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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Family Communication Patterns In The Era Digital Technology

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Abstract: Communication dynamics in the family environment have a major impact on the relationships between family members and their psychosocial development. However, with the rapid progress of information and communication technology, especially in the current digital era, there have been quite striking changes in family communication patterns. Ease of access to digital devices and communication platforms can make many people feel obliged to stay connected, checking messages, email or social media constantly. Therefore, family members need to learn to manage their time wisely so that direct interactions and family activities remain a priority. This research was conducted in Bahagia Pondok Ungu Permai Village, Bekasi City. The method of qualitative descriptive research and interviews was conducted with two married couples, residents of Pondok Ungu Permai. The results of this research show that digital technology can have a positive impact on family communication, facilitating long-distance interactions, enabling quick sharing of information, and helping to monitor children.

Keywords: Communication Patterns, Digital Communication, Family Communication

1. Introduction

The family is the main element in the social structure which plays a crucial role in shaping individual values, norms and behavior. Communication dynamics in the family environment have a major impact on the relationships between family members and their psychosocial development. However, with the rapid progress of information and communication technology, especially in the current digital era, there have been quite striking changes in family communication patterns. Digital technology has resulted in a fundamental transformation in the way humans interact and communicate (Yulia & Sidharta, 2023). Technological developments such as smartphones, social media, instant messaging applications, and content sharing platforms, have changed the way family members interact with each other. Technology allows families geographically far apart to stay connected via the internet.

According to the results of the 2022 Susenas survey conducted by BPS, during the 2018 to 2022 period, there is a significant difference in growth between households that own or control computers and households that access the internet. Households that have internet access have experienced a much greater increase than households that only own or control a computer. This phenomenon can be explained by the ease of internet access through



various means, such as wireless fidelity technology (wifi, or better known as hotspots), facilities at work or schools, and even via mobile telephone devices (Statistik, 2023).

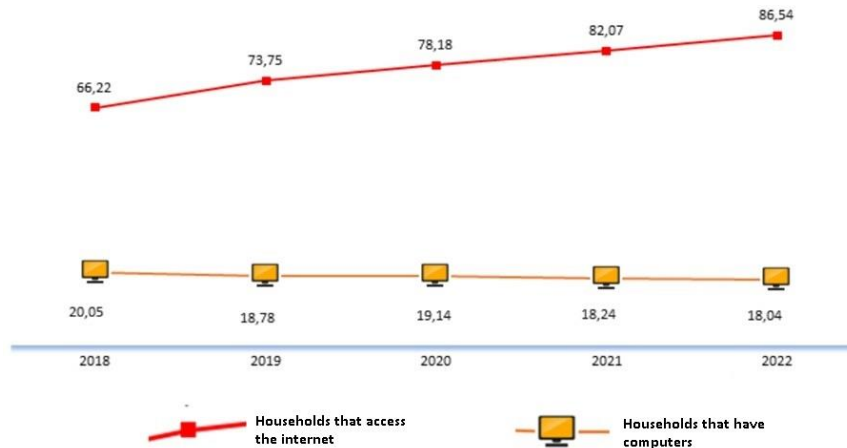


Figure 1. The percentage of households that own a computer and access the internet, 2018—2022. (Source: National Socio-Economic Survey, BPS)

Advances in digital technology facilitate family members to communicate more intensely via text messages, video calls, or social media, without being hindered by geographic distance. This can impact the extent to which family members stay connected and share information. Although technology makes long-distance communication easier, it is necessary to evaluate whether these changes have a positive or negative impact on the depth and quality of interactions between family members. In a family context that prioritizes harmony and harmony, changes in communication patterns can affect the traditional roles of family members (Yoanita, 2022).

For example, parents' use of technology for work or children for online learning can affect the division of time and focus of their roles in the family. Ever-evolving modern communication tools are enabling changes in the way families communicate. The use of technology to communicate within families has become increasingly important and common in the digital era, allowing family members to stay connected, exchange information, and maintain relationships despite geographic distance or busy schedules.

Technology is considered a different environment with the interactivity it provides providing convenience to today's technology users (Hasian & Kinseng R, 2020). Even in situations of family communication separated by distance, interactive media can surpass the ability to provide feedback due to the direct transmission of messages. Although the convenience of digital communication brings many benefits, such as allowing us to connect with people around the world quickly and efficiently, excessive use can lead to addiction to digital devices.

Ease of access to digital devices and communication platforms can make many people feel obliged to stay connected, checking messages, email or social media constantly. Therefore, family members need to learn to manage their time wisely so that direct interactions and family activities remain a priority. The internet has become a basic necessity in everyday life, used for various activities such as working, studying, accessing digital platforms, and socializing.

This research will focus on two families in Bahagia Pondok Ungu Permai Village, Bekasi City. Through this research, it is hoped that we can better understand changes in family communication patterns in the digital era, along with their impact on family interactions and dynamics in the Indonesian social and cultural context and can provide useful insights for developing policies, education and interventions related to the use of digital technology in families.

2. Literature Review

In every human activity, communication is a basic need and an important aspect in human life to be able to interact with each other. In the process, communication requires understanding of each individual and requires clear goals so that the content of the message can be conveyed as expected by the sender of the message through the media as a communication channel. Information needs are important because a person's success in fulfilling one or all of these basic needs is influenced by fulfilling information needs. Accuracy of information, completeness of information, correctness of information, relevance of information and timeliness of information are the main things in supporting the success and effectiveness of its use (Mustafa et al., 2020). Moreover, information used in one activity will produce knowledge (McInerney & Koenig, 2011).

Currently, the development of digital technology has changed the way individuals communicate, replacing traditional forms of communication with digital ones, such as e-mail, social media, e-commerce, and chatting. To convey messages effectively through digital media, a clear understanding and purpose is required. Digital platforms, used for interaction, have changed various aspects of life such as education, politics, finance and health. Digital communication, being a basic need, utilizes digital platforms to facilitate information exchange and communication, because information needs influence the fulfillment of individuals' basic needs. Accuracy, completeness, correctness, relevance and timeliness of information play a key role in its success and effectiveness (Hasian W, A Kinseng R, 2020).

Digital communication is a message that can be communicated to a number of people via electronic mass media and computers aimed at a wide audience, is general and planned. A type of digital communication is synchronous online communication, namely communication that uses a computer in real time and simultaneously. Digital communication is the art of communicating information without wires. In principle, it covers a number of techniques including underwater acoustic communications, semaphores, smoke signals, radio communications, and satellite communications, among others. The term was coined in the early days of radio, fell out of fashion for about fifty years, and was reinvented during the cell phone revolution.

Digital technology is increasingly intertwined with everyday life from school and education, to political engagement and even financial and health management. The development of digital technologies, and the speed at which they emerge, is driving new innovations and applications that touch our lives in different and often profound ways. The digital world is increasingly encroaching on the education and skills domain, with technology gradually being used to deliver education, knowledge and skills in new and innovative ways. The use of this technology has contributed to turning learning and skill development into a lifelong process (Grand-Clement et al., 2017).

Digital communication involves the use of electronic devices, such as computers, smartphones, and tablets, to interact and communicate through digital technology, which includes speed, efficiency, accessibility, and wide reach. Changes in family communication in the digital era create significant transformations due to developments in information and communication technology. It is important to remember that these changes have both positive and negative impacts, and families need to actively manage their use of digital technology to maintain healthy and productive communication.

One of the main changes is asynchronous communication within families in the digital era, where messages can be replied to at any time via text message, email or social media. The digital age also facilitates better communication between generations within a family, with parents and children able to learn from and support each other in the use of technology.

With digital communications, parents can supervise and control their children's use of technology, including using internet filters, limiting screen time, and monitoring online



activities. This change is the result of technological advances that require people to adapt their communication and behavior patterns, including social interactions (Boestam & Derivanti, 2022).

Through the digital communication process, understanding of meaning and effective communication occurs. Accuracy, completeness, truth, relevance and timeliness of information are the keys to supporting its success and effectiveness (Mustafa et al., 2020). Effective communication occurs when messages remain concise, clear, and accurate through all stages of the communication process. In the context of family communication, messages are exchanged from communicator to communicant, with parents dominating the family communication process (Prasanti, 2016). Family communication encourages the transformation of interpersonal communication into group communication, focusing on interactions between family members. This communication plays an important role in forming relationships, maintaining them, and determining the way families communicate and interact.

3. Research Method and Materials

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative, which is a research approach with the aim of understanding human events by creating a broad and complex picture through in-depth thoughts expressed in sentences, as well as providing detailed understanding from informant sources (Creswell & Poth 2018). This research approach aims to investigate phenomena or events related to changes in family communication patterns in the era of digital technology, by conducting interviews with two married couples who live in Pondok Ungu Permai, Bekasi City.

4. Results and Discussion

Communication within the family involves interactions and relationships among family members. In the context of family communication, factors such as social power structures and dynamics of social relationships can influence the overall family dynamics. The family communication process involves the exchange of information, ideas, feelings, and expectations among family members. This forms a crucial foundation for building healthy and close relationships within a family, encompassing both verbal (spoken words) and non-verbal aspects (body gestures, facial expressions, and body language).

To maintain good relationships between family members, it is important for family communication to be well established. Family communication includes the process of creating, sharing, and managing meaning through interactions between family members. This is a communication process that is continuous, complex, and involves changes in activities from the past to the reality of family members in the future (Chris Segrin, 2011).

Communication is not only about exchanging information, but also requires consensus between both parties to create effective communication. This applies to the relationship between parents and children in the family. To build good relationships, it is important for parents to implement open communication effectively within the family. In this understanding, the family uses a communication process where one family member sends a message and another family member acts as the recipient of the message, creating interactions that mutually understand each other in sending, receiving, and understanding messages.

The communication process is a complex interaction between two or more individuals aimed at sending, receiving and understanding messages, both verbal and non-verbal. This process becomes an integral part of everyday life in formal and informal situations. From this communication process, patterns, models, shapes and small parts emerge that are closely related to the communication process (Hia, 2019).

In the current era of internet-based technology, family communication which was previously interpersonal has developed through the internet network. In fact, this



communication is not only limited to individual interactions but can also be carried out in groups via internet channels. In Indonesia, internet use, especially social media, in the 25 to 45 year age group is very high. The longer the family spends time communicating via the internet, the lower the interpersonal communication between parents and children (Rumata, 2017).

The growth of technology, information, and communication (ICT) in Indonesia continues to show promising progress. According to data released by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the Information and Communication Technology Development Index (ICTDI) reached 5.85 points in 2022. This represents an increase of 0.09 points or 1.56% compared to the previous year, which recorded a score of 5.76. With the increasing value of the index, domestic ICT development is also improving (Mustajab, 2023).

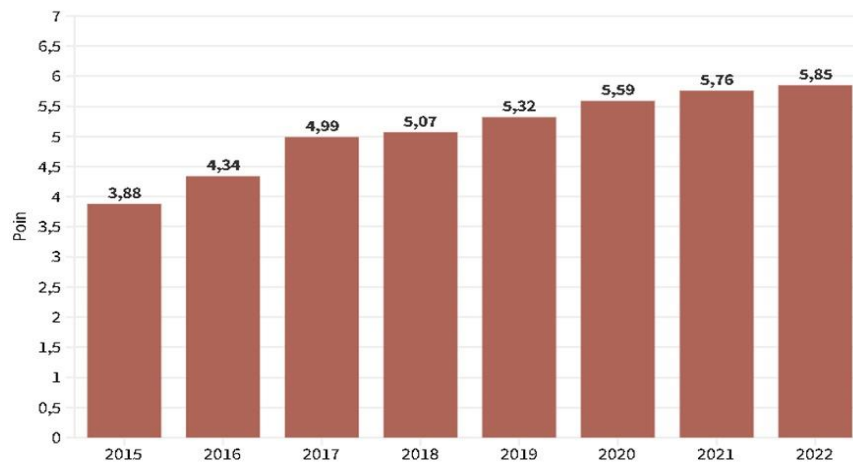


Figure 2. Indonesian Information and Communication Technology Development Index 2018-2022. (Source: Central Statistics Agency BPS)

The development of communication technology has progressed very rapidly in the last few decades. In the mid-20th century, the computer revolution brought significant innovations in communications technology. The Internet, as a result, changed the way humans communicate by enabling messaging, email, global information access, and online collaboration. These changes involve aspects such as hardware, software, and network infrastructure, fundamentally changing the way people communicate. In particular, communication via the internet is no longer bound by time and space constraints, allowing instant access to information.

The impact of technological developments can also be seen in changes in family communication patterns. It covers various aspects, from interactions between family members to the dynamics of their relationships. This pattern includes the way messages are delivered, received and responded to in the family environment. Family communication plays a significant role in family dynamics, relationships between family members, and individual development within the family. This pattern may even be a predictor of normative style and absorption of positive information (Soltani, A., Hosseini, S., & Mahmoodi, 2013).

Family communication patterns can be influenced by culture, values, past experiences, and individual characteristics in the family. Healthy and positive communication patterns encourage mutual understanding, support, and collaboration between family members. Effective communication within the family helps strengthen bonds, solve problems, and overcome challenges together. Family communication patterns can change over time and are influenced by external environmental factors. Healthy, open, and supportive family communication patterns tend to improve the quality of family relationships, while unhealthy patterns can cause conflict, emotional distance, and other relationship problems.

According to the first informant, a married couple from Pondok Ungu Permai, advances in digital technology have made it very easy for them to communicate, especially when parents are far from their children and other family members.

Open communication involves honest, transparent and open conversations between family members and can create a sense of comfort for them to discuss feelings, opinions and personal problems without fear or obstacles. Furthermore, the second informant from a married couple from Pondok Ungu Permai stated that the impact of digital technology on family communication could be considered positive. Even though face-to-face communication is considered more ideal for maintaining family harmony, the importance of face-to-face communication remains relevant, especially for monitoring children when parents are not at home.

As technology advances, family messages are becoming more frequent in the form of text, images, or videos rather than direct verbal communication. Families often share photos and videos of everyday events via social media applications or instant messaging. This can strengthen family bonds and allow them to share experiences more easily.

This statement reflects conformity with the view of the first informant who stated that digital advances have a positive impact on family relationships between parents and children. Currently, the evolution of digital technology has made long-distance communication easier and made a positive contribution to communication within the family. This technology can be used to change behavior through effective communication patterns. Communication via digital media is able to present information in real-time without space and time restrictions.

Technological developments and digitalization have changed various aspects of human life, including communication patterns within the family. The digital era has brought fundamental changes in the way family members interact, share information, and establish relationships with each other. The most striking impact of digitalization is that it allows family members to communicate easily, even if they are in separate locations. Instant messaging apps, video calls, and social media are becoming tools that allow families to stay connected in real time, overcoming geographic barriers.

Families today can share important and small moments via social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat. Photos, videos and stories can be shared instantly, allowing geographically separated family members to feel more involved in each other's lives. Even though family communication patterns have experienced significant changes along with advances in digital technology, it is important to manage the use of this technology so that it does not interfere with the quality of interactions and relationships between family members, both physically and emotionally.

5. Conclusion

Communication within the family sphere involves interactions and relationships between family members, with factors such as social power structures and the dynamics of social relationships influencing overall family dynamics. The family communication process involves the exchange of information, ideas, feelings and hopes between family members, both verbally and non-verbally. Good family communication requires consensus among family members and plays a role in forming healthy and close relationships. The use of technology, especially social media, has influenced family communication patterns, with the growth of communication technology that allows family communication via the internet network. Family communication patterns can be influenced by culture, values, past experiences, and individual characteristics in the family. Healthy, open and supportive family communication can improve the quality of family relationships, while unhealthy patterns can cause conflict and relationship problems. In the digital era, technology enables family communication through various social media platforms and instant messaging applications, facilitating long-distance relationships. Even though technological

developments have made a positive contribution to family communication, it is important to manage the use of technology so that it does not interfere with the quality of interactions and relationships between family members physically or emotionally.

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