

Parenting in Digital Age: Let's Bring Back the Culture

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Abstract: Technology advances offer convenience in our life nowadays. However, it also presents many challenges in families due to the excessive use of digital devices by parents and children. In this study, we will examine the way Riau Malay culture, also known as *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* or Malay teachings, can be used as a guide for parenting in the digital age. The inability of parents to apply good parenting leads to problems in teaching children attitude and manner. The method used is the literature review from Riau Malay manuscripts. The result shows that *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* contains noble values related to education and childcare. It can be used as guidelines for parents in educating children, including responsibility and role as parents, cooperation in educating children, and the ability to face problems that are the basis for parenting. It can be recommended that parents return to make Riau Malay cultural values as a guide in parenting in the digital era.

1 INTRODUCTION

It is not easy to be parents in the digital age. The impact of technological advances, such as educating children, on how everyone thinks and acts necessitates the confronting of many new challenges (Haslam, et. all, 2017). After all, using digital devices in children provides convenience and opportunities for learning and causes problems (Y. Alghamdi, 2017).

The use of digital media by young children is one of the most prominent educational topics today. Numerous studies have been conducted on the use of digital media in children and training for parents to assist them in better understanding how to use it with children. According to the study, children aged four to thirteen in South East Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand) spent most of their time using digital media at home, much less frequently or never at school, and infrequently in restaurants, at their friends' houses, or when taking a car, bus, or train (Asianparent, 2014). Due to the unique features of these devices and the quick development of mobile applications aimed at these age groups, the usage of tablets among young children is expanding quickly (R. Hosokawa and T. Katsura, 2018). Tablets, which have a built-in touch-

based interface, are acceptable for youngsters between the ages of two and four, unlike older technology devices like computers that require fine motor skills to use correctly (Y. Alghamdi, 2017) & (J. Marsh et al, 2015).

The positive impact of digital media on children and teenagers' physical, cognitive, and social well-being is expected to be mitigated by parental mediation. Parental mediation is a multifaceted idea that helps children develop and improve crucial digital skills (S. Sharma and C. Y. Lee, 2023). Parental mediation is primarily located within the media effects paradigm, which emphasizes social, psychological, and developmental aspects and is primarily grounded in communication. In light of digital media, there are five elements of parental mediation that can be used to control online behavior. Actively provide understanding to children, restrict access to content, and co-use mediation for access and supervision.

Parenting styles are significantly influenced by cultural background. Different cultures have different ideas and behaviors regarding parenting methods, like discipline, education, family roles, and other parenting-related topics. Parenting entails accepting and transferring these cultural values and customs to the following generation (R. Novianti, 2019), (S. Tambak, 2020) & (M. A. Suizzo, 2019).

The Government of Indonesia strongly backs cultural preservation efforts as per Regulation 87 of 2021 regarding the Implementation Regulations of Law Number 5 of 2017. The aim of one is Cultural Advancement, which is to enhance the resilience and contribution of Indonesian culture in the context of world civilization. The law explains that promoting culture involves protection, development, utilization, guidance, and appreciation. According to Tambak et al. (2020), in the Riau Malay tradition, *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* (TAM), also known as Malay teaching, is understood as counsel, direction, and an example of how to live a good life and follow the right path to receive blessings from the Almighty God. All 28 themes in TAM can be used as a parenting manual (S. Tambak, 2020).

The literature and research that examines parenting in the digital age and its connection to local culture is still limited. Therefore, this study intends to examine and discuss how the noble values of Riau Malay culture can be used as guidelines in parenting in the digital era.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Parenting in the digital age comes with unique difficulties that previous generations were spared. The rapid development of technology and its integration into our daily lives has had a profound impact on the development, learning, and interactions of children (C. P. Jeffery, 2021). It also requires a good understanding of technology, open communication with children, and proper planning and discipline (R. Novianti, M. Muryanti, M. A. Rusandi, and E. Noviana, 2023). Strengthening their proactive attitudes and engaging in active self-expression in daily life (Y. Alghamdi, 2017), (R. Novianti, Hukmi, and I. Maria, 2019) can allow children to help solve problems and create a safe and secure environment in the digital age.

Parental mediation is the term used to describe the methods parents employ to manage, discuss, and keep an eye on their children's media consumption (S. Livingstone and E. J. Helsper, 2008). Parental mediation is designed to teach children how to use media responsibly in order to provide learning opportunities and reduce potential risks associated with media use. Parental views, values, and experiences serve as the foundation for parents' parenting mediation tactics. The parent-child interaction involves daily negotiations that take into account both individual and environmental considerations. However, they are not always applied

rigidly to every circumstance (K. Symons, K. Ponnet, M. Walrave, and W. Heirman, 2017).

Parenting is inseparable from culture; even in practice, parenting is carried out based on parental culture (M. H. Bornstein, 2020). In Riau Malay culture, it is known as *Tunjuk Ajar Melayu* or Malay teaching, which define as all kinds of advice, guidance, rules, and examples that are beneficial for human life (T. Effendi, 2004). Malay teaching was developed to guide and nurture children in modern times such as today, and to provide good guidance to parents to help them become good people with integral personalities (I. Bangsawan, R. Ridwan, and Y. Oktarina, 2021).

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Parents are the primary gatekeepers and socializing agents for the younger generation's access to media and digital gadgets. They ensure that their children use media responsibly, both in terms of time and content. Parents must prioritize media education as children use digital media at a younger age (P. Nikken and J. Jansz, 2014).

Culture mitigated the effects of active mediation by decreasing the frequency of media-related risks and the duration of media usage. The findings also showed that Eastern countries used active mediation more successfully than Western nations. An active mediation strategy can have a normative impact, which is a reasonable explanation. Children establish their perceived subjective norms of media use as a result of parents telling them what to do or not do (L. Chen and J. Shi, 2019). Malay teaching values that relate to the use of children's digital devices can assist in parental mediation.

3.1 Actively Provide Understanding to Children

In educating children, Malays realize that every child need attention (interest) and accuracy (careful) in his physical and spiritual growth and development. Therefore, parents must focus on their children wholeheartedly (T. Effendi, 2004). This is known as "*minat bersama cermat*," or interest and carefulness, which is explained by the following expression:

*Yang minat sepanjang hayat
Yang cermat sepanjang buat
Minatnya berjimat-jimat
Cermatnya bersifat-sifat*

To balance the potential and threats that media present, parents are responsible for monitoring their children's media use (S. Livingstone and E. J. Helsper, 2008). When the father and mother are together with children, parents can wholeheartedly pay attention to children (E. I. de Bruin et al, 2014), and that is when parents can provide an understanding to children about the rules that apply in the family regarding the use of gadgets (R. Novianti, 2019) & (B. Zaman and C. L. Mifsud, 2017). The child's behavior towards using digital devices will be more positive if parents provide them with understanding and consistently apply rules.

3.2 Restrictive

In Riau Malay Culture, there is an expression: "*Keras dalam Lunak*," or hard in softness, which means that parents are obliged to teach discipline to children (T. Effendi, 2004). Discipline is applied educationally by the personality of Malays who are unwilling to impose the will of the will contrary to the will of others and are willing to compromise for good.

This attitude of not wanting to impose their will also applies to Riau Malay parents in educating children. Discipline should be applied by parents in a non-authoritarian and harsh manner. However, they must be done step by step with soft language so that awareness arises from within the child, not forced to be disciplined for fear of parents (I. Bangsawan, R. Ridwan, and Y. Oktarina, 2021). Parental mediation involves parents restricting their children's use of gadgets. Both from screen time and content. According to Davidov (2021), restrictions must be implemented with proper discipline, conveyed through good communication, and understood by children according to their age.

Restrictive mediation, or rule-making, describes parental efforts to establish guidelines limiting how much time their kids can spend using media and the types of information they can view (Lwin et al., 2008; Valkenburg & Peter, 2013). For instance, limiting online contacts may help prevent youngsters from being exposed to contact and content concerns (Livingstone et al., 2015), and parents who used to filtering software for their children were less likely to experience cyberbullying (J. N. Navarro and J. L. Jasinski, 2012) & (R. Novianti et al, 2023). The way parents restrict the use of digital media in Riau Malay Culture will succeed if it is done by providing understanding to children and avoiding violence.

3.3 Co-Use Mediation on Access

"*Antuah bahtera, sama-sama melayar.*" This expression in Riau Malay conveys that just like a ship needs its crew to sail the ocean together, so does accompanying children. Parents or caregivers are likened to crew accompanying children like ships crossing life (E. Waridah and R. Renggana, 2014). The message is the importance of presence, support, and guidance in the child's developmental journey.

Positive parenting can be practiced by parents by giving guidance, praising good behavior, and teaching coping skills. Parents consciously investigate and understand their reactions to children and how past experiences can influence their approach to accompanying children (K. E. Darling, et.all, 2019). Co-using, co-viewing, or co-surfing refers to parents engaging in media with their children without actively engaging in discussions (P. M. Valkenburg, 2013). The use of co-use has been proven to improve children's media learning (H. Sasson and G. S. Mesch, 2019) and decrease the risks of online content for children (H. J. Jiow, S. S. Lim, and J. Lin, 2017). In Riau Malay teachings, parents are required to communicate with their children to convey rules, optimistic character values, and pass on culture (N. Yohana and M. E. Putri, 2014). Similarly, by using mediation, good communication becomes essential, especially when done by the parents, so that children can use digital media according to their functions and needs.

3.4 Content

Parents should complement children's knowledge by instilling noble values derived from religious teachings, customs, traditions, and social norms that live in society. Thus, children will have an identity and identity by their culture (T. Effendi, 2004). This is explained in the phrase:

*"hati dipahat dengan iman
Dada dituang dengan Lembaga*

*Diisi lurus dengan benar
Dituang berani dengan setia
Ditegakkan tiang budinya
Dikokohkan tiang amalnya*

*Dikuatkan tiang amanahnya
Didirikan tiang malunya.*

Instilling noble values in children will make them individuals who believe, virtuous, brave, and loyal.

However, various content contained in digital media is not all by the age and development of children so it can inhibit the instillation of positive values in children.

Inappropriate information and media content have exposed children and teenagers to risks to their physical and mental health (C.-M. Chao, 2020). The rise of television and the Internet has led to the exposure of children to various media concerns, including unsuitable content and unwanted contact (S. Livingstone, et. al, 2017). According to research, parents impact their kids' adoption of new media technology and improve their academic results after watching educational programs (P. Nikken and S. J. Oprea, 2023).

3.5 Supervision

Parental authority is highly prized in Asia. Most Asian children respect and follow their parents' directions (W.-C. Chen, 2016). The Riau Malay Culture emphasizes the importance of parents' respect, and it is the responsibility of parents to educate and supervise children to behave well and avoid making wrong decisions.

"Jaga anak buah, jangan sampai keluar payah."

This phrase in Riau Malay highlights the importance of supervising children well. This expression reminds parents or caregivers to care for children conscientiously so they do not get involved in situations or actions that could cause difficulties or problems (E. Waridah and R. Renggana, 2014). In line with this, supervision in parental mediation is essential to maintain that the rules applied can run as expected and that children are disciplined using digital media.

When parental mediation is implemented, children feel respected and supported by their parents, which strengthens their autonomy and encourages moral internalization. Children follow parental instructions and exhibit less antisocial conduct (P. M. Valkenburg, 2013).

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