



## Strengthening Parent–Student Engagement Through Zoom-Based Communication in the Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Education Program

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**Abstract** : This community service activity aims to strengthen parent–student engagement through Zoom-based communication to support educational supervision and participation in the Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Program. This activity was initiated based on the need to improve communication effectiveness between the pesantren and parents in monitoring students' educational development. The limited intensity of direct communication and the geographical constraints faced by some parents became challenges in building continuous collaboration between the institution and the family environment. The program was implemented using a participatory approach through socialization, training on the utilization of Zoom Meeting, technical assistance, and mentoring in developing digital communication practices. The activities included introducing online communication strategies, utilizing Zoom features for parent meetings, strengthening parental involvement, and developing follow-up communication mechanisms between the pesantren and parents. The evaluation results showed an improvement in participants' understanding and ability to utilize Zoom as a medium for educational communication and supervision. Furthermore, the program encouraged stronger collaboration between parents and the pesantren in supporting students' learning processes, character development, and educational progress. This activity demonstrates that digital communication empowerment can become an effective strategy for strengthening parent–student engagement and creating a more collaborative Islamic boarding school education ecosystem.

**Keywords** : Parent–Student Engagement; Zoom-Based Communication; Educational Supervision.

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## INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) have an important position in the Indonesian education system as institutions that not only transmit Islamic knowledge but also develop students' character, morality, and social responsibility (Schlaile et al., 2018). The educational process in *pesantren* involves various dimensions, including religious learning, discipline formation, and daily habituation (Lestari, 2023; Lisnawati, 2016). Therefore, the success of *pesantren* education cannot be separated from the collaboration of various stakeholders, particularly the institution, students, and parents. Parental involvement becomes an important factor in ensuring that educational goals are supported through continuous supervision and cooperation between the *pesantren* and family environment.

The involvement of parents in *pesantren* education is not merely a form of administrative relationship but represents an important partnership in supporting students' academic, emotional, and character development (Afnibar, 2020; Hatchimonji et al., 2022). However, maintaining intensive communication between *pesantren* and parents remains challenging. Several factors, such as geographical distance, limited time availability, and differences in digital literacy, often reduce opportunities for parents to participate directly in monitoring students' development (Gath, McNeill & Gillon, 2023; Henry & Lens, 2021). These conditions indicate the need for an effective communication mechanism that enables parents to remain actively involved despite physical limitations.

Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School is an educational institution committed to implementing Islamic education based on moral values and character development. In maintaining the quality of its educational programs, the *pesantren* recognizes the importance of strengthening collaboration with students' parents (Aziz et al., 2023; Fadhilah et al., 2022; Garbacz et al., 2022). Nevertheless, communication between the institution and parents still requires continuous innovation to create a more structured and participatory system. Effective communication is needed not only to deliver information but also to provide opportunities for parents to contribute ideas, understand students' conditions, and support the implementation of *pesantren* educational programs.

The advancement of digital communication technology provides new opportunities for strengthening relationships between *pesantren* and parents. One platform that can support this process is Zoom Meeting, which enables real-time interaction, online discussion, and flexible communication without being limited by distance and time (Jung Chu, 2024). The use of Zoom can function not only as a communication medium but also as a platform for educational supervision, parenting discussions, program dissemination, and strengthening collaboration between *pesantren* and families. Through this approach, parents can become more active partners in supporting students' educational development.

However, the implementation of Zoom-based communication requires adequate preparation, particularly regarding parents' ability to use digital platforms and the establishment of an effective communication management system. Some parents may still experience difficulties in accessing and utilizing online meeting platforms due to limited

digital experience or technological constraints. Therefore, empowerment activities are needed to provide practical guidance, strengthen digital communication skills, and develop sustainable interaction patterns between parents and pesantren administrators. This approach ensures that technology adoption becomes meaningful and contributes to improving educational participation.

Based on these conditions, the community service activity entitled “Empowering Parent-Student Communities Through Zoom-Based Communication to Strengthen Supervision and Participation in the Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School Program” was designed as an effort to strengthen digital-based collaboration between pesantren and families. This activity focuses on improving parents’ capacity to utilize Zoom Meeting, increasing communication effectiveness, and encouraging active participation in supporting students’ educational processes. Through this empowerment program, Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School is expected to develop a more collaborative, adaptive, and participatory educational ecosystem involving institutions, students, and parents.

## METHOD

This community service activity was implemented using a participatory empowerment approach that emphasized active collaboration between the service team, the management of Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, and the parent-student community. This approach was chosen because the program was designed not only to introduce the technical use of Zoom Meeting but also to strengthen the capacity of parents and educational stakeholders in building effective digital communication to support student supervision and participation. The implementation of the program focused on creating a sustainable communication mechanism between pesantren and families through the utilization of digital platforms.

The activity was carried out through several stages, including preparation, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up activities. The preparation stage began with initial observations and discussions with the management of Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School to identify existing communication patterns and challenges faced by the institution and parents. This process aimed to understand the level of digital readiness of participants, the effectiveness of existing communication channels, and the potential utilization of Zoom Meeting as a medium for strengthening educational collaboration. Based on the results of this identification, the service team prepared training materials, activity schedules, and technical requirements that were adjusted to the needs and conditions of the participants.

The implementation stage was conducted through socialization, training, practical demonstrations, and mentoring activities. The initial session focused on providing an

understanding of the importance of parent involvement in supporting pesantren education and the role of digital communication in strengthening partnerships between institutions and families. Participants were introduced to the concept that communication between pesantren and parents should not only function as a medium for delivering information but also as a collaborative space for monitoring students' development, discussing educational programs, and strengthening shared responsibility in the learning process.

Furthermore, participants received technical training on the utilization of Zoom Meeting as a communication platform. The training materials included procedures for creating and joining online meetings, managing audio and video settings, utilizing discussion features, and conducting interactive virtual meetings. The training was conducted through direct practice so that participants could experience the use of Zoom independently. In addition, mentoring sessions were provided to assist participants in implementing digital communication practices through simulations of parent meetings, educational discussions, and online interaction forums related to pesantren activities.

The evaluation stage was conducted during and after the implementation of the program to assess the effectiveness of the activities. Evaluation was carried out through direct observation, participant responses, and feedback regarding the usefulness of Zoom-based communication for supporting educational supervision and participation. The evaluation focused on participants' understanding of digital communication, their ability to operate Zoom Meeting features, and their readiness to participate in online communication activities organized by the pesantren. The results of the evaluation became a reference for developing recommendations to maintain the sustainability of digital communication practices between parents and the institution.

The sustainability strategy of this program was developed by encouraging the continuous use of Zoom Meeting as a supporting communication medium between Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School and parents. The service team encouraged the institution to maintain regular digital communication forums, strengthen parental involvement, and utilize technology as part of educational management. Through this approach, Zoom-based communication is expected to become more than a technical tool but also a strategic medium for building collaboration, strengthening supervision, and creating a participatory educational ecosystem involving pesantren, students, and families.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Digital Communication Gaps Revealed the Need for Parent Empowerment

The initial assessment revealed that communication between Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School and the parents' community had not yet developed into an interactive mechanism for supporting students' education. Through initial observations

and informal interviews with pesantren administrators, communication was found to remain largely focused on the delivery of educational information, student development updates, and administrative matters. Existing communication channels, particularly WhatsApp messages, were considered useful for disseminating information but provided limited opportunities for direct discussion, clarification, and reciprocal interaction between parents and the pesantren. This condition indicates that the challenge was not simply the availability of communication media, but the absence of a communication mechanism that could facilitate sustained parental participation.

Further assessment through a needs questionnaire involving representatives of students' parents showed an important gap between parents' willingness to participate and their readiness to use digital communication technologies (Osler & Zahavi, 2023; Pirotta et al., 2022). Most parents had smartphones and adequate internet access, indicating that the basic technological infrastructure required for online communication was available (Vorderer & Kohring, 2013). However, many participants were not yet familiar with video-conferencing applications, particularly Zoom Meeting. At the same time, parents expressed a strong desire to become more involved in monitoring and supporting their children's educational development when appropriate facilities and guidance were provided.

These findings demonstrate that the partner's primary need involved two closely related dimensions: strengthening interactive communication between the pesantren and parents and developing parents' digital capacity to participate in that communication. The first dimension concerns the need for a communication space that enables dialogue, information exchange, and collaborative discussion rather than one-way information delivery. The second concerns parents' ability to independently access and use digital communication platforms. Thus, the identified problem was not appropriately addressed by simply introducing a new application; it required an empowerment process that connected technological skills with the educational responsibilities of parents.

Based on this finding, the community service program positioned Zoom Meeting as a medium for strengthening educational engagement rather than merely as a technological tool. Training and mentoring were therefore directed toward enabling parents to access online meetings, interact with pesantren administrators, participate in discussions, and use digital communication to support supervision of their children's education. This needs-based orientation provided a clear foundation for the subsequent stages of the program, particularly the implementation of Zoom training, facilitated online forums, and the development of a more sustainable digital communication community.



**Figure 2.** Parents' meeting of Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School

## **2. Developing a Needs-Based Digital Empowerment Program and Training Module for Parent Engagement**

The development of the empowerment program and training module became the second important finding after identifying the communication problems and digital literacy needs of the parent community at Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School. The preparation process was not only focused on developing technical materials for using Zoom Meeting but also on designing an educational framework that could strengthen the role of parents as active partners in supporting students' development. The program design was developed based on the results of the initial assessment, which showed that parents needed both technological guidance and a communication mechanism that enabled continuous interaction with the pesantren.

Based on these findings, the service team designed a structured empowerment program using an educational, practical, and participatory approach. The educational aspect was directed toward increasing parents' understanding of the importance of digital communication in supporting pesantren education. The practical aspect focused on developing parents' ability to independently operate Zoom Meeting features, while the participatory aspect encouraged parents to actively engage in discussions, simulations, and reflections regarding their role in supervising children's education. This approach ensured that the program was not merely application-oriented but also strengthened the awareness and involvement of parents in the educational process.

The program design consisted of several interconnected stages, beginning with needs analysis, formulation of training objectives, determination of learning materials, development of training modules, validation, limited testing, and final preparation. The structured design process was intended to ensure that the training materials were relevant to the characteristics of the participants, particularly parents with diverse levels of digital literacy. The details of the program preparation are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Program Design and Training Module Development Plan**

| Stage                         | Sub-activities                                | Description                                                                                                                                       | Expected Results                                                                    |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Needs Analysis                | Survey and Interview                          | Collecting data on the needs of parents and Islamic boarding schools regarding digital communication and literacy.                                | Mapping the actual needs of partners as the basis for preparing training materials. |
| Program Design                | Developing Training Objectives and Strategies | Formulating training objectives and appropriate approaches based on partner conditions.                                                           | A targeted training design that aligns with partner needs.                          |
| Determination of Material     | Identifying Topics and Materials              | Organizing four training sessions: Zoom introduction, meeting simulation, educational discussion, and virtual parent community development.       | Structured and relevant training materials.                                         |
| Module Development            | Writing Print Modules and Video Tutorials     | Developing PDF and video-based modules containing technical guidance, online communication ethics, and parental roles in educational supervision. | Practical modules that can be understood and used independently by participants.    |
| Material Validation           | Expert and Partner Review                     | Reviewing module content by educational technology experts and pesantren administrators.                                                          | Revised modules adapted to the pesantren context.                                   |
| Limited Trial                 | Simulation Training                           | Testing module effectiveness with a limited number of participants and collecting feedback.                                                       | Module improvement based on participants' experiences.                              |
| Finalization and Distribution | Module Finalization and Schedule Preparation  | Finalizing modules and preparing implementation schedules with partners.                                                                          | Ready-to-use training materials and participant readiness.                          |

The developed training module became one of the important outputs of this program because it provided participants with practical guidance that could be accessed repeatedly. The module was prepared in two formats, namely printed/PDF materials and video tutorials, to accommodate differences in participants' learning preferences and digital abilities. The content consisted of an introduction to the program objectives, technical guidance on using Zoom Meeting, online meeting ethics, strategies for accompanying children in pesantren from a distance, and independent evaluation activities.

Before being implemented in the main training activities, the module underwent validation involving pesantren administrators and educational technology experts. The validation process focused on content relevance, language clarity, practicality, and suitability with the needs of parents. Feedback obtained from the validation stage was used to improve the module so that the materials became easier to understand and more contextual to the pesantren environment.

The final design of the program emphasized a gradual learning process, considering that participants had different levels of digital experience. Therefore, the training strategy combined visual explanations, simple language, direct demonstrations, and practical assistance (Das et al., 2023; Madavan, 2022; Ou et al., 2024). In addition, a communication support mechanism was prepared through online discussion groups to provide continuous assistance after the training activities. This strategy indicates that the program design was developed not only to achieve short-term technical competence but also to encourage sustainable digital engagement between parents and Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School.

### **3. Strengthening Digital Infrastructure Readiness to Support Sustainable Parent-Pesantren Communication**

The implementation of the empowerment program not only improved parents' understanding of digital communication but also contributed to strengthening community participation within the Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School environment. The utilization of Zoom Meeting was positioned as a communication bridge that enabled parents, pesantren administrators, and educational stakeholders to maintain interaction and involvement in supporting students' educational development. This condition shows that digital empowerment does not merely focus on improving technical skills but also encourages the formation of a more collaborative relationship between the institution and its surrounding community.

The evaluation process was conducted through direct observation during training sessions, participant responses, brief interviews, and reports from the technical support

team. The results indicated that participants gradually developed greater confidence in participating in digital communication activities. Parents who initially experienced limitations in using online platforms began to understand the basic functions of Zoom Meeting and its potential role in maintaining communication with the pesantren. This change indicates that the program successfully reduced technological barriers and encouraged parents to become more active partners in supporting educational supervision.

The strengthening of participation was also reflected in the broader involvement of the pesantren community in institutional activities. The collaboration between the pesantren, parents, and external partners demonstrated that community engagement has become an important component in supporting educational programs (Alharbi et al., 2024; Schroeder et al., 2023). One example of this collaborative participation was the implementation of a social service activity involving Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, the parents' community, and external partners through a mass circumcision screening program for 100 children. This activity illustrates the existence of strong social involvement and collective responsibility among educational stakeholders.



**Figure 3. Community Participation and Institutional Collaboration Activities at Mirqotul Ulum Islamic Boarding School**

The documentation presented in Figure 3 provides evidence that the empowerment program was implemented within a supportive social ecosystem. Although the activity shown was not a direct Zoom training session, it reflects the broader impact of strengthening communication and collaboration among pesantren stakeholders. The existence of active community participation indicates that improved communication

mechanisms can support wider institutional engagement and strengthen the relationship between pesantren and society.

Therefore, the findings demonstrate that the success of digital empowerment programs in Islamic boarding schools depends not only on technological adoption but also on the strength of social relationships built among stakeholders. The integration of digital communication platforms with existing community collaboration practices provides a foundation for developing a more participatory pesantren education system (Alfina et al., 2024). The results of this activity serve as a basis for improving future training programs and designing more inclusive digital empowerment approaches for Islamic educational institutions.

## CONCLUSION

The Community Service (PkM) activity on empowering the parent community through the utilization of the Zoom Meeting platform demonstrated that digital communication training can become an effective strategy to strengthen the relationship between Islamic boarding schools and families. The program was initiated based on the identification of partner needs, particularly the limited interaction between the pesantren and parents in monitoring students' educational development. Through a participatory approach consisting of needs assessment, training, technical assistance, and evaluation, the activity provided parents with practical skills to utilize Zoom Meeting as a medium for communication, discussion, and educational coordination.

The results of the activity indicate that the empowerment program contributed to improving parents' digital literacy and confidence in participating in technology-based communication. Participants who previously had limited experience using online meeting platforms gradually understood the basic functions of Zoom Meeting and its relevance to supporting their children's education in the pesantren environment. The program also encouraged changes in parental involvement, where parents became more prepared to participate in two-way communication, educational discussions, and information exchanges with the pesantren. This finding confirms that digital empowerment is not merely a process of introducing technological tools but also an effort to strengthen awareness and partnership among educational stakeholders.

Furthermore, the implementation of this program highlights that successful technology adoption in Islamic boarding schools requires alignment between digital infrastructure, participant readiness, and institutional support. Several challenges, such as differences in digital competence, internet limitations, and participants' initial hesitation in using digital platforms, were addressed through gradual assistance, practical demonstrations, and accessible training materials. Therefore, the sustainability of this program requires continuous support from the pesantren management to maintain digital communication forums and encourage active participation from parents.

Overall, this community service activity provides evidence that the integration of digital platforms such as Zoom Meeting can support the development of more collaborative communication between Islamic boarding schools and parent communities. The program can serve as an initial model for strengthening technology-based parental engagement in Islamic educational institutions, particularly those facing challenges related to distance and limited communication channels. Future programs are recommended to expand digital mentoring activities, develop more structured online parent forums, and involve broader educational stakeholders to strengthen sustainable collaboration between pesantren and families.

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