

Family Communication in the Digital Era for Resolving Household Conflicts

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the application of family communication in resolving domestic conflict, focusing on conversation orientation, compliance, and interpersonal communication skills. The research method used a qualitative approach with a literature review of couples who had experienced domestic conflict. The results indicate that communication based on openness, mutual respect, and third-party mediation, when necessary, can reduce conflict intensity and improve the quality of family relationships. Therefore, implementing effective family communication is a key strategy in maintaining household stability and the psychological well-being of family members. Therefore, it is important to find effective solutions that can help resolve these conflicts. Communication is key in resolving conflict, with values such as compassion and patience helping to manage differences more effectively. This approach strengthens emotional and spiritual bonds, creating a more stable and healthy family environment.

Keywords: *Communication implementation; family; conflict*

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INTRODUCTION

Family conflict is a common problem faced by everyone, whether as a father, mother, or child. Individuals can experience this due to many factors, including differences in opinion, values, and external pressures. Unresolved conflict can affect family harmony and stability, negatively impacting the mental and emotional health of family members. Therefore, it is important to find effective solutions to help resolve this conflict. The family is the smallest social unit and plays a vital role in shaping the personality, values, and well-being of its members. However, within a household, conflict often arises due to differences in opinion, needs, parenting styles, and economic pressures. Unresolved conflict can lead to disharmony, diminish the quality of relationships, and even lead to family breakdown.

Communication is the key to resolving conflicts within the family. However, not all effective communication methods applied to defuse tensions are successful and yield positive solutions. Therefore, a religiosity-based approach can be an effective method for resolving conflict. Religion has values and principles that can help family members interact in a more harmonious and respectful manner. In the family context, the relationship between communication is at the interpersonal level, which is the communication that occurs between the communicator and the communicant. This communication is the most effective in changing attitudes, opinions, and behaviors because it is more dialogical in nature and has a direct feedback flow (Effendy, 2003). In this interpersonal communication, the effectiveness of communication can be seen from five general qualities that are considered: openness, empathy, supportiveness, positiveness, and equality (DeVito, 2011).

In their lives, humans cannot stand alone, therefore humans are categorized as social creatures who need to communicate with other humans, or express opinions, feelings, wills and desires so that others can understand our desires and we can understand the desires of others. By nature, humans will indirectly create a larger community called society which consists of the smallest groups of society, namely the family. So it can be said that the family is the smallest social system in society. This happens because within the family there is a continuous and close relationship, so that if one of the family members experiences a certain event, then other family members usually feel the event too. (Darmayanti 2013).

The results of Ni Made's (2024) research explain that the types of conflict that often occur in their households are mostly external conflicts. Informant TN answered that the external conflict that occurs most often in their household life stems from work, then informant EZ answered that the external conflict that occurs in their household stems from family, informant WT answered that the external conflict that occurs stems from family, namely children, then informant ON answered that external conflicts also stem from economic and family problems regarding education

and childcare patterns and finally informant YN also answered that external conflicts occur due to miscommunication. So overall, from the answers of the 5 informants, the type of conflict that often occurs in their households is external conflict. This external conflict can occur because there are factors that trigger arguments between husband and wife. When viewed from the answers of the 5 informants, with varying ages of marriage, it can be concluded that they also experience conflict in their households.

Not only that, other cases of differences of opinion between husband and wife make the household relationship disharmonious because they always differ in making a decision. The difference of opinion between husband and wife experienced by SH, was caused by the selfish attitude of the husband and wife so that neither of them wanted to give in, only wanting their opinion to be used, because they always thought their opinion was the most correct and found it difficult to accept each other's opinions. And the lack of unity between husband and wife in deciding a problem in their household relationship resulted in differences of opinion between husband and wife. Similarly, LA because the wife rarely respected what was his (husband's) orders, even often his orders were rejected even though they were good orders, so that what happened in LA's household life became frequent differences of opinion with his wife. (Musaitir, 2020).

In the Hello Sehat article "10 Main Causes of Family Disputes," the following are listed: 1) Differences in parenting styles often lead to disagreements with partners regarding how to treat children; 2) Different opinions or perspectives; 3) Financial problems; 4) Cultural differences; 5) The arrival of a new person; 6) Sibling rivalry; 7) Illness or condition of a family member; 8) Domestic violence; 9) Feeling unappreciated; and 10) Criticism and comments that cross the line.

Therefore, the application of family communication in resolving household conflicts serves not only as a means of resolving problems but also as a strategy for maintaining harmony, stability, and the psychological well-being of all family members. This makes research on family communication relevant and important to examine in more depth.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is about understanding the context, situation, and setting of a natural phenomenon under study, which is a unique phenomenon. The technique used to collect data in this research is library research, a method of collecting data by understanding and studying theories from various literature related to the research (Fadli, 2021). The stages carried out by the researcher include: Selection and Collection of Literature, namely by establishing criteria for selecting literature, such as relevance to the theme, quality of sources (academic articles, books, research reports), and publication period. Then, organizing the literature. Then, the next stage is analyzing by assessing

the quality and contribution of each source. Then, analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in the existing literature and also identifying the main patterns and themes from the collected literature and then drawing conclusions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Communication within the family is a crucial part of the interaction process that occurs within a family and is also a crucial foundation for the functioning of life and family functions. According to Fiese & Winter (in Windarwati et al., 2021), communication within the family is a medium for socializing with children, a learning medium for children, and a medium for cognitive and socio-emotional development. When two or more individuals communicate with each other, they essentially disagree to achieve a common goal by expressing their own characteristics and self-expression, which is not the same as anyone else, even if the communication participants are parents and children. Communication between mother and child, father and child, husband and wife, or between children, is a form of interpersonal communication. Communication within the family is fundamental because within the family, individuals are accepted into certain patterns. The social context is the nursery where humans acquire norms, values, and beliefs. (Tuti Bahfiarti; 2016)

In the Family Communication Patterns Theory by Koerner & Fitzpatrick, it is stated that families who tend to focus on objects and discuss how each family member understands them are conversation-oriented families. There are three important assumptions in this Family Communication Patterns Theory, namely: Early family experiences shape the way we think, act, and communicate throughout our lives; that conversations within the family have a major influence on how its members live their lives. They call this conversation family communication patterns, or beliefs and repetitive communication behaviors that direct family members towards a shared reality.

The second assumption is that communication creates shared reality. That is, families exhibiting a high conformity orientation create a shared reality by emphasizing parental authority. A high conversational orientation does not emphasize parental authority or knowledge; instead, a shared reality emerges from open discussion and debate of ideas. Each orientation represents a different way of creating a shared social reality. They call it coorientation, or “a situation in which two or more individuals focus their cognitive attention on the same object in their social or physical environment and form beliefs and attitudes toward that object.” Coorientation does not mean that family members always agree with each other, but most families experience pressure to reach at least some level of agreement. Conversation and conformity are two different ways of achieving this coorientation.

The third assumption is that conversation and conformity shape four family types. Almost all families have a mix of conformity and conversation orientations, although the two are inversely related. These types are (Setyawan, 2020):

1. Consensual Family

This family type has equally high levels of conformity and conversation orientations. Parents are highly interested and attentive to what their children have to say about various issues, while still considering them as the final decision-makers. Parents resolve differences by listening to their children and taking the time to explain their values, beliefs, and decisions so that children can understand the reasons behind their decisions.

2. Pluralistic families

Family orientation is high in conversation, but low in conformity orientation. Parents do not feel the need to control their children, make decisions for them, or require their children to agree with their decisions. Opinions are openly discussed and evaluated based on the support of the arguments, rather than on who is making the argument (child or parent).

3. Laissez-faire families

Laissez-faire families meaning "not interfering," are low in both conversation and conformity. Both orientations in this family type, conversation and conformity, are low. Communication between family members is very limited, and parents tend to believe that all family members should be able to make their own decisions. Unlike other family types, parents are less concerned with their children's decision-making, which is why conflict is rare.

4. Protective Family

This family is the opposite of the Pluralistic Family, as it is low in conversation and high in conformity. Obedience to authority is emphasized, with limited discussion within the family. Parents tend to make decisions for their children and consider their explanations for their decisions to be of little significance to them.

Relational Dialectic Theory is a theory of interpersonal communication that differs from other theories. In this theory, people who build relationships and then engage in interpersonal communication experience the pull of conflict. This pull of conflict is what causes relationships to remain in a constant state of fluidity. This state is known as dialectical tension. People interacting feel torn between two poles of the relationship: harmony and conflict, or intimacy and hostility. The essence of applying relational dialectics theory to family conflict resolution is recognizing and managing the tension between opposing needs or desires that exist within family relationships. In this theory, relationships are viewed as dynamic and constantly in a tug-of-war between conflicting needs, such as the need for independence versus the need for connectedness, openness versus privacy, and stability versus change. Acknowledging these tensions is the first step in managing conflict, as it provides a framework for understanding the sources of conflict and how family members can work together to find balance.

To manage this tension, families need to adopt various strategies that allow for the fulfillment of conflicting needs. These strategies include integration, where

families seek ways to meet both needs simultaneously; segmentation, where families allocate time or space to meet separate needs; balance, where families seek equitable compromises; and recalibration, where families shift their perspective to view the tension in a more positive, less conflicting light. Through these strategies, families can create a more harmonious environment where conflict can be managed constructively. The application of relational dialectics theory also emphasizes the importance of open and honest communication, as well as self-awareness and self-reflection. Family members need to feel safe expressing their feelings and needs without fear of judgment, and they also need to be aware of their roles in the dynamics of family relationships. With good communication and self-awareness, families can be more flexible and adaptable to change, and better able to find solutions that satisfy all parties involved. This not only helps with conflict resolution but also strengthens family bonds and maintains the emotional health of each family member.

CONCLUSION

Integrating religious values into family communication can enhance the conflict resolution process across different family types, including consensual, pluralistic, laissez-faire, and protective families. The application of conflict resolution strategies such as competition, collaboration, compromise, avoidance, and accommodation within a religious context enables families to manage differences and tensions, as described in relational dialectics theory, in a more constructive manner. This approach not only facilitates effective conflict resolution but also contributes to stronger emotional and spiritual connections among family members, thereby supporting a more stable family environment.

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