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# Building the Values of Social Concern and Empathy in Students of Mattayom (Secondary School) Prateeptham Foundation School, Krabi, Thailand

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## ABSTRACT

Social awareness is an attitude or action that always wants to help, share, assist, and give to others. One of the factors that forms social awareness is empathy, the ability to put oneself in someone else's shoes, to understand the views and feelings of people or to experience what the person is experiencing. This attitude is in line with the goals of Prateeptham Islamic Foundation School, that is to enable students to have morality, ethics, and desirable characteristics including love for the nation, religion, and king, love of being Thai, honesty, disciplined, eagerness to learn, live simply, and have public spirit, be determined to work, be aware of and see their own value, have a sense of responsibility, and participate in conserving natural resources and developing the environment. Community Service of the University of Muhammadiyah Jakarta at Prateeptham Islamic Foundation School, Krabi, Thailand aims to build values of social awareness and empathy in students in order to foster enthusiasm and social awareness in the school environment. The method used in building values of social awareness and empathy in students at this school is implemented using the Project based Learning approach. The result of this community service activity is the growth of enthusiasm and social awareness in the school environment. In addition, it is also beginning to show that students are more concerned about social problems in the environment where they live.

## INTRODUCTION

Social concern is an attitude that is necessary in the relationship between an individual, society, and their environment. Social concern is an attitude or action that always wants to help, wants to share, help, and give to other people and communities in need [1], [2]. Social concern is a person's feeling of responsibility for the difficulties others face, which can create a drive to do something to help overcome these difficulties [3]. Agnew (2014) stated that social concern sometimes leads people to consider others more than their own interests [4].

The existence of this social concern attitude will encourage someone to always care about the difficulties of others around them and want to help overcome these difficulties. Social concern is related to honesty, compassion, humility, friendliness, kindness, and an attitude of always wanting to help others [5].

One of the factors that shape social concern is the sense of empathy within a person towards others. Empathy is a person's ability to put themselves in another person's shoes, to understand the person's views and feelings, or to experience what the person is experiencing [6], [7], [8]. Baron & Byrne defined empathy as the ability to feel the emotional state of others, feel sympathetic and try to solve problems, and take other people's perspectives [9]. It is viewed generally as a process by which ones come to understand accurately and share another's emotions [10]. A person's sense of empathy will increase their desire to help others even more [11].

Empathy is a commendable attitude that a Muslim must have. This attitude is shown in the form of compassion and pity for the weak or those affected by disaster. Allah commands Muslims to have four attitudes in His word in the Qur'an, Surah An-Nisa, verse 8 [12].

وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُو الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ  
وَالْمَسْكِينُ فَأَرْزُقُوهُمْ مِنْهُ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا  
*If (during) the distribution there are*

*several relatives, orphans, and poor people present, give them some of the property and say good words to them (QS. an-Nisa'/4: 8) [13].*

The attitude of social concern and empathy must be developed from an early age of children. The character of social awareness and empathy values is one of the tasks of schools as educational institutions in addition to parents and society. Students must be given sufficient provisions about a feeling of concern for others and the surrounding environment. Social concern and empathy can be instilled in students by role models from teachers and continuous habits that must be practiced. [14]. The instillation of social awareness and empathy values is also carried out by integrating them into learning activities as modules or interventions within existing courses, as stand-alone courses or workshops, or even as part of extra-curricular activities, particularly in the case of service-learning [15].

This Community Service aims to foster a spirit and social awareness in students so that they develop an attitude of caring for social problems in the environment where they live. The theme of building social awareness and empathy values for students aligns with the school's focus, namely management with a love for instilling morality and ethics in students according to Islamic methods. This theme also follows the school's goals, namely to enable students to have morality, ethics, and desirable characteristics specified in the school curriculum, including love for the nation, religion, and king, love of being Thai, honesty, discipline, eagerness to learn, live simply, and have public spirit, be determined to work, be aware of and see their value, have a sense of responsibility, and participate in conserving natural resources and developing the environment [16].

## METHOD

Community service was carried out at Mattayom Prateeptham Islamic School, Laem Sak, Ao Luek District, Krabi Province, Thailand. This activity was carried out by students of the Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta, Indonesia, under the guidance of a

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field supervisor lecturer. This activity involved all Mattayom students and was carried out in August 2023.

The Community Service Team of Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta and the leadership of Prateeptham Islamic School, Laem Sak, conducted a conversation to choose the activities that would be carried out. Following this conversation, a consensus was reached regarding the students who would participate and how the community service projects would be carried out. The topic of this activity, which is to instill values of social concern and empathy in students to promote excitement and social awareness in the school setting and help them develop an attitude of caring for social problems in their local communities, was also decided upon during this discussion.

The project-based learning approach is the methodology employed in this exercise. This activity involves students choosing a project to work on during the activity. Classroom instruction served as the starting point for the activities that made up this activity.

The school community, in this case, fellow students, is where the principles of social concern and empathy for others' concerns are first put into practice. Maintaining the cleanliness of the school and its surroundings is another task completed for this project.

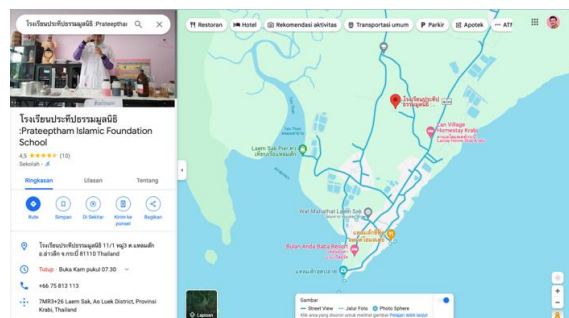
The values of social concern and empathy are also a commitment of the Prateeptham Islamic Foundation School. As stated on its website, the commitment of the Prateeptham Islamic Foundation School is to develop the quality of students to be good youths, knowledgeable, live happily in society, and be quality individuals who will strengthen society and the country to progress further [16].

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This community service activity was carried out at the Prateeptham Islamic Foundation School. This school is a private school overseas by the Foundation of Prateeptham for Education (FOPE), a non-profit organization located in Krabi Province,

Southern Thailand. This educational institution is housed in a Pondok called Maahad Misbahuddin, which the locals refer as Pondok Ban Laem Sak.

. This school teaches Islamic religious knowledge in addition to general education. For general education, this school provides everything from early childhood education to elementary school, junior high school, and high school. This school is located in Laem Sak District, Ao Luek District, Krabi Province, South Thailand [16].



**Fig. 1.** Location Map of Prateeptham Islamic Foundation School (Source: Google Map) [17]

This activity began with classroom learning activities. The Community Service Team delivered material on the values of social concern and empathy to foster social spirit and awareness in the school environment. This material was delivered by team members Handika Permana and Meisya Adelina Dewanti. Both are students of the Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta. This activity aims to motivate students to become more concerned about social disparities in their surroundings. This learning is intended to discuss ways to enhance social sensitivity and social awareness in the school environment.

This class's learning method included active participation in discussions by all students. A few students brought forward several points about the major concerns that would be discussed to find answers. The students are expected to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned in this subject to their living situations and surroundings. Lectures and conversations are used in this activity.



**Fig. 2.** Learning Activities at School

After the learning activity, a project was established for students to implement the values of social concern and empathy for others and the environment. Students worked on two projects, including addressing problems faced by their peers and improving the school environment's cleanliness. All students worked together to complete this project.

The first project began by identifying problems faced by fellow students. In the initial stage, students identified their fellow students who had problems and the causes of these problems. During the discussion, it was discovered that several students had been absent from school for a considerable amount of time. From the information collected by the students, it was known that there was a student, let's say Fulan, who had not been to school for several days. Next, the students looked for information about the cause of Fulan's long absence.

From the results of the investigation, students found that the reason for Fulan's absence was due to illness. Based on Fulan's condition, the students then made a plan to visit Fulan at his home. The purpose of the visit was to encourage Fulan to recover quickly and return to school as usual. A visit to Fulan's house is a form of student concern for problems faced by people other than themselves.

The second project, the cleanliness the school environment, begins by identifying problems in the school environment. In the initial stage, students identify problems that occur in the school environment. From the results of the discussion, students found that the condition of the school environment did not meet the rules of cleanliness. The students then discussed the causes of the environmental cleanliness problem. From the results of the investigation, the students found that the cause of the problem was the lack of student concern for the condition of the school environment. The students continued the discussion about the efforts that must be made to ensure that the school environment is cleaner.

As a result of the discussion, the students agreed to build student concern for the surrounding environment. One of the activities is to carry out a movement to maintain the cleanliness of the school environment. To ensure that the school environment is clean, before entering class, students are required to pick up trash and clean the school environment, including the classroom. The same activity is also carried out when they go home from school. They also clean the classroom before leaving their respective classes.

During the activity, teachers from Mattayom Prateeptham Islamic School together with the Student Community Service supervisors from the University of Muhammadiyah Jakarta provided guidance and direction to both students and students. Guidance is intended to ensure that activities run smoothly and achieve established goals..

Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta community service activities carried out in Prateeptham Islamic Foundation School align with the school's service focus. It focuses on developing students to be well-behaved, self-disciplined, public-minded, and eager to learn. The activities carried out are also in line with the school program that has been designed, namely organizing various activities to enable students to be of quality, moral, ethical, knowledgeable, and skilled in expressing their knowledge by themselves [16]. This activity also introduces the essence of social concern which includes being sensitive to the

difficulties of others, being sensitive to changes in social life patterns, being sensitive to the demands of a dynamic society and its needs, being sensitive to damage to the physical environment, being sensitive to various deviant behaviors [18].

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of community service carried out by Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta in Thailand, especially in Krabi Province, can run smoothly. All designed programs run smoothly. The projects developed during the activity run well. Students managed to formulate existing problems, the causes of the problems, and solutions to overcome them. A very important result that occurred was that students truly understood the values of social concern and empathy and applied them in real life in their school environment.

This community service activity in particular has achieved the previously designed goals. This activity began to show results, namely the growth of enthusiasm and social awareness in the school environment. In addition, students began to care more about social problems in the environment where they live.

The results of this community service activity can be utilized by Prateeptham Islamic Foundation School to strengthen the school's future programs. Furthermore, the cooperation that has been built between Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta, Indonesia and Prateeptham Islamic Foundation School Krabi, Thailand can be maintained and followed up in other cooperation programs that benefit both parties.

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