

Parenting Program Management in Improving Student Morals

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Abstract

Contemporary educational institutions face unprecedented challenges in fostering student moral development amid rapidly evolving technological and social environments. Parenting programs have emerged as strategic interventions for character development, yet limited research has systematically examined their management implementation within educational settings. This qualitative descriptive case study examined parenting program management in two vocational schools in West Java, Indonesia: SMK 1 Cihampelas and SMK Wirakarya 2 Ciparay. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with school administrators, teachers, counselors, and parents, complemented by non-participant observation and documentary analysis. Data analysis employed thematic analysis guided by George R. Terry's management functions framework: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. The findings revealed significant deficiencies across all management functions. Planning lacked systematic needs assessment and measurable indicators for moral development outcomes. Organizational structures demonstrated poor coordination between stakeholders with unclear responsibility divisions. Program implementation remained largely incidental and unsystematic, with low parent participation rates (30-40%). Supervision and evaluation mechanisms were absent, preventing measurement of program effectiveness in improving student morals. Both schools showed reactive rather than proactive approaches to parenting program management, limiting their potential impact on character development. These findings contradict established management principles and highlight critical gaps in educational practice. The study contributes empirical evidence demonstrating that program effectiveness depends on systematic management implementation rather than content design alone. The research provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how educational institutions can optimize parenting programs through proper management practices, offering practical implications for educational administrators and policy makers seeking to enhance moral development outcomes through school-family partnerships.

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary educational landscape faces unprecedented challenges in fostering moral development among students, particularly in the context of rapidly evolving technological and social environments. The proliferation of digital media and changing social dynamics have created complex moral challenges that schools cannot address in isolation, necessitating collaborative approaches between educational institutions and families. According to socialization theory, parents play a pivotal role in promoting prosocial behavior in their children (Bandura, 1986; Hoffman, 2000), serving as primary agents of moral development from early childhood through adolescence (Steinberg & Silk, 2002). This fundamental principle underscores the critical importance of parenting programs in educational settings as strategic interventions for character development.

The theoretical foundation for parental influence on moral development is well-established in the literature. Bandura's (1986) social learning theory demonstrates that modeling is fundamental to learning new behaviors, where parents who exhibit warm parenting behavior provide behavioral models that promote affectionate and sensitive responses in children (Grusec & Davidov, 2010). Conversely, children exposed to harsh parenting are more likely to model antisocial behaviors (Chang

et al., 2003; Patterson, 1982). Furthermore, parental control strategies significantly shape children's prosocial behavior through the internalization of moral values (Hoffman, 2000). Research indicates that positive behavioral control, characterized by reasoning and induction, promotes children's internalization of values and self-regulatory capacities (Farrant et al., 2012; Hart et al., 2003), while inconsistent or psychologically controlling parenting undermines moral development (Barber, 1996; Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2010).

Recent empirical studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of parenting programs in addressing moral and behavioral challenges in educational contexts. Amria and Netrawati (2021) established significant relationships between parenting patterns and students' moral behavior, highlighting the direct impact of family dynamics on character development. Similarly, Imelia and Supriyadi (2021) demonstrated that structured parenting interventions in elementary schools effectively enhanced students' moral reasoning capabilities. Mufidah and Aini (2023) provided evidence that parenting programs significantly improved student discipline, while Sakkar et al. (2023) showed successful character development through integrated parenting initiatives in Islamic schools. Sandika et al. (2024) further validated these findings by developing technological frameworks for implementing school-based parenting programs, demonstrating the evolving nature of these interventions.

The importance of parenting programs extends beyond individual behavioral modification to encompass broader systemic change. Evidence indicates that well-designed parenting programs promote positive changes in both parents and children (Barlow & Coren, 2017), serving as evidence-based treatments for children with externalizing problems such as disruptive behaviors (Beelmann et al., 2023; Evans et al., 2014). However, engaging parents in these programs, particularly fathers, remains a significant challenge (Axford et al., 2012; Dahlberg et al., 2022). Research suggests that fathers participate at significantly lower rates than mothers despite evidence that their involvement enhances child outcomes and family interactions (Ho et al., 2011; Panter-Brick et al., 2014).

Contemporary research has also emphasized the need for comprehensive family systems approaches that recognize the integrated nature of family relationships. Families function as integrated systems where both fathers and mothers contribute to children's development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007; Cabrera et al., 2014), necessitating parenting programs that account for multiple family dynamics rather than focusing solely on maternal involvement. Ningsih et al. (2025) highlighted the particular challenges of maintaining moral values in the digital era, emphasizing the need for updated parenting strategies that address contemporary technological influences.

Despite the growing body of literature supporting parenting programs, significant gaps remain in understanding their optimal implementation within school management frameworks. While numerous studies have examined the effectiveness of parenting interventions, limited research has systematically analyzed how these programs are managed within educational institutions using established management principles. This gap is particularly pronounced in vocational education settings, where students face unique challenges related to career preparation and workplace readiness alongside moral development needs.

The present study addresses this knowledge gap by examining parenting program management through the lens of George R. Terry's management functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. This framework provides a systematic approach to understanding how educational institutions can optimize their parenting programs to achieve maximum impact on student moral development. The research focuses on two vocational schools in West Java, Indonesia, representing both public and private educational contexts, to provide comprehensive insights into diverse implementation challenges and opportunities.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to inform evidence-based practices for educational administrators seeking to enhance moral development outcomes through systematic parenting program management. By identifying strengths and weaknesses in current implementation

approaches, this study aims to contribute practical recommendations for improving school-family partnerships in character education. Furthermore, the findings may inform policy development and resource allocation decisions related to moral education initiatives in vocational education settings, ultimately contributing to the preparation of graduates with strong character foundations for entering the workforce.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design with a descriptive case study approach to examine parenting program management in improving student morals. The qualitative methodology was selected to enable in-depth exploration of the complex dynamics between school management practices and parental involvement in character development, allowing for comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and practices within their natural contexts. The case study design facilitated detailed examination of parenting program implementation across multiple educational settings, providing rich contextual insights that quantitative approaches might not capture.

The research was conducted at two vocational schools in West Java Province, Indonesia: SMKN 1 Cihampelas in West Bandung Regency and SMK Wirakarya 2 Ciparay in Bandung Regency. These institutions were purposively selected to represent diverse institutional contexts, encompassing both public and private educational environments with varying socioeconomic backgrounds. The study population comprised key stakeholders involved in parenting program implementation, including school administrators, teachers, counselors, parent representatives, and students. Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in parenting programs and their ability to provide comprehensive insights into program management processes.

Data collection employed multiple sources to ensure triangulation and enhance the credibility of findings. Primary data were gathered through semi-structured in-depth interviews with school administrators, homeroom teachers, guidance counselors, and parent participants. The interview protocol was developed based on George R. Terry's management functions framework, focusing on planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling aspects of parenting program implementation. Additionally, non-participant observation was conducted during parenting program activities, including parent meetings, seminars, and character education sessions, to capture real-time implementation dynamics. Documentary analysis supplemented primary data collection, examining school policies, program reports, meeting minutes, and evaluation records related to parenting initiatives.

The interview instruments underwent content validation through expert review by educational management specialists and were pilot-tested to ensure clarity and appropriateness. Observational data were recorded using structured observation sheets designed to capture specific behaviors and interactions relevant to the research objectives. To enhance reliability, multiple data collection sessions were conducted, and member checking was employed to verify the accuracy of interview transcripts and interpretations with key participants.

Data analysis followed a systematic thematic analysis approach, guided by Terry's management functions framework. Interview transcripts were coded inductively to identify emerging themes, while observational and documentary data were analyzed to support and triangulate findings from interviews. The analysis process involved multiple rounds of coding, theme development, and constant comparison to ensure comprehensive understanding of parenting program management practices. Data saturation was achieved when no new themes emerged from continued analysis, ensuring the completeness and robustness of findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The analysis of parenting program management across both vocational schools revealed significant insights regarding the implementation of Terry's four management functions. The findings demonstrate varying degrees of effectiveness in planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling parenting programs, with distinct patterns emerging between the two institutional contexts.

Planning Function Implementation

Interview data from school administrators revealed fundamental weaknesses in the planning phase of parenting programs. The principal of SMKN 1 Cihampelas stated: *"We develop parenting programs based on general assumptions about student behavior problems rather than conducting systematic analysis of specific character development needs."* Similarly, documentation analysis showed that both schools lacked comprehensive needs assessment procedures. As one guidance counselor noted: *"Our planning meetings focus more on scheduling activities rather than identifying root causes of moral issues among students."*

Observational data from planning meetings demonstrated that program design was primarily reactive rather than proactive. The planning process typically involved informal discussions among teachers without systematic data collection or parent input. Documentary evidence revealed that neither school had established measurable indicators for moral development outcomes, making it difficult to set specific, achievable planning objectives.

Organizational Structure and Coordination

The organizational aspect of parenting program management presented significant challenges across both institutions. Interview findings indicated poor coordination between different stakeholders. A homeroom teacher from SMK Wirakarya 2 Ciparay explained: *"There is no clear division of responsibilities between guidance counselors, subject teachers, and school committees in implementing parenting activities."*

Observational data confirmed fragmented organizational structures, with limited communication channels between school personnel and parents. The analysis of organizational charts revealed that both schools lacked dedicated units or clear hierarchical structures for managing parenting programs. One parent participant commented: *"We are often confused about who to contact regarding our children's character development issues because responsibilities are not clearly defined."*

Program Implementation and Actuating

The actuating function showed mixed results, with both schools demonstrating efforts to implement parenting activities while facing significant implementation barriers. Documentation analysis revealed that SMKN 1 Cihampelas conducted monthly parent meetings and quarterly character education seminars, while SMK Wirakarya 2 Ciparay implemented weekly religious guidance sessions and bi-monthly family counseling programs.

However, interview data indicated that program implementation remained largely incidental and unsystematic. As one school administrator noted: *"We implement parenting activities when problems arise rather than following a consistent, planned schedule."* Observational findings showed that parent participation rates were consistently low, with an average attendance of 30-40% at scheduled activities. The implementation approach was primarily one-directional, with limited opportunities for meaningful dialogue between schools and parents.

Supervision and Controlling Mechanisms

The controlling function emerged as the weakest aspect of parenting program management in both schools. Interview responses consistently highlighted the absence of structured evaluation systems. A guidance counselor stated: *"We do not have specific instruments to measure changes in student behavior or the effectiveness of our parenting programs."*

Documentary analysis confirmed the lack of systematic monitoring procedures. Neither school maintained regular assessment records of student moral development progress or program impact evaluation. Observational data showed that follow-up activities after parenting sessions were minimal,

with no structured feedback mechanisms in place. One parent expressed frustration: "*We attend these programs, but we never know if they actually help improve our children's behavior because there is no follow-up or evaluation.*"

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal significant deficiencies in parenting program management across both vocational schools, particularly when evaluated against Terry's (1972) management framework. These results align with and extend previous research while highlighting critical areas for improvement in educational management practices.

The inadequate planning function identified in this study contradicts the theoretical foundation established by Sagala (2013), who emphasized that effective educational planning should involve comprehensive problem analysis and needs mapping. The reactive rather than proactive approach observed in both schools reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of Terry's (1972) planning principles, which require systematic goal setting and strategic decision-making processes. This finding resonates with Sandika et al. (2024), who identified the need for systematic technological frameworks to support parenting program planning in educational settings.

The organizational weaknesses discovered in this research support Handoko's (2011) assertion that effective educational programs require comprehensive stakeholder involvement. The fragmented coordination observed between teachers, counselors, and parents directly contradicts the integrated family systems approach advocated by Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2007). This organizational dysfunction may explain the low parental engagement rates identified in this study, which aligns with broader research indicating that recruiting parents into parenting programs remains a major challenge (Axford et al., 2012; Dahlberg et al., 2022).

The implementation challenges identified in this study reflect broader issues in parenting program delivery documented in international literature. The incidental and unsystematic implementation patterns observed contradict Mulyasa's (2011) recommendations for consistent, planned character education approaches. The low parent participation rates (30-40%) identified in this study are consistent with Ho et al.'s (2011) findings regarding parental engagement challenges, particularly concerning father involvement in parenting programs. The one-directional communication approach observed in both schools contradicts Henderson and Mapp's (2002) emphasis on meaningful parental involvement through decision-making participation and two-way communication.

The absence of structured evaluation systems represents a critical gap that undermines program effectiveness. This finding supports Arikunto's (2012) assertion that effective educational supervision requires performance indicators, periodic evaluation, and feedback systems. The lack of measurable outcomes contradicts evidence-based practices in parenting program evaluation (Barlow & Coren, 2017) and prevents schools from determining program effectiveness in addressing moral development needs.

The moral degradation issues identified in both schools, including decreased respect for authority and dishonest behavior, align with broader patterns documented by Bandura (1986) regarding the influence of environmental factors on character development. The inadequate parenting program management identified in this study may be exacerbating these issues by failing to provide the systematic family-school partnerships necessary for effective character development.

These findings have significant implications for educational policy and practice. The study supports Mufidah and Aini's (2023) evidence that structured parenting programs can improve student discipline when properly implemented. However, the management deficiencies identified suggest that simply implementing parenting activities is insufficient without proper planning, organization, and evaluation frameworks.

The research extends Sakkar et al.'s (2023) work on character development through parenting programs by highlighting the critical importance of management systems in determining program success. While their study demonstrated successful outcomes in Islamic school contexts, this research

reveals that success may be contingent on effective management implementation rather than program content alone.

The contemporary challenges highlighted by Ningsih et al. (2025) regarding moral value maintenance in the digital era are compounded by the management weaknesses identified in this study. Without systematic planning and evaluation, schools cannot effectively address the complex moral challenges facing students in technological environments.

The findings suggest that effective parenting program management requires comprehensive reform across all management functions, supporting the integrated approach advocated by Cabrera et al. (2014) for family systems interventions. The study contributes to understanding how educational institutions can optimize their parenting programs through systematic management practices, addressing gaps identified in previous research focused primarily on program content rather than implementation processes.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals significant deficiencies in parenting program management across both vocational schools examined, with weaknesses identified in all four of Terry's management functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. The research demonstrates that while both institutions have implemented parenting activities, the lack of systematic management approaches undermines their potential effectiveness in improving student morals. The findings indicate that reactive planning approaches, fragmented organizational structures, incidental implementation patterns, and absent evaluation systems collectively limit the impact of parenting programs on character development.

The study contributes to educational management literature by providing empirical evidence of how management theory applications influence parenting program effectiveness in vocational education contexts. This research extends existing knowledge by demonstrating that program success depends not merely on content design but critically on systematic management implementation. The findings offer a comprehensive framework for understanding the interconnected nature of management functions in character education initiatives.

The implications for educational practice are substantial, suggesting that schools must adopt comprehensive management reforms to optimize parenting program outcomes. Educational administrators should prioritize developing systematic needs assessment procedures, establishing clear organizational structures with defined stakeholder responsibilities, implementing consistent program delivery schedules, and creating structured evaluation mechanisms with measurable outcomes. These findings also have policy implications, indicating that educational authorities should provide management training and resources to support effective parenting program implementation.

The study's limitations include its focus on two vocational schools in West Java, which may limit generalizability to other educational contexts. Additionally, the qualitative approach, while providing rich insights, restricts statistical generalization of findings.

Future research should examine parenting program management across diverse educational settings, including primary and secondary schools in different geographical contexts. Longitudinal studies investigating the relationship between management quality and student moral development outcomes would provide valuable evidence for policy development. Additionally, research exploring the integration of digital technologies in parenting program management could address contemporary challenges in character education delivery.

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