muslim children has greatly affected by the modernisation of lifestyle and the outburst of modern technology in communication. Their communication towards parents are way from the teaching of the Prophet (PBUH) and against the values of Islam. This is a content analysis study which involves library research. The objective here is to elucidate the communication towards parents according to the teaching of the Prophet (PBUH). This study found that it is not an easy task to practice good interpersonal communication to parents however, the *ahadith* (the Prophet’s (PBUH) sayings, teachings and practices from the *adab* in the book *al-Adab al-Mufrad* will enable the children to improve their way of communication towards parents.

Keywords: *adab*, communication, teaching of the Prophet (PBUH), *al-Adab al-Mufrad*

**INTRODUCTION**

Communication between children and parents is essential to build a harmonious and positive relationship between them. In Islam, it is important to establish good relationship through good communication between the children and the parents. According to Hasniza et al. (2011) communication is one of the most important elements in addressing issues that arise in a family and it will lead towards a harmonious family. Positive and effective communication has been identified as the basis for a close family relationship and a loving relationship between them.

The teaching of the Prophet (PBUH) is the main source after the Qur’an to guide proper communication towards parents. Good and proper communication towards parents is obligatory for the children as this will prevent children from uttering rude words towards parents. Children should emulate the teaching and practices of the Prophet’s (PBUH) communication towards the elders and his companions. The Prophet’s (PBUH) teachings, practices and emphasis on good communication with the parents are recorded in the book *al-Adab al-Mufrad* compiled by Muhammad bin Ismail al-Bukhari (194H – 256H). It provides the necessary guidelines and teachings of good communication towards parents.

**Communication in Islam**

Communication as an important basic part of human life and it is an everyday activity that is connected with all of human life. Communication are influenced by surrounding based on individual and societal belief, values, rituals, norms, and culture which are practiced in the society. Human communication comes in different forms as it can be intrapersonal communication, small group communication and public communication (Azad, 2015).

Islam lays certain factors, rules, and regulation to guide all types of interpersonal communication in the Qur'an, hadith, and Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH). Islam also demands good interpersonal communication in all situation. For this good communication, the guidance from the sources mentioned will help in the interaction between one another among Muslim and towards others. Thus, it will also create good relationship and strengthen brotherhood (Olayiwola, 1993). Islam sees interpersonal communication in a wider contact as compared to the conventional rules and principles of communication theories. For the Muslims, this interpersonal communication occurs not only between two or more person communicates with each other, but it also involves the relationship of man and his Creator. As for interpersonal communication between a person to the other, it is constructed on the reality where they need one another for the essentials in their livelihood (Nadvi, 2014).

Communication is not only limited to verbal action, but it also encompasses of the non-verbal actions. This non-verbal communication in most time speaks louder than the spoken ones. It involves in the movement of the body which compliment with the verbal communication (Kamaruddin et al., 2012). Velentzas & Broni (2014) argued that interpersonal communication may also occur intentionally or unintentionally verbally or non-verbal. It can be an act of exchanging of thoughts or ideas. The exchange of thoughts and ideas can be expressed by gestures, signs, signals, speech or writing. Communication happens when a person communicates with others on certain matter either directly or indirectly as in talking on the telephone or when exchanging information through letters to others.

Interpersonal communication is more to communication interaction based on religion either verbally or non-verbal and this involve two or more persons interact with one another on common grounds or interest. In Islam, in the case of good interpersonal communication between one another creates good relationship or bad relationship. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was someone who understood the importance of communicating with people. He establishes good dialogue with people and to communicate he took into account the psychological peculiarities of the individual and society (Khalil, 2016).

According to Omer (2016), everyday communication is not only about communicating effectively but there are ethics of speech that needs to be observed into especially in interpersonal communication to others where verbal and non-verbal communication involved. Bearing this fact, the act of interpersonal communication could influence the quality of relationships between one another.

### **Current Children Interpersonal Communication towards Parents**

Current explosion of modern technology in the era of globalization, interpersonal communication of children towards parents have changed tremendously. It has a strong influence in their life specifically the mass media. Mass media as one of the tools of information and communication technology is widely used. It influences individuals that effect attitudes and daily social relationships. Therefore, these changes may lead to a positive or negative attitude. The influence of modern technology is one of the reasons children unable to communicate well with parents. The mass media gradually brought society into a new cultural pattern and began to change the thought patterns and cultural behaviour of a person (Sohana Abdul Hamid, 2016).

Nahar et al. (2018) argues that the development of mass media and today's technology especially gadgets and various devices that apply the latest invention to some extent have contributed negative effect to individuals. This technological development leaves a profound impact on children's lives especially in their relationship with people around them due to lack of direct communication between them. They spend a lot of time watching television, playing electronic devices, surfing the internet and social media. They isolated themselves and unable to interact effectively especially towards parents. They limited time to communicate with parents or

family members. Some children today are less likely to communicate with parents due to enjoyment of surfing the internet or playing gadgets. They are comfortable interacting with parents through the medium of modern technology and this has widened the gap between children with parents.

In term of conflicts that affect children interpersonal communication with parents, there are factors that contribute to these actions. Clarke, Preston, Raksin, & Bengtson (1999), brought up the existence of several conflicts that affect the relationship and cause communication breakdown between the children and parents. Some parents do not understand the children due to conventional thinking. The presence of communication differences between them due to the style of conversation among the children today. Children are more independent and speak freely, sometime beyond the ethical boundary. Furthermore, children currently have different attitudes and different perspective views in their lifestyle choices. These children like to spend on things for their own satisfaction and this cause disagreement from their parents who prefer them to be more frugal. This causes dissatisfaction and uneasiness for both parties as the parents are more conservative.

According to Kamaruddin et al. (2012) quality time among family members to communicate to each other has reduced due to the factors discussed above. Most parents are a working parent where they spent more time working to provide comfort for the family. On the other hand, the children too are occupied with strenuous academic activities and spend more time surfing the internet and computer related thus making it harder for parents and children to communicate with each other. This will relate to misconduct of the children towards parents and both parties feel depressed and lonely.

Further on children's communication towards parents, Aziyah (2015) argues, cultural influences also play an important role in contributing unpleasant interaction between children and parents. Parents from Asian countries still adhere to their respective cultures where it is necessary to communicate in a way that can help maintain harmonious relations as well as avoid conflicts. The children are pressured with this situation and they become bored because the parents do not want to be tolerant and accept their views. This leads to communication breakdown between them. On the other hand, for the families in western countries the children are more offensive and aggressive while communicating with parents. This causes tension in the relationship especially for parents who still practice traditional culture.

### ***Al-Adab al-Mufrad* in Communication of Children towards Parents**

In Islam, the source of building good communication towards parents are the Qur'an and the teaching of the Prophet (PBUH) through the *hadith* and his *Sunnah*. Good communication towards parents is very much in line with the concept of *Bir al-Walidain*. In *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, Imam al-Bukhari asserts that the *adab* of communication towards parents is important. He collected the favourable interpersonal communication from the teaching of the Prophet (PBUH) with his companions through the hadith. These discipline on *adab* of communication towards parents are clearly stated in the special chapter on parents.

The teachings of the Prophet (PBUH) on communication in *al-Adab al-Mufrad* outline good interpersonal and the atrocious communication between children towards parents. Following these teachings will build good relationship between children and parents. Imam al-Bukhari in *al-Adab al-Mufrad* emphasize that children should communicate to parents in the most appropriate way and should avoid disrespect or disobedience.

In the *hadith* narrated by Taysala ibn Mayyaa who approach Abdullah ibn Umar concerning major sins and his fear of hellfire. Ibn Umar asked, 'Are your parents still alive?' I replied, 'My mother is' He said, "By Allah, if you speak gently to her and feed her, then you will enter the Garden as long as you avoid the major wrong actions". (Hadith Al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Adab al-Mufrad, Bab al-Walidain, Juz 5, 8)

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) prioritized the manners of his speech every time he communicates with others. He is very careful while uttering by using a well-structured sentence, fluent, concise language and he will emphasise the important message as it will be well received and understandable. The Prophet (PBUH) will always speak in a very calm state, where in his interaction with others he shows love, intimacy, gentle, sincerity, appreciation for those who communicate with him. He used appropriate intonation so that what is conveyed can have a profound effect on the listener. Therefore, this method of communication of the Prophet (PBUH) is suitable to be practiced by children in communicating with parents (Harun Baharudin, 2018).

Gentle words in interaction between children and parents have a broad meaning. Communication is more than talking with gentle words. The children should be kind and respect the parents. Interpersonal communication from the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH) not only includes the way of communication to parents but it also involves the *adab* and the selection of proper words toward parents and avoiding communication gaps as it will destruct the relationship between the child and the parents. Applying noble words, soft and kind words in communicating with parents are essential. Allah forbids a child to show anger or slightest word of disrespect or condemn towards parents.

Khalil (2016) added that communication towards family members especially to parents, should not only to communicate with gentle language but more than that. They need to respect, understand each other thus develop closeness and bond with each other in affection. Using good, gentle and a low tone of voice from a child towards parents can add to the feelings of love of a mother or father to the child. Parents will feel respected, valued and loved when their children communicate with the Islamic interpersonal communication ethics. Beautiful words are enough to please and soothe their hearts and feelings. This enhances family ties and each member in the family play an important role in creating good communication especially between the children and the parents. This is stated in the Qur'an from the Surah al-Isra' 17: 23-24, hereby a child should communicate with gentle and kind words to them at all time. 'Urwa commented on this verse, "Do not refuse them anything they love." (Al-Bukhari. Kitab al-Adab al-Mufrad, Bab al-Walidain, Juz 5, 9) This means that the children should contribute whatever the parents' wishes as long as it not excessively done and to get the mercy of Allah.

Furthermore, good interpersonal communication between parents and children strengthen the love and relationship between them and it avoid the communication gap. As for the parents, they have the right to receive love, respect, and affection from their children. It is the responsibility of the children not to communicate with disrespect towards parents. Children are easily influenced by external elements that tarnish their *adab* of communication towards parents. Kamaruddin et al. (2012) pointed out that disrespect communication towards parents can be in verbal or non-verbal. It is important to use the right body gestures as to get the correct message and accepted in by the parents. This non-verbal communication sends strong messages to them as it is capable to put at ease, build trust or offend them, confuse, and hurt their feelings.

In addition to the non-verbal communication towards parents, a *hadith* from the Prophet (PBUH) narrated by Abu Huraira: "... anybody who believes in Allah and the Last Day should talk what is good or keep quiet." (Al-Bukhari, Sahih Bukhari, Kitab Adab, Juz 31, 6018). Based on the *hadith* above, there are some children who are silent and do not wish to interact with their parents to avoid conflict between them. Nevertheless, the act of silence referred to in the *hadith* above is to abstain from all kinds of evil and dirty talk towards others. In the case of children refuse to interact with parents to avoid misunderstanding, however, the act of keeping quiet due to anger towards parents is one of the gestures or body language that include in the category of disrespect towards parents. Parents will encounter the feel of uneasiness, frustration and hurt towards the children.

In a *hadith* narrated by Ibn Umar: "Making parents weep is part of disobedience and one of the major wrong actions." (Al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Adab al-Mufrad, Bab al-Walidain, Juz 16, 31) This communication with disrespect towards parents strictly prohibited in Islam. In life disagreement happens which will inevitably lead to misunderstandings about something, a child should give in and abide by the decision of both parents, unless the decision of the mother or father is contrary to the teachings of religion. Islam always demands that the children should always be careful and vigilant of their words in daily communication to avoid disagreement or disrespect towards parents. Children should not speak loudly, curse, frown, look with sharp eyes or talk without facing their parents when communicating with their parents. In building positive communication between the children and the parents, the children should not make their parents sad or cause them to shed tears over the child's actions. This kind of act is included in the category of rebellious towards parents (S.Noorul, T. Fatimah. & Siti Fatimah, 2014).

The situation of disrespect and cursing parents is recorded in the book *al-Adab al-Mufrad* narrated by Abu Tufayl: "Allah curses anyone who curses his parents." (Al-Bukhari. Kitab al-Adab al-Mufrad, Bab al-Walidain, Juz 8,17). In another *hadith* narrated by Abdullah b. 'Amr: "Reviling one's parents is one of the great wrong actions." They asked, "How could he revile them?" He said, "He reviles a man who then in turn reviles his mother and father." (Al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Adab al-Mufrad, Bab al-Walidain, Juz 14, 27)

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) ordered not to revile one's parents or the parents of others. The actions of someone who criticizes the father or mother of another person, are judged to be the same as criticizing his own parents. This provocation to the other person will retaliate by insulting his parents. Both his parents were insulted due to his own actions. As a result, even though he did not insult his parents directly, he was still judged or equated with insulting his own parents. The Prophet (PBUH) consistently used good words and polite during interaction with others. The act of cursing reviles and insulting others especially parents is not the nature of a believer. In the case of insulting other's parents, it will create arguments and altercation.

The use of abusive words and insults among children and adolescent happen due to communication environment around them. This negative communication between children and parents, will give negative impact to the children behaviour thus causing children to be aggressive and disrespectful to parents. It is further aggravated when parents insult the children in front people they know (Abu Dzar & M. Arif (2017)). Islam advocates good moral values and conduct. It is, therefore, unthinkable that a true believer will indulge in utterances and words that are admittedly filthy and foul. For the fear of prolong negative communication between children and parents, taking an approach from the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH) is effective that is healthy conversation and obedience. The healthy communication means is to express each other feelings, respect each other and understand each other's wishes as long as it does not conflict with Islamic law. Even Allah have stated this type of communication in the Qur'an that one should use effective words as to avoid misinterpretation. Whilst the communication towards parents, children in any situation should speak gently and respectfully to both parents.

In conjunction from the above, Allah commands children to do good and speak gently to parents even if they are infidels. Ghazali (1990), stated that Islam demands the right to honour parents and good communication to them as a way of showing gratitude and indebtedness for all their roles and sacrifices. The children are always indebted to their parents due to their sacrifices and the Prophet (PBUH) forbade the act of rebellion against both parents and considered it as one of the great sins. In the *hadith* narrated by Abu Bakrah related to this stance, the Prophet (PBUH) said: "Shall I tell you which is the worst of the major wrong actions?" "Yes, Messenger of Allah," they replied. He said, "Associating something else with Allah and disobeying parents." (Al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Adab al-Mufrad, Bab al-Walidain, Juz 7, 15) For all the reason above, in respect to parents, children are not allowed to call their parents by their names nor sit down before them. Children need to respect both

parents by calling them by their proper titles. It is rude for a child to just call their parents by name. This is emphasized by the Prophet in his hadith: Abu Hurayra saw two men and said to one of them, "Who is this man in relation to you?" He is my father," he replied. He said, "Do not call him by his own name nor walk in front of him nor sit down before him." (Al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Adab al-Mufrad, Bab al-Walidain, Juz 23, 44)

## CONCLUSION

It is important for the children to communicate in respectful way by using gentle words towards parents on any occasion. Using gentle words during the interaction of the children with the parents is demanded in Islam. The best way to communicate has been outlined in the Qur'an and the teaching of the Prophet (PBUH) and it becomes a guideline for children to communicate in a proper way to parents. Thus, this article raises the good interpersonal communication towards parent as taught and practiced by the Prophet (PBUH) recorded and arranged by Imam al-Bukhari in his book al-Adab al-Mufrad. The discussion above, explains the preference way in communication towards parents. Communication towards parents can be in two ways that is verbal and non-verbal communication. To communicate politely using gentle words and portraying appropriate body gesture to both parents is very much demanded. From what has been presented, it is hoped that this article can provide guidelines and increase the level of awareness of children in terms of communication towards parents from the perspective of Islam.

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