

Family Communication Patterns in Enhancing Children's Learning Motivation in Batang Kuis District, Deli Serdang Regency

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ABSTRACT

Family communication is the interaction that takes place within a family, namely the way a family member relates to other members, serving as a means to instill and develop values needed as life guidance. Learning is a process of behavioral change through education or, more specifically, through training procedures. From the traditional perspective, learning is an effort to acquire a certain amount of knowledge. The purpose of this study is to find out how family communication patterns enhance children's learning motivation in Batang Kuis District, Deli Serdang Regency. This research applies a qualitative approach, carried out through interviews and documentation with a descriptive nature. The data analysis techniques include data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of the study indicate that the family communication pattern in this research tends to apply the Equality Pattern.

Keyword : Family communication pattern, children's learning motivation, equality communication pattern



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1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is a fundamental process in human life as social beings. Etymologically, the term communication comes from the Latin word *communis*, which means “same,” emphasizing the existence of shared meaning or messages between the sender and the receiver (Rahmawati, 2018). Communication is not only a medium for exchanging information but also serves to build interaction, togetherness, and understanding in social life.

Within the family sphere, communication plays a strategic role as the main medium for character formation, value transmission, and children's initial learning. Interactions between parents and children greatly contribute to shaping children's learning motivation (Kamuh, 2016). A good communication pattern is characterized by openness, honesty, and opportunities for children to express opinions and ideas. Conversely, ineffective family communication may lead to a decline in children's learning motivation and disruptions in their emotional and social development.

Several studies affirm that effective family communication can produce independent children who are self-controlled, socially competent, and highly motivated to learn (Hafizah, 2019). In the educational context, learning motivation is a key factor that determines children's academic success. Motivation functions as an internal driving force that sustains learning activities while directing the achievement of educational goals.

However, reality shows that the quality of education in Indonesia still faces serious challenges. Data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2012 placed Indonesia at 71st out of 72 countries, while UNESCO ranked Indonesia 64th out of 120 countries in terms of educational attainment. Furthermore, around 11% of children in Indonesia fail to complete basic education. This fact indicates the low quality of education, which is partly influenced by weak children's learning motivation.

Within this framework, the family becomes an important institution that can directly contribute to increasing children's motivation and enthusiasm for learning. Parents act as motivators as well as the first counselors for children, so the communication patterns established in the family can become a supporting factor for children's educational success.

Based on this background, this study focuses on “Family Communication Patterns in Enhancing Children's Learning Motivation in Batang Kuis District, Deli Serdang Regency.” This research is expected to contribute to the understanding of how parent-child interactions within the family play a role in building learning motivation, and to serve as a basis for efforts to improve education quality through the strengthening of family communication.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Family Communication Patterns

Communication patterns are understood as forms of relationships between individuals in the process of sending and receiving messages that occur repeatedly until they become a habit. These patterns reflect the way a community or group interacts with agreed-upon symbols or flows (Nadia & Delliana, 2020). In the family context, communication plays an essential role as a means of nurturing, instilling values, and enhancing children's social functions, thereby creating a healthy and prosperous family environment (Hafizah, 2019).

Parent-child communication is also key in supporting control, monitoring, and providing support. The effectiveness of communication patterns is influenced by how parents deliver messages, making communication skills essential in parenting (Kathryn & David, 2011). Moebin & Irawatiningrum (2017) emphasize that family communication patterns are interaction processes between parents and children with specific patterns that can affect relationship harmony.

There are four types of family communication patterns: equality pattern, balanced split pattern, unbalanced split pattern, and monopoly pattern. These four types describe differences in power distribution and roles in decision-making and family interaction.

2.2 Communication Messages

Communication messages are divided into two types: verbal and nonverbal. Verbal messages are delivered orally or in writing, using language as a system of codes (Di & Di, 2017). Meanwhile, nonverbal communication includes expressions, movements, or symbols without words, which tend to be more honest and spontaneous in conveying meaning (Kusumawati, 2016).

2.3 Forms of Communication

Based on the direction of interaction, communication can be distinguished into one-way and two-way communication. One-way communication occurs when the receiver of the message has no opportunity to provide feedback, such as in a military command system. Conversely, two-way communication allows for reciprocity, enabling both parties to actively engage in the exchange of messages (Kurniawan, 2018).

2.4 Learning Motivation

Learning motivation is defined as an internal drive that fosters a person's persistence in achieving achievement. Motivation not only functions as a driving force but also as a determinant of direction and the selection of actions to achieve goals (Hariyanti & Hasibuan, 2010). Learning itself is a process of behavioral change that is relatively permanent as a result of interaction with the environment. Motivation to learn is necessary so that individuals remain persistent even when facing failure.

The functions of learning motivation include determining the strength of learning, clarifying goals, and increasing perseverance (Purwanto, 2013; Emda, 2017). Sardiman (2008) further adds that motivation drives humans to act, determines the direction of actions, and selects actions relevant to goals. Thus, learning motivation becomes a crucial factor in improving children's academic achievement.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Types and Approaches

This study utilised a descriptive qualitative approach, with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of family communication patterns in improving children's enthusiasm for learning. This method was chosen because it is able to provide a complete picture of social reality based on oral data and documentation (Usman, 2009).

3.2 Conceptual Framework

The research framework is based on the relationship between family communication patterns and children's enthusiasm for learning, where parent-child communication is seen as a factor that influences learning motivation (Kriyanto, 2012).

3.3 Research Information

Research informants were determined using purposive sampling techniques, namely by selecting parents in Batang Kuis Subdistrict, Deli Serdang Regency, who were considered relevant and had direct experience related to the phenomenon being studied. Research data was collected through in-depth interviews with key informants, observation of interactions within families, and documentation in the form of notes and other supporting evidence (Darmalaksana, 2020).

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles & Huberman model (Sugiyono, 2017), which includes the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. The analysis process was conducted interactively and repeatedly until the data obtained was considered saturated and able to provide a comprehensive picture of family communication patterns and their influence on children's enthusiasm for learning.

This research was conducted in Batang Kuis Subdistrict, Deli Serdang Regency, from July 2023 to March 2024. This location was chosen because the researcher wanted to directly understand the dynamics of family communication in the context of children's education in the area.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

The following is a compilation of research results and discussions based on three in-depth interviews (father, mother, and child) in Sena Village, Batang Kuis Subdistrict, Deli Serdang Regency. I present a summary of findings per aspect, then relate them to the framework of 'family communication patterns' and 'spirit of learning'.

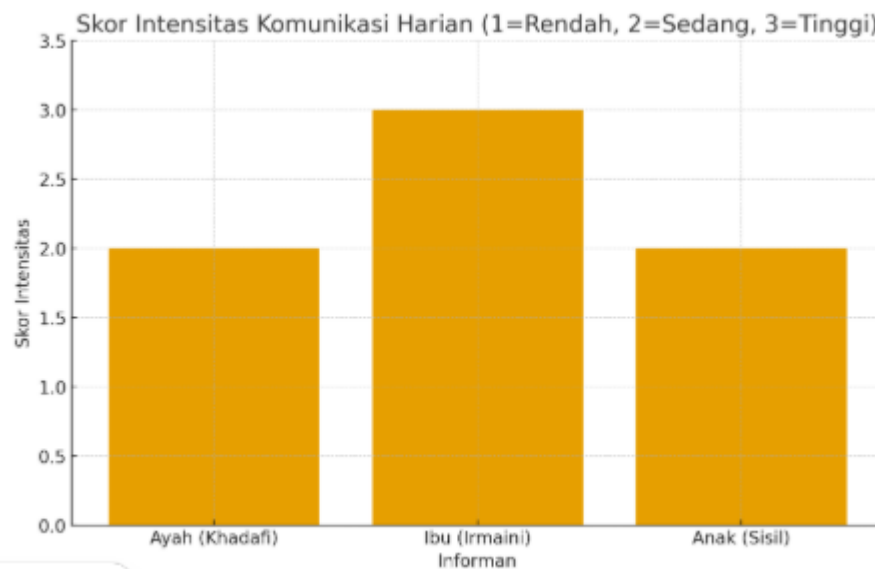


Fig 1. Daily Communication Intensity Score

Proses analisis

The data were obtained through interviews, transcribed, and thematically coded (open-axial-selective). This process generated five central themes: (1) intensity and patterns of communication, (2) forms and techniques of communication, (3) message content, (4) instrumental support and control, and (5) impact on learning motivation.

The main themes highlight how family communication patterns are shaped in daily interactions and their impact on children's learning motivation. In terms of intensity and patterns, fathers tended to engage more intensively during weekends, while on weekdays their interactions were shorter but consistent through daily check-ins. Mothers, on the other hand, communicated more frequently—three to four times a day—especially in the mornings and evenings as the primary reminders of the child's activities. The child confirmed this rhythm, stating that routine interactions usually occurred before school in the morning and after lessons or tutoring in the evening. The communication pattern consistently took a two-way form, with the child being given space to share academic challenges.

Regarding forms and techniques of communication, the dominant style was persuasive-informative. Both parents avoided verbal or physical violence and instead applied non-physical sanctions, such as reducing allowance or limiting social activities, in cases of misconduct. This approach made the child feel safe to share, thus maintaining communication bonds. The messages delivered in daily conversations also showed distinctive traits, including advice on behavior, study, and social relationships, monitoring of daily activities such as school schedules, and problem-solving related to homework or tutoring. The father emphasized role modeling through concrete examples, while the mother focused on soft discipline through reminders and routine evaluations before bedtime and upon waking.

Instrumental support and control also emerged as strong findings. The family provided learning facilities such as a laptop, mobile devices, and Wi-Fi, as well as tutoring support. Control was implemented through simple household rules and consistent non-physical sanctions, thereby creating a balance between freedom and responsibility. This combination of support and control was acknowledged by the child as highly helpful in maintaining focus on study and reducing procrastination.

The impact of this communication pattern was evident in the child's learning motivation. The child reported feeling emotionally comfortable because they were not afraid of punishment or scolding, which

encouraged openness in communicating with parents, especially when facing academic difficulties. This sense of security enhanced motivation, as the child also recognized the sacrifices parents made in providing learning facilities.

In summary, the study found that fathers played a role in providing support through role modeling, facilities, and reinforcement of discipline, while mothers were more active in daily communication and monitoring the child's activities. The child, in turn, experienced comfort from two-way, supportive communication and soft discipline, and stated that the facilities provided by parents were a major driver of their motivation to learn. These findings reinforce that the combination of two-way communication, persuasive techniques without violence, provision of facilities, and consistent non-physical control creates a conducive environment for enhancing children's learning motivation.

4.2 Discussion

The findings indicate a pattern approaching a balanced-split pattern within the family: the mother's communication plays a more intensive role in daily caregiving (reminders, monitoring), while the father contributes emotional support and role modeling, particularly on weekends. Although roles are divided, decisions and dialogue remain two-way and emphasize emotional equality (providing children with equal voice). This pattern aligns with the principles of effective family communication—openness, empathy, support, and warmth—which in this study are evident in the avoidance of violence and the prioritization of persuasion.

In terms of messaging, the family combines regular advice, activity monitoring, and academic problem solving. This combination works because the child feels psychologically safe to disclose difficulties, allowing parents to guide solutions (e.g., arranging tutoring, rescheduling tasks). At the same time, instrumental support (laptop, devices, Wi-Fi) removes practical barriers, while non-physical control maintains behavioral boundaries without undermining trust. This blend of support and control emerges as the main driver of learning motivation: the child interprets the provision of facilities as proof of parental investment, generating a sense of commitment not to waste that trust.

Conceptually, these results reinforce the idea that consistent communication intensity (even if brief on weekdays) is more crucial than sporadic lengthy interactions. Morning/evening conversations serve as anchors for learning routines (planning–review), while longer weekend sessions deepen reflection and emotional bonding. On the other hand, the child reported discomfort with yelling, underscoring that harsh punishment is counterproductive to motivation. Instead, proportional non-physical sanctions (e.g., reducing allowance) are more effective for behavior correction without closing communication channels.

Practically, families with limited work time can replicate the following strategies: (i) establish two brief daily communication windows (morning/evening) to check plans and evaluations; (ii) schedule a weekend session as a distraction-free deep talk; (iii) use a simple study checklist monitored by the mother, with positive reinforcement from the father; (iv) provide minimum learning facilities (stable internet access) and enforce clear household rules with consistent non-physical sanctions.

This study has limitations, including a small sample size (three informants from one family/community), reliance on self-reports, and the absence of triangulation with objective academic achievement data. Nevertheless, the consistency of narratives across informants strongly indicates the role of two-way persuasive communication, instrumental support, and non-physical control in enhancing children's learning motivation. These findings may serve as a foundation for designing family-based interventions (such as short parental coaching programs) in similar contexts.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings obtained through observation and interviews, it can be concluded that family communication patterns in enhancing children's learning motivation in Batang Kuis District, Deli Serdang Regency, are carried out effectively with specific characteristics. The family communication pattern applied tends to use the equality pattern, in which each family member has an equal opportunity to communicate fairly and evenly without any violence. The intensity of communication is also quite high; although the father is busy with work, he still takes the time to ask about the children's complaints and needs related to school. The communication process is two-way, marked by feedback from the children, making the conversation more interactive. In addition, communication within the family provides significant benefits, particularly in guiding children to stay on the right path and avoid undesirable behaviors, while also encouraging their learning motivation.

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