

ETHICS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS TOWARDS EARLY CHILDHOOD IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE QUR'AN: A STUDY OF THE TAFSIR MAFATIḤ AL-GHAIB BY FAKHRUDDIN AR-RAZI

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Abstract

Parental communication plays a crucial role in shaping early childhood language, emotional development, character, and interpersonal relationships. Although Qur'anic communication ethics have been widely discussed, the interpretation of Fakhruddin al-Razi's Mafāṭiḥ al-Ghaib has rarely been integrated systematically with the developmental needs of early childhood. Previous studies have either examined Qur'anic communication ethics generally, focused on family communication, or analyzed parent-child communication through a limited set of verses. This study aims to analyze the six qaulan principles in Mafāṭiḥ al-Ghaib and synthesize their relevance as an ethical framework for parent-child communication in early childhood. This qualitative study employs library research with a philosophical-tafsiri approach. Data were drawn primarily from the Qur'an and al-Razi's Mafāṭiḥ al-Ghaib, while relevant studies on Islamic communication and early childhood development were used for contextual synthesis. Data were collected through identification and contextual selection of qaulan verses, followed by systematic examination of al-Razi's interpretation. The data were analyzed through tafsir-oriented content analysis involving reduction, categorization, interpretation, and conceptual synthesis. The findings indicate that qaulan sadidan, balighan, kariman, maisura, layyinan, and ma'rufan represent complementary dimensions of ethical communication concerning message content, recipient, and delivery. The synthesis produces a recipient-centered communication framework that positions children as recipients whose developmental capacity and dignity must be considered. The study contributes a contextual Qur'anic framework for developing responsive Islamic parenting practices.

Keywords: *Qaulan, Mafāṭiḥ al-Ghaib, Qur'anic Communication Ethics, Islamic Parenting, Early Childhood*

Abstrak

Komunikasi orang tua memiliki peran penting dalam pembentukan bahasa, perkembangan emosional, karakter, dan relasi interpersonal anak usia dini. Meskipun etika komunikasi dalam

Al-Qur'an telah banyak dikaji, interpretasi Fakhruddin al-Razi dalam Mafātīḥ al-Ghaib belum banyak diintegrasikan secara sistematis dengan kebutuhan perkembangan anak usia dini. Penelitian terdahulu cenderung membahas etika komunikasi Qur'ani secara umum, efektivitas komunikasi dalam keluarga, atau komunikasi orang tua dan anak melalui cakupan ayat yang terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis enam prinsip qaulan dalam Mafātīḥ al-Ghaib dan mensintesis relevansinya sebagai kerangka etika komunikasi orang tua dengan anak usia dini. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui studi kepustakaan dengan pendekatan filosofis-tafsiri. Sumber primer berupa Al-Qur'an dan Mafātīḥ al-Ghaib, sedangkan literatur tentang komunikasi Islam dan perkembangan anak usia dini digunakan untuk memperkuat sintesis kontekstual. Data dikumpulkan melalui identifikasi dan seleksi kontekstual ayat-ayat qaulan, kemudian dianalisis berdasarkan penafsiran al-Razi. Analisis dilakukan melalui reduksi data, kategorisasi, interpretasi tafsir, dan sintesis konseptual. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa qaulan sadidan, balighan, kariman, maisura, layyinan, dan ma'rufan membentuk prinsip komunikasi yang saling melengkapi dalam aspek isi pesan, penerima pesan, dan cara penyampaian. Sintesis tersebut menghasilkan kerangka komunikasi berpusat pada penerima (recipient-centered communication) yang menempatkan anak sebagai penerima pesan dengan kapasitas perkembangan dan martabat yang perlu diperhatikan. Temuan ini memberikan landasan konseptual bagi pengembangan praktik Islamic parenting yang responsif terhadap perkembangan anak.

Kata Kunci: *Qaulan, Mafātīḥ al-Ghaib, Etika komunikasi qur'ani, Pengasuhan Islami, Anak usia dini.*

INTRODUCTION

Parental communication plays an important role in early childhood development because the family is the child's primary social environment. Parents' responses to children's questions, mistakes, needs, and emotions become repeated learning experiences that influence how children understand themselves and interact with others. Thus, parental communication is not merely a means of delivering messages but also a pedagogical process related to children's linguistic, emotional, social, and moral development.¹

The quality of communication is particularly important in early childhood because children's ability to understand language, regulate emotions, and interpret social situations is still developing. Effective communication therefore requires messages that correspond to children's developmental capacities, respect their dignity,

¹ Muhammad Torieq Abdillah and Panji Ansari, "The Julid Fi Sabilillah Movement: A Response to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict A Review of Communication Ethics in Tafsir," *Muāṣṣāṭarah: Journal of Contemporary Islamic Studies* 6, no. 2 (2024): 126–42, <https://doi.org/10.18592/msr.v6i2.15712>. Ahmad Zain Sarnoto, "Effective Communication in 'Early Childhood in the Family According to the Qur'an,' *Journal of Obsession : Journal of Early Childhood Education* 6, no. 3 (2022): 2359–69, <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v6i3.1829>.

and are delivered in ways they can understand.² Previous studies have shown that family communication and educational verbal interaction contribute to children's moral and behavioral development.³ These findings indicate that communication with young children involves not only what parents say but also the suitability, ethical quality, and manner of communication.

The Qur'an provides a normative foundation for these dimensions through several qaulan expressions: qaulan sadidan, qaulan balighan, qaulan kariman, qaulan maisura, qaulan layyinan, and qaulan ma'rufan. These expressions represent different ethical orientations concerning the truth and goodness of messages, the characteristics of recipients, the accessibility of language, and the manner of delivery. Their diversity suggests that Qur'anic communication ethics can be understood as a multidimensional framework rather than merely a general command to speak well.⁴ This framework is particularly relevant to parent-child communication because children should be considered as developing recipients rather than merely objects of instruction. The Qur'anic principles therefore need to be contextualized according to children's linguistic, cognitive, emotional, and social characteristics. Such contextualization can connect the normative dimensions of Qur'anic communication ethics with the practical needs of Islamic parenting.⁵

The study of communication ethics in the perspective of the Qur'an has developed through various approaches. Muhamad Nidzom Muis examines communication ethics based on the interpretation of Fakhruddin Ar-Razi in *Mafāṭih al-*

² Ahmad Zain Sarnoto, "Effective Communication in 'Early Childhood in the Family According to the Qur'an,' *Journal of Obsession : Journal of Early Childhood Education* 6, no. 3 (2022): 2359–69, <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v6i3.1829>.

³ Intan Asyikin Rantikasari et al., "Early Childhood Moral Formation through Educational Verbal Communication," *Journal of Obsession : Journal of Early Childhood Education* 7, no. 5 (2023): 6365–75, <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v7i5.3742>. Athena Chung Yin Chan dan Timothy F. Piehler, "Evaluation of Prevention Programs for Grandparent Caregivers: a Systematic Review," *Prevention Science* 25, no. 1 (2024): 137–54, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-023-01594-2>.

⁴ Elya Siska Anggraini et al., "The Role of Effective Communication Strategies in Shaping Early Childhood Character," *Socius: Journal of Social Sciences Research* 2, no. 12 (2025), <https://ojs.daarulhuda.or.id/index.php/Socius/article/view/1802>.

⁵ Qithrotun Nida Aulia et al., "Critical Thinking in the Qur'an: A Study of Thematic Interpretation and Its Implementation in the Digital Era," *Al-Fahmu: Journal of Qur'an Science and Tafsir* 4, no. 1 (2025): 131–49, <https://doi.org/10.58363/alfahmu.v4i1.473>. Muhammad Nidzom Muis and Uswatun Hasanah, "Communication Ethics in the Perspective of the Quran in Mafatih Al Ghaib by Fakhruddin Al Razi," *Mentari : Journal of Islamic Primary School* 1, no. 2 (2023): 97–110, <https://ejournal.staimnglawak.ac.id/index.php/ment/article/view/1280>.

Ghaib. The research shows that *Mafāṭih al-Ghaib* has an important contribution in understanding the principles of Qur'anic communication ethics. However, the discussion is still placed within the framework of communication ethics in general and has not been directed to the context of specific communication relations.⁶ Meanwhile, Efri Ayu Aginta Br Surbakti studied communication between parents and early childhood has shown that communication in parenting relationships has different characteristics from general communication. The study emphasizes the role of parental interpersonal communication in the formation of early childhood behavior, which shows the importance of adapting the communication process to the characteristics and needs of child development.⁷

In line with that, Sarnoto specifically discusses effective early childhood communication in the family according to the Qur'an. The study has linked the principles of Qur'anic communication with the family context and characteristics of early childhood. However, the discussion has not made *Mafāṭih al-Ghaib* the main source of interpretation and has not conducted a systematic analysis of the six characters of *qaulan*. As a result, the differences in the character of each *qaulan* have not been formulated as specific dimensions of communication ethics in the relationship between parents and children.⁸ Meanwhile, Bob Andrian examine the ethics of parent-to-child communication through the interpretation of Q.S. Luqman verses 13–17. The research contributes to showing that the Qur'an can be the foundation of communication ethics in parenting.⁹ However, the scope of his analysis is limited to a single series of verses in Surah Luqman. These limitations have not allowed for a broader mapping of the diversity of *qaulan* principles scattered in several surah.

Based on previous research, studies on Qur'anic communication ethics, family communication, and parent-child communication have been conducted by previous

⁶ Muhammad Nidzom Muis dan Uswatun Hasanah, "Etika Komunikasi Dalam Perspektif Al Quran Dalam *Mafatih Al Ghaib* Karya Fakhruddin Al Razi," *Mentari : Journal of Islamic Primary School* 1, no. 2 (2023): 97–110, <https://ejournal.staimnglawak.ac.id/index.php/ment/article/view/1280>.

⁷ Efri Ayu Aginta Br Surbakti dkk., "Peran Komunikasi Interpersonal Orang Tua Dalam Pembentukan Perilaku Anak Usia Dini Di Langkat," *Komunikologi: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Komunikasi dan Sosial* 6, no. 1 (2022): 52, <https://doi.org/10.30829/komunikologi.v6i1.12107>.

⁸ Sarnoto, "Komunikasi Efektif pada 'Anak Usia Dini dalam Keluarga Menurut Al-Qur'an."

⁹ Bob Andrian dkk., "Etika Komunikasi Orang Tua Kepada Anak Dalam Tafsir Q.S. Luqman Ayat 13-17," *Mafatih* 4, no. 1 (2024): 20–28, <https://doi.org/10.24260/mafatih.v4i1.2862>.

research. However, there has been no research that integrates Fakhruddin Ar-Razi's interpretation in *Mafātiḥ al-Ghaib*, analysis of the six principles of *qaulan*, and their contextualization in parent-child communication. This gap is important because communication in early childhood requires adjustments to the characteristics and capacity of children's development.

On the basis of this gap, this study synthesizes six principles of *qaulan* based on Ar-Razi's interpretation and reconstructs their relevance in the context of parent-child communication. Thus, the principle of *qaulan* is not only understood as a general norm of Qur'anic communication, but as the basis for the formation of a framework of communication ethics that considers the character of the message, the way of delivery, and the capacity of the recipient. Based on this position, this study aims to analyze Fakhruddin Ar-Razi's interpretation of the six principles of *qaulan* in *Mafātiḥ al-Ghaib* and synthesize their relevance as an ethical framework for communication between parents and early childhood.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using library research because the primary objects of analysis were the Qur'anic texts and Fakhruddin al-Razi's interpretation in *Mafātiḥ al-Ghaib*. The study focused on examining the meaning and ethical orientation of six *qaulan* principles from al-Razi's interpretation and synthesizing their relevance to communication between parents and young children. A philosophical-tafsiri approach was applied by considering the linguistic dimensions, textual context, communicative purposes, and position of the message recipient as reflected in al-Razi's interpretation.¹⁰

The primary sources consisted of the Qur'an and Fakhruddin al-Razi's *Mafātiḥ al-Ghaib* (*al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*), published by Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, in 1981. Secondary sources included scholarly articles and academic literature on Qur'anic communication ethics, family communication, Islamic parenting, and early childhood development and communication. These secondary sources were used to contextualize the findings and

¹⁰ Hasna Wijayati Wijayanti et al., *Qualitative & Quantitative Research Methods: How to Identify Problems, Formulate Hypotheses, and Start Research Stages* (Anak Hebat Indonesia, 2024).

relate al-Razi's interpretation to the developmental characteristics of young children, rather than to determine the meaning of the Qur'anic verses.

The data were collected by identifying Qur'anic verses containing the qaulan constructions with the assistance of *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfāz al-Qur'ān* by Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi. The identified verses were then examined according to their textual and contextual usage to determine their relevance to the study of communication ethics. Based on this process, six qaulan principles were established as the research corpus: qaulan sadidan, qaulan balighan, qaulan kariman, qaulan maisura, qaulan layyinan, and qaulan ma'rufan. Each selected verse was subsequently traced to its corresponding discussion in *Mafātiḥ al-Ghaib*, particularly the passages explaining its linguistic meaning, contextual significance, communicative purpose, characteristics of the recipient, and manner of message delivery.

The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis combined with tafsir analysis. The analysis involved four stages: data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and synthesis. At the reduction stage, passages from al-Razi's interpretation that were directly relevant to communication principles were selected and documented. The selected data were then categorized according to recurring ethical patterns, including the truthfulness and appropriateness of message content, the suitability of the message to the recipient's capacity, respect for the recipient, accessibility of language, gentleness in delivery, and orientation toward goodness. Each category was subsequently interpreted by considering the textual context of the verse and al-Razi's interpretive arguments to ensure that the analytical categories remained grounded in the primary tafsir source. The final stage involved synthesizing the categories to identify the relationship among the six qaulan principles and formulate their implications for parent-child communication in early childhood.

The trustworthiness of the interpretation was maintained through source triangulation by comparing the Qur'anic text, al-Razi's interpretation, and relevant scholarly literature. Interpretive consistency was maintained by placing the textual context and explanations in *Mafātiḥ al-Ghaib* as the primary basis before relating the findings to contemporary concepts of communication and early childhood development. Accordingly, the findings of this study are not intended to provide empirical evidence of the effectiveness of particular parental communication practices but to offer a conceptual synthesis of Qur'anic communication ethics that may serve as a foundation

for developing Islamic parenting practices responsive to children's developmental needs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Getting to know Fakhruddin Ar-Razi and *Mafātīḥ al-Ghaib*

Fakhruddin Muhammad ibn Umar Ar-Razi (544–606 AH/1149–1209 AD) was one of the important mufasirs in the Islamic intellectual tradition, with a keen interest in the problems of language, theology, philosophy, and reasoning in understanding the verses of the Qur'an. This breadth of knowledge is reflected in his monumental work, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghaib* or *At-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*. The characteristics of the interpretation of Ar-Razi lie not only in the explanation of the literal meaning of the verses, but also in the use of rational argumentation and linguistic analysis to explain the problems contained in them.

The linguistic and rational characteristics of *Mafātīḥ al-Ghaib* are relevant to this study because the term *qaulan* in the Qur'an can be understood not only through literal translation but also in the context of word use, the purpose of communication, and the condition of the party receiving the message. With this approach, the interpretation of Ar-Razi allows the principles of *qaulan* to be analyzed not only as a form of encouragement to say good things, but also as a concept of communication ethics with a distinct character in each form. It is important to understand because the six terms *qaulan sadidan*, *balighan*, *kariman*, *maisura*, *layyinan*, and *ma'rufan* have different contexts and emphases in meaning.¹¹

Thus, the use of *Mafātīḥ al-Ghaib* in this study is not solely to repeat Ar-Razi's interpretation of the *qaulan* verses. The interpretation is presented as the primary source for identifying the ethical principles in the verses, and these principles are then analyzed in light of the communication needs of early childhood. This position distinguishes research from studies that only describe the content of the verses or explain Ar-Razi's thoughts without systematically connecting them to the context of *Islamic parenting*.¹²

The Principles of *Qaulan* in the Qur'an

¹¹ Razi, "*Tafsīr al-Kabīr*."

¹² Hattasal Ma'ruf, "Telaah Kitab Tafsir Mafatīḥ al-Ghaib by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī: A Study of Content and Interpretation Methodology," *Al-Qadim-Journal of Tafsir and the Science of Tafsir* 2, no. 2 (2025): 30–49.

The results of identifying the verses of the Qur'an that contain the construction of *qaulan* reveal six principles that are the focus of the research: *qaulan sadidan*, *qaulan balighan*, *qaulan kariman*, *qaulan maisura*, *qaulan layyinan*, and *qaulan ma'rufan*. The six principles do not convey the same meaning; rather, they form different and complementary dimensions of communication ethics. Therefore, the following discussion not only explains the meaning of each principle according to Ar-Razi but also analyzes its ethical function and its relevance to parental communication in early childhood.

Qaulan Sadidan: Truth and Accuracy in Communicating

وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَافًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

"And fear (Allah) those who leave weak descendants behind them whom they fear for their (welfare). Therefore, let them fear Allah and speak the truth." (QS. (An-Nisa: 9)

The term *sadid* comes from a root meaning straight, precise, and true. In Ar-Razi's interpretation, *qaulan sadidan* is not enough to be understood as a word free of lies, but also as one that is precise and directed to the right goal. Thus, the ethical dimension of *qaulan sadidan* includes at least two elements, namely the truth of the substance of the message and the accuracy of its delivery. This perspective shows that ethical communication does not stop at the question of "what is said to be true?", but also "is the way of delivery appropriate for the recipient of the message?".¹³

In the context of parental and early childhood communication, the findings suggest that honesty should be incorporated into the formation of children's trust. Children gain an understanding of right and wrong not only through verbal advice, but also through the consistency of parental behavior and communication.¹⁴ Therefore, the habit of parents giving children incorrect information, even when intended to avoid crying or make momentary situations easier, can lead children to accept inconsistent communication patterns.

For example, when a child is about to undergo immunizations or medical procedures, parents should not make promises that are contrary to reality, such as saying that "they will not hurt at all" if there is a possibility of pain. Communication that is more

¹³ Andrian et al., "The Ethics of Parent-to-Child Communication in Tafsir Q.S. Luqman Verses 13-17."

¹⁴ Andrian et al., "The Ethics of Parent-to-Child Communication in Tafsir Q.S. Luqman Verses 13-17."

in line with *qaulan sadidan* can take the form of a simple, honest explanation that the action may feel uncomfortable, but that the parents will be there to accompany the child. From the perspective of early childhood education, this method not only conveys information, but also teaches honesty while providing a sense of security.

This finding extends the discussion by Bob Andrian on the ethics of parent-to-child communication through the lens of the Qur'an. If the study emphasizes the ethical value of communication in the context of QS Luqman verses 13–17, this study shows that *qaulan sadidan* can be understood more specifically as a principle that connects parents' honesty with the formation of children's beliefs.¹⁵ Thus, the Qur'anic value has a pedagogical dimension because correct communication is part of the child's moral learning process.¹⁶

Based on this analysis, *qaulan sadidan* in parent-child communication can be formulated as the principle of "correct in content and correct in delivery." This principle places parents as a model of honesty while demanding adjustments in language to children's abilities. Thus, honesty is not positioned as the delivery of information rawly, but as true, proportional, and understandable communication by children.¹⁷

Qaulan Balighan: The Accuracy of the Message Based on the Capacity of the Child

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا

"These are the ones whose hearts are known by Allah. Therefore turn away from them, and give them advice, and speak to them words that impress their souls." (QS. An-Nisa: 63)

The word *balighan* comes from the root of the word *balagha*, which means to reach, achieve a goal, or have an effect. In the context of communication, this meaning suggests that a good message achieves its purpose and influences the recipient. Ar-Razi views communication as *puberty* in relation to the condition of the person receiving the message, so that the effectiveness of communication is not determined solely by the amount of information conveyed, but by the ability of the message to achieve the

¹⁵ Andrian dkk., "Etika Komunikasi Orang Tua Kepada Anak Dalam Tafsir Q.S. Luqman Ayat 13-17."

¹⁶ Andrian et al., "The Ethics of Parent-to-Child Communication in Tafsir Q.S. Luqman Verses 13-17."

¹⁷ Mawaliya Mawaliya et al., "The Ethics of Communication from the Perspective of the Qur'an in Overcoming Hate Speech on Social Media," *Journal of Literature Review* 1, no. 2 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.63822/631gvd52>.

intended purpose.¹⁸ These findings show an important difference between *qaulan sadidan* and *qaulan balighan*. *Qaulan sadidan* mainly emphasizes the truth and accuracy of the message, while *qaulan balighan* emphasizes the accuracy of the target and the message's influence. Thus, the correct message does not necessarily become a *puberty* message when delivered in a language the child cannot understand.

These differences are highly relevant to the characteristics of early childhood development. Children aged 0–6 years are still developing language skills and understanding of abstract concepts. Therefore, parental communication should take into account the child's language skills, experiences, attention, and emotional state. Sarnoto shows that effective communication with early childhood in the family requires adjustment to the child's characteristics. These findings strengthen the interpretation that an effective message can be received and understood by the child, not just one that is substantially correct.

In practice, *qaulan balighan* can be achieved through short sentences, concrete vocabulary, examples close to the child's life, and repetition when needed. For example, when parents want to teach the rules of tidying up toys, the sentence "After playing, we keep the blocks in the box, yes" is more appropriate for children than a long explanation about the importance of maintaining cleanliness and orderliness in the home. The message still contains educational value but is packaged for the recipient's capacity. When viewed through the lens of social-cognitive development, adjusting messages to children's abilities demonstrates that parental communication serves as *scaffolding* in the learning process. Parents provide verbal assistance that children can understand, then gradually increase the complexity of their messages as children's abilities develop. Thus, *qaulan balighan* is not only a principle of communication ethics but also has a pedagogical function because it helps parents convey values and rules through forms of communication within the child's range of understanding.

Based on these findings, *qaulan balighan* in the context of *Islamic parenting* can be formulated as the principle of "delivering a message that is right on target based on the capacity of the recipient." This principle requires parents to consider the child's age, language ability, experience, and condition before determining how to convey the

¹⁸ Anggraini et al., "The Role of Effective Communication Strategies in Shaping Early Childhood Character."

message. Thus, the effectiveness of communication is not only measured by the delivery of the message, but also by the extent to which the child can understand and internalize the meaning conveyed.¹⁹

Qaulan Kariman: Honoring Children with Noble Speech

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۖ إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٌ وَلَا تَنْهَرَهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

"And your Lord has commanded that you should worship none other than Him and that you should do good to your parents. If one of them or both of them grows old in your care, then you shall not say the word 'ah' to them, and you shall not yell at them, and speak to them a good word." (QS. Al-Isra: 23)

The term *qaulan kariman* comes from the word *karim*, which indicates glory, honor, and appreciation. In the context of Q.S. Al-Isra [17]:23, the principle concerns how to treat parents through communication that neither degrades nor yells, while still maintaining honor. This emphasis shows that the quality of communication is not determined solely by the content of the message, but also by the position and dignity of the recipient. Thus, ethical communication requires one to avoid forms of speech that can degrade or harm the recipient of the message.²⁰

Although the verse directly addresses communication with parents, the principle of *qaulan kariman* can serve as an ethical guide in the relationship between parents and children, given the value of respect it embodies. In the context of early childhood, respect for children does not mean placing children in the same position as parents in the family structure, but treating children as individuals who have dignity and need to be appreciated.²¹ The implications of this principle can be seen in the way parents provide corrections. When children make mistakes, parents can guide behavior without labeling the child's personality negatively. For example, instead of saying "You are a bad kid," parents can say, "Do not throw the toy, okay? If you throw it, it can be damaged." This difference is important because the focus of communication shifts from assessing the child's identity to directing behaviors that need improvement.²²

¹⁹ Sarnoto, "Effective Communication in 'Early Childhood in the Family According to the Qur'an'."

²⁰ Razi, "*Tafsir al-Kabir*."

²¹ Andrian et al., "The Ethics of Parent-to-Child Communication in Tafsir Q.S. Luqman Verses 13-17."

²² Andreja Brajša-Žganec dkk., "Family Resilience and Children's Subjective Well-Being: A Two-Wave Study," *Children* 11, no. 4 (2024): 442, <https://doi.org/10.3390/children11040442>.

From a social-emotional perspective, this communication pattern is relevant to the development of a child's self-concept. In early childhood, he builds an understanding of himself through interaction with the people closest to him. Therefore, communication that constantly degrades or gives negative labels can become an interpersonal experience that does not support the formation of a positive self-concept. On the other hand, communication that respects the child's dignity allows the correction process to continue without compromising the child's identity.

This finding aligns with the study by Andrian which views parent-child communication ethics as part of the formation of values and character. However, this study expands this perspective by placing *qaulan kariman* specifically as a principle of protecting children's dignity in the communication process.²³ Thus, respect is not only understood as a polite attitude toward the other party, but also as a communication strategy that allows parents to give direction without degrading the child.²⁴ Based on this analysis, *qaulan kariman* in the context of communication between parents and early childhood can be formulated as the principle of "correcting behavior without degrading the dignity of children." This principle emphasizes that education through communication can still be firm, but firmness needs to be distinguished from insults, slaps, or negative labeling of children.

Qaulan Maisura: Light, Easy, and Soothing Speech

وَأِمَّا تُعْرِضَنَّ عَنْهُمْ ابْتِغَاءَ رَحْمَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكَ تَرْجُوهَا فَقُلْ لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّيْسُورًا

"And if you turn away from them in order to obtain the mercy of your Lord that you hope for, then say to them an easy saying." (QS. Al-Isra: 28)

In this section, it is necessary to be careful in translating and interpreting the *qaulan maisura*. The meaning of *maisur* is related to something easy, light, or possible to accept. Therefore, this principle is not enough to be understood only as "gentle words", but more precisely understood as communication that is easy to accept and does not burden the party to whom the communication is made.²⁵ This distinction is important

²³ Bob Andrian dkk., "ETIKA KOMUNIKASI ORANG TUA KEPADA ANAK DALAM TAFSIR Q.S. LUQMAN AYAT 13-17," *Mafatih* 4, no. 1 (2025): 20–28, <https://doi.org/10.24260/mafatih.v4i1.2862>.

²⁴ Zeni Murtafiati Mizani, "Communication of Parents and Children in Islam (A Pedagogical Review of Prophet Ibrahim's Communication with Prophet Isma'il in the Qur'an)," *Ibriez : Journal of Science-Based Islamic Basic Education* 2, no. 1 (2017): 95–106, <https://doi.org/10.21154/ibriez.v2i1.28>.

²⁵ Razi, "Tafsir al-Kabir."

because *qaulan maisura* has a different pressure point than *qaulan layyinan*. *Qaulan layyinan* emphasizes the softness of its delivery, while *qaulan maisura* emphasizes the ease and affordability of the message for the recipient. Thus, a message can be conveyed in a soft tone, but it is still difficult to understand if the language is too complex. In the context of early childhood, these two aspects need to be together.²⁶

Early childhood can understand language that is still developing. Therefore, parental communication needs to use concrete, simple, and close language to the child's experience. When giving instructions, parents can convey a single main message first rather than issuing several commands at once. For example, when asking children to get ready for bed, parents can say, "Now let us put away the toys first," then after finishing, continue with the next instruction.²⁷ The application of *qaulan maisura* can also be found when parents face their child's rejection. Instead of giving a long explanation when the child is crying, parents can use short sentences that are easy to understand, such as "Mom knows you still want to play. Now it is time to stop. Tomorrow we play again." This communication provides boundaries and helps children understand the situation without being burdened with explanations beyond their comprehension at the time.²⁸

This principle strengthens findings regarding the importance of effective communication adapted to the characteristics of early childhood.²⁹ However, this study provides conceptual sharpening that these adjustments can be read through the principle of *qaulan maisura*, which is to make the message accessible and accepted by children. Thus, the simplicity of language is not just a communication technique, but has an ethical basis in Qur'anic communication³⁰.

Based on this analysis, *qaulan maisura* in parent-child communication can be formulated as the principle of "conveying messages in a simple, light, and easily

²⁶ Muis and Hasanah, "Communication Ethics in the Perspective of the Quran in Mafatih Al Ghaib by Fakhruddin Al Razi."

²⁷ Intan Asyikin Rantikasari et al., "Early Childhood Moral Formation Through Educational Verbal Communication," *Journal of Obsession : Journal of Early Childhood Education* 7, no. 5 (2023): 6365–75, <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v7i5.3742>.

²⁸ Andrian et al., "The Ethics of Parent-to-Child Communication in Tafsir Q.S. Luqman Verses 13-17."

²⁹ Sarnoto, "Effective Communication in 'Early Childhood in the Family According to the Qur'an'."

³⁰ Rinwanto Rinwanto et al., "Communication Ethics in Social Media According to the Demands of the Qur'an," *Journal of Communication Studies* 1, no. 01 (2021): 49–61, <https://doi.org/10.37680/jcs.v1i01.721>.

acceptable way for children." This principle requires parents to consider the language skills and conditions of the message recipient so that communication does not become a cognitive or emotional burden for children.

Qaulan Layyinan: The Tenderness That Breaks the Wall

فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَىٰ

"So speak to him (Pharaoh) with gentle words, so that he may be conscious or afraid."
(Qur'an. Thaha: 44)

Qaulan layyinan is linguistically related to the concept of gentleness. In Q.S. Taha [20]: 44, this principle is interesting because the command to speak softly is given even when communication is directed to Pharaoh. This shows that gentleness is not a sign of weakness, but rather part of a communication strategy that allows the message to be received without magnifying the recipient's resistance. Thus, gentleness has a communicative as well as ethical function.³¹ In the relationship between parents and early childhood, *qaulan layyinan* is highly relevant because the parents' emotional state can affect the atmosphere of interaction with the child. When a child makes a mistake, a loud response can quickly stop the behavior, but it does not necessarily help the child understand why the behavior needs to change. On the other hand, gentle communication allows parents to maintain boundaries while still maintaining an emotional connection with the child.³²

Loud, stressful communication should be avoided because it can be a negative emotional experience for the child. In the context of social-emotional development, children need safe, responsive relationships with the adults closest to them. Therefore, gentleness in communication can be understood as one of the ways parents create safer interactions and support the child's learning process.³³ These findings also show that gentleness is not synonymous with permissiveness. Parents can still set rules and consequences, but convey them without insult or intimidation. For example, when a child hits his friend, the parent can say, "Hitting is not allowed. If you are angry, tell

³¹ Nurlisana Shidqi Saili and Ali Akbar, "An Evaluation Analysis of Communication Ethics in the Perspective of Qur'an Study," *Journal of Islamic Theology* 1, no. 2 (2025): 472–82, <https://doi.org/10.63822/jsqe3c55>.

³² Anisa Nur Izzati Sukmaningtyas et al., "The Communication Ethics of the Qur'an and Its Relevance to Communication in Modern Times," *Journal of Semiotics-Q: A Study of the Quran and Tafsir* 4, no. 2 (2024): 556–76, <https://doi.org/10.19109/jsq.v4i2.23981>.

³³ Sarnoto, "Effective Communication in 'Early Childhood in the Family According to the Qur'an'."

Mom. Our hands are not to hurt friends." The message remains firm, but the way it is delivered maintains gentleness and provides alternative behaviors to the child.³⁴

These findings expand on Sarnoto's discussion of effective communication in the family. If effective communication is understood as achieving the goals of the message, Qaulan Layyinan adds an emotional dimension to the message-delivery process.³⁵ This means that effective communication in the context of early childhood is not only determined by whether the child obeys instructions, but also by how the communication process takes place.³⁶ Based on this analysis, *qaulan layyinan* can be formulated as the principle of "conveying boundaries and directions with gentleness without losing assertiveness." This principle places gentleness as part of an educational strategy, not just a style of speech. In the context of *Islamic parenting*, parents can use gentleness to maintain authority while safeguarding their children's emotional safety.³⁷

Qaulan Ma'rufan: Every Word is Imparted, Goodness

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَامًا وَارْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا

"And do not leave your wealth (those in power) to those who are imperfect in understanding, whom Allah has made the tree of life. Give them food and clothing (from the proceeds of the wealth) and speak to them good words." (QS. An-Nisa: 5)

The term *ma'ruf* comes from the word *'arafa*, which is related to something that is known as good, proper, and in accordance with the value that is received correctly. In the context of Q.S. An-Nisa [4]: 5, *qaulan ma'rufan* shows that communication to those in need of protection must still be carried out with good, appropriate words. This principle shows that communication cannot be separated from the moral goals and benefits of the recipient of the message.³⁸ If *qaulan sadidan* emphasizes truth, *qaulan balighan* emphasizes the accuracy of the target, *qaulan kariman* emphasizes respect for dignity, *qaulan maisura*

³⁴ Natasya Rindiani et al., "Communication Patterns of Parents and Children in the Digital Era: Parenting in the Perspective of the Qur'an (Study of Surah Yusuf [12]: 4-6)," *CENDEKIA: Journal of Islamic Studies* 10, no. 2 (2024): 150–61, <https://doi.org/10.37348/cendekia.v10i2.506>.

³⁵ Ahmad Zain Sarnoto, "Komunikasi Efektif pada 'Anak Usia Dini dalam Keluarga Menurut Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* 6, no. 3 (2022): 2359–69, <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v6i3.1829>.

³⁶ Muis and Hasanah, "Communication Ethics in the Perspective of the Quran in Mafatih Al Ghaib by Fakhruddin Al Razi."

³⁷ Anita Wardani et al., "Improving Early Childhood Character Through the Implementation of Moral and Ethical Education at RA Amanah Ummah Surakarta," *Indonesian Journal of Early Childhood: Journal of the World of Early Childhood* 7, no. 2 (2025): 429–36, <https://doi.org/10.35473/ijec.v7i2.3370>.

³⁸ Razi, "Tafsir al-Kabir."

emphasizes the affordability of the message, and *qaulan layyinan* emphasizes gentleness. *Qaulan ma'rufan* provides an additional dimension by orienting the recipient to the Goodness of the message. Thus, good communication is not only true, easy to understand, and gentle, but must also be directed towards benefit.³⁹

In parental communication with early childhood, an orientation to kindness can be fostered through language that helps children understand the values, rules, and consequences of behavior. Parents not only say that an action is "allowed" or "not allowed," but can explain simple reasons that children can understand. For example, when a child takes a friend's toy, the parent can say, "It has a friend. Let us ask permission first," instead of immediately saying, "Do not take it!" In this way, communication not only stops the behavior but also helps the child to understand others's rights.⁴⁰ At this point, *qaulan ma'rufan* has a strong relationship with character education. Parental communication is a medium for introducing prosocial values such as sharing, respecting others' rights, apologizing, thanking, and being responsible. Because early childhood learns a lot through concrete interactions with the closest adults, parents' words can serve as a means of habituating values.⁴¹

This finding is in line with research on educational verbal communication in early childhood, which views language as part of the process of forming morals and character.⁴² However, this study clarifies that the educational orientation can be grounded in the principle of *qaulan ma'rufan*, so that good communication is not only viewed in terms of politeness of language but also in terms of its contribution to the Goodness and moral development of children. In the practice of *Islamic parenting*, *qaulan ma'rufan* also requires parents to distinguish between giving direction and controlling children through fear.⁴³ Parents can set rules, but communication should help children

³⁹ Razi, "*Tafsir al-Kabir*."

⁴⁰ Sarnoto, "Effective Communication in 'Early Childhood in the Family According to the Qur'an'."

⁴¹ Muis and Hasanah, "Communication Ethics in the Perspective of the Quran in Mafatih Al Ghaib by Fakhruddin Al Razi."

⁴² Rantikasari et al., "Early Childhood Moral Formation through Educational Verbal Communication."

⁴³ Mohamad Zenal Arifin and Muh Anshori, "Teachers' Communication Ethics to Students in Schools from the Perspective of the Qur'an," *Felt* 4 (2021).

understand the expected behavior. Thus, communication becomes a means of education that directs children gradually, not just a tool to gain momentary obedience.⁴⁴

Based on this analysis, *qaulan ma'rufan* in communication between parents and early childhood can be formulated as the principle of "using good, appropriate, and oriented communication for the benefit and moral development of children." This principle complements the previous five principles by placing the final goal of communication at the heart of speaking ethics.

The Principle of *Qaulan* and Its Implications for Communication Between Parents and Children

Based on an analysis of Fakhruddin Ar-Razi's interpretation in *Mafātīḥ al-Ghaib*, the six principles of *qaulan* reveal distinct yet complementary dimensions of communication ethics. The findings of the study show that Qur'anic communication not only provides provisions regarding what is said, but also regulates how the message is conveyed, to whom it is addressed, how the condition of the recipient is considered, and for what purpose communication is carried out.⁴⁵ The synthesis produces six main dimensions of parent-early childhood communication ethics as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Synthesis of *Qaulan* Principles in Communication between Parents and Early Childhood

No.	Qaulan Principle	Ethical Focus	Conceptual Synthesis	Relevance of parent-child communication
1	<i>Qaulan Sadidan</i>	Permissions and stipulations	Correct in content and accurate in delivery	Parents become models of honesty and convey information proportionately

⁴⁴ Ilham Khoiri and Alfiyatul Azizah, *Hubb ad-Dunya in the Interpretation of QS Ali Imran verse 14 Fakhruddin ar-Razi's perspective in the Book of Mafatihul Ghaib*, 2024.

⁴⁵ Asrul Asrul, "The Relationship of Parents and Children; Thematic Studies of the Quranic Term *Gulām* in Tafsir Al-Kabīr.," *Quranika Studies* 6, no. 1 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.21111/studiquran.v6i1.5805>.

2	<i>Karlan Balighan</i>	Target accuracy	Messages are tailored to the recipient's capacity	Using language, examples, and explanations according to the child's developmental stage
3	<i>Qaulan Kariman</i>	Dignity of the recipient	Correcting behavior without demeaning	Provide boundaries without insulting, labeling, or demeaning the child
4	<i>Qaulan Maisura</i>	Ease of reception	Simple, lightweight, and easy-to-understand messages	Using concrete, brief, and step-by-step instructions
5	<i>Qaulan Layyinan</i>	Softness of communication	Firm in message but gentle in delivery	Establish rules without boasting, intimidation, or threatening communication.
6	<i>Qaulan Ma'rufan</i>	Kindness orientation	Communication is geared towards benefit and value formation	Using communication as a means of moral habituation and prosocial behavior

The table shows that the six principles of *qaulan* should not be understood as the six rules of communication that stand alone. The six form an ethical framework that can be used simultaneously in parent-child communication. A message, for example, should ideally have the right content (*saddan*), be adjusted to the child's capacity (*balighan*), not degrade the child (*kariman*), be easy to understand (*maisura*), convey with tenderness (*layyinan*), and be directed at the good of the child (*ma'rufan*). Thus, the conceptual contribution of this research lies in the understanding that, from the perspective of Ar-Razi, Qur'anic communication ethics can be read as a communication framework centered on *recipient-centered communication*. Children are not positioned solely as

objects who must receive parental instruction, but as recipients of messages who have developmental capacity, emotional needs, and dignity that must be considered in the communication process.

This perspective has relevance to early childhood education because the success of communication with children cannot be separated from the characteristics of child development. Language that is too abstract can be difficult to understand, instruction that is too long can exceed the child's attention span, and degraded communication can interfere with the quality of interaction between children and adults. Therefore, *the principle of qaulan* provides a normative foundation that can be met with the principles of child development in building educational and responsive communication.

The Relevance of the *Qaulan* Principle to Early Childhood Development

The synthesis of the six *principles of qaulan* shows that the application of communication ethics in the family does not have to be carried out as six separate steps.⁴⁶ Rather, the principles can be applied simultaneously in various parenting situations. For example, when parents teach children to apologize, parents can convey the right reasons and not mislead (*sadidan*), use age-appropriate language (*balighan*), do not embarrass the child (*kariman*), use simple sentences (*maisura*), convey them in a gentle tone (*layyinan*), and direct the child to understand the importance of improving relationships with others (*ma'rufan*).⁴⁷

Thus, the implementation of *qaulan* in *Islamic parenting* can be understood through three main dimensions. First, the content dimension, which ensures the message is correct and well-structured. This dimension is mainly represented by *qaulan sadidan* and *qaulan ma'rufan*. Second, the recipient dimension, which is to consider the ability and dignity of the child through *qaulan balighan* and *qaulan kariman*. Third, the delivery dimension, which is to ensure that the message is easily received and conveyed gently through *qaulan maisura* and *qaulan layyina*.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Zuhri Fahrudin and Mochammad Marjuki, "The Concept of Learning Communication in the Qur'an," *JIQTA: Journal of Qur'an and Tafsir* 1, no. 2 (2022): 127-43, <https://doi.org/10.36769/jiqta.v1i2.288>.

⁴⁷ Almer Ragil Amri et al., "Children's Moral Education to Parents in the Perspective of the Quran and Hadith," *Journal of Islamic Ethics* 2, no. 3 (2024): 128-44, <https://doi.org/10.61132/jbpai.v2i3.308>.

⁴⁸ Mawaliya et al., "The Ethics of Communication from the Perspective of the Qur'an in Overcoming Hate Speech on Social Media."

Table 2. Dimensions of *Qaulan* Implementation in Islamic Parenting

Dimensions	Main principles	Forms of parental communication	Empirical examples
The content of the message	<i>The Sword + Shield</i>	Honest, true, and kindness-oriented	Explain the reasons for the prohibition of hitting friends simply and honestly.
Message recipients	<i>Balighan + Kariman</i>	Be age-appropriate and still respect children	Correcting behavior without saying "you are a bad boy"
How to deliver	<i>Maisura + Layyinan</i>	Simple, concrete, soft, but still firm	"We keep the toys first; after that we can choose books to read."

This division shows that Qur'anic communication ethics can be practically applied in parenting without losing its normative character.⁴⁹ Parents are not only required to speak correctly, but also need to consider the child's readiness to receive messages and the means of communication used. In the context of early childhood education, these three dimensions serve as a basis for habituating consistent communication at home or as a material for strengthening communication skills between educators and parents.⁵⁰

The implications for early childhood education are the importance of establishing continuity between communication practices at home and the educational environment.⁵¹ Early childhood teachers can help parents understand that educational communication does not always mean giving long advice to children. Communication can be educational when adults give the right message, respect the child's ability and dignity, use language that is easy to understand, convey it with gentleness, and direct the child toward good behavior.⁵²

⁴⁹ Herlina Husen, "Ta'dib Methods and Islamic Communication According to the Perspective of the Qur'an and Hadith in Early Childhood Character Development," *Golden Age: Journal of Early Childhood Education* 1, no. 2 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.29313/ga.v1i2.3385>.

⁵⁰ Rizka Azhari et al., "Good and Effective Communication in Children's Education: (Parenting Communication in Surah Lukman Verses 13-19 and Surah as-Saffat Verses 102)," *Seulanga* 3, no. 2 (2024): 94-108, <https://doi.org/10.47655/3fp11097>.

⁵¹ Syamsu Nahar, *Educational Communication of Parents and Children in the Qur'an: A Study of Tafsir Tarbawi* (Publisher of Adab, T.T.).

⁵² M. Noor Hidayat, "Internalization of Multicultural Values in Tafsir Al-Rāzi on the Development of the Approach to Learning Tafsir," *Journal of Religious and Social Studies* 11, no. 1 (2017): 105-21, <https://doi.org/10.23971/jsam.v11i1.450>.

However, the application of the quality principle in the context of Islamic parenting in this study is the result of conceptual contextualization based on interpretations and literature on child development, not empirical testing of a specific family. Therefore, the resulting framework needs to be further tested through field research, including observations of parent-child communication, interviews, and quantitative research on the relationship between quality-based communication practices and children's social-emotional development and character.

The contribution of this study lies in the conceptual integration of Qur'anic communication ethics, Fakhruddin al-Razi's interpretation, and the developmental characteristics of early childhood. Rather than treating the six qaulan principles as independent forms of communication, this study demonstrates their interrelated functions within three dimensions: message content, message recipients, and message delivery. Qaulan sadidan and qaulan ma'rufan establish the ethical quality and direction of the message; qaulan balighan and qaulan kariman position the child as a recipient whose developmental capacity and dignity must be considered; while qaulan maisura and qaulan layyinan regulate the accessibility and manner of delivering the message. This synthesis extends previous discussions of Qur'anic communication by showing how the principles can operate as an integrated ethical structure in parent-child communication.

The study also contributes to Islamic parenting discourse by introducing a recipient-centered perspective derived from the interpretation of Mafāṭiḥ al-Ghaib. Within this framework, children are not merely viewed as objects of parental instruction, but as developing recipients who require communication that is truthful, beneficial, understandable, respectful, and appropriately delivered. The framework therefore connects the normative dimension of Qur'anic ethics with the developmental dimension of early childhood communication. In practical terms, it provides a conceptual basis for parents and early childhood educators to develop communication practices that preserve moral direction while adapting messages to children's developmental capacities and dignity.

This contribution should be understood within the scope of the present study as a conceptual and interpretive framework rather than an empirically validated parenting model. Its application and effectiveness in actual family settings remain open to further investigation through field-based research involving observations, interviews, or

quantitative studies of parent-child communication and children's social-emotional development.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the six qaulan principles in Fakhruddin al-Razi's *Mafāṭiḥ al-Ghaib* form an integrated ethical framework for parent-child communication in early childhood. Qaulan sadidan and qaulan ma'rufan emphasize the content of the message, qaulan balighan and qaulan kariman concern the capacity and dignity of the child as the recipient, while qaulan maisura and qaulan layyinan emphasize the accessibility and manner of communication. Their synthesis produces a recipient-centered communication framework that connects Qur'anic communication ethics with the developmental needs of young children.

This framework provides a conceptual basis for Islamic parenting by emphasizing that parental communication should be truthful, beneficial, developmentally appropriate, respectful, understandable, and gentle. Since the framework is derived from library research and has not been empirically tested, further research is needed to examine its application in actual parent-child communication.

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