



The Correlation of Interpersonal Communication among the Elderly and its Impact on Family Harmony

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Declining physical condition in the elderly, reduced income, limited relationships threaten the self-existence and happiness of the elderly. Technological developments make the world rush (hurried world), and result in the elderly being left behind, marginalized, alone, lonely, unhappy and sickly, which will eventually burden families and the country. The external challenge faced by the elderly today is the rapid development of technology. The elderly, in their old age, have to deal with an environment that is different from the environment in which they were raised. The limitations of elderly interpersonal communication with family harmony today will certainly be a challenge in maintaining harmony in the family.

Objective: The purpose of this study was to determine elderly interpersonal communication with family harmony in the globalization era.

Method: This type of research is quantitative, with a cross sectional approach. Total population of 112 elderly with a sample of 53 samples selected using a purposive sampling approach. Statistical data processing using the SPSS for windows application. Bivariate analysis used the Chi Square statistical test with an alpha of 0.05.

Result: The results of the study can be concluded that there is a relationship between elderly interpersonal communication and family harmony as indicated by the P Value of 0.000.

Conclusion: The advice that can be given is to increase the intensity of family meetings with the elderly to establish more intimate interpersonal relationships so that they can have a better effect on the elderly in the current era of globalization.

Keywords: elderly, family, interpersonal communication

Introduction

Communication is a fundamental activity which is a social event for human life to interact with other people. By communicating, humans can relate to each other well in daily life at home, at work, in the market, in society or wherever humans are. According to Sugiyo (2005), the term communication contains the meaning of informing and spreading information, news, messages, knowledge, values and thoughts conveyed to the recipient of the information (Firdausi, 2014).

As we know, elderly people are the final stage of development in a phase of human life that cannot be avoided. The older a person gets, the more the person's body function decreases, both physically and psychologically. The decline in these functions has an impact on the ability of a person at an advanced age to interact with their environment. In this increasingly advanced era, more and more changes are occurring in society in terms of communication. Basically, elderly people still need attention and support from the people closest to them, such as family (Chistanty & Azeharie, 2016).

Apart from the busy lives of family members, interpersonal communication between children and parents has become a big influence from the use of increasingly sophisticated gadgets. Smartphones have now become a new communication tool for children and parents and are very helpful for those who can use them, but if the person cannot keep up with technological developments then the person will be forgotten. The external challenge faced by the elderly today is the rapid development of technology. The elderly, in their old age, have to deal with an environment that is different from the environment in which they were raised. In today's interactions, there is a lot of demand for sophisticated things, public facilities, household equipment, government agency services, communication facilities, all-digital mass media. On average, these elderly people are not able to keep up with the times, so they are neglected because most of their children and grandchildren are absorbed in their own world, so they lack communication and make the elderly who cannot keep up with the times become alienated by their families, and makes the feelings of the elderly become sensitive (Chistian, et al, 2018).

There are various definitions of interpersonal communication. Joseph de Vito, defines interpersonal communication as the process of sending and receiving messages between two or more people, formally or informally. Interpersonal communication requires actors to meet face to face between two or more people by bringing verbal and nonverbal messages so that each can understand each other and interact effectively (DeVito, 2009).

Effective interpersonal communication is not only determined by the ability to communicate verbally, but if in its implementation there is a combination of a set of non-verbal abilities, such as: the listening process; the ability to place particular emphasis on special moments of the communication partner; the capacity to appreciate and understand anyone involved in the communication. (Jo-Ann, 2012). Or, communication expert Prof. Dr. Deddy Mulyana, said that the success of interpersonal communication is the responsibility of the communication participants. The closeness of the relationship between the parties communicating will be reflected in the type of message or nonverbal response through touch, eye gaze and close physical distance (Anggraini, 2022).

If in a family there are problems in interpersonal communication, then this will put family harmony at risk. Gerungan (2004) states that family harmony will create integrity in family

interactions, that within it social interactions take place that are normal (harmonious) and that there is no mutual hostility accompanied by aggressive actions. Family harmony is family integrity, compatible relationships between husband and wife and peace. This harmony is characterized by an orderly home atmosphere, not prone to conflict and sensitive to household needs. Furthermore, Gunarsa (in Hafsah, 2009) stated that another factor that influences family harmony is communication. Communication is a transaction, a symbolic process that requires people to regulate their environment by building relationships between each other through exchanging information to strengthen the attitudes and behavior of other people and trying to change those attitudes and behavior.

Not everyone is able to care for parents who are already elderly. Especially if the parent is sick. Apart from the physical care required, physical illness often causes parents to complain and show other negative attitudes. The ability that families must have is the ability to communicate well, based on genuine empathy and patience, as well as a sense of love and enthusiasm to provide support. With the ability to empathize, the family will have the ability to carry out conscious communication actions with the elderly so that they can understand and feel the elderly's mood.

Objective

The purpose of this study was to determine elderly interpersonal communication with family harmony in the globalization era.

Method

Study Design and Setting

This research was conducted between February-April 2023 in Cibeureum Village, Banjar I Community Health Center Working Area, Banjar City. This type of research is analytical with a cross sectional approach.

Population and Sampling

The population in this study were 112 elderly people with a total sample of 53 elderly people using purposive sampling technique. The respondent's inclusion criteria are elderly who live in Cibeureum Village, willing to be respondents, aged > 60 years, cooperative at the time of the research, able to communicate in two directions and live with family.

Measurements and Statistical Analyses

The research instrument uses a questionnaire that has been tested for validity and reliability. Research data processing begins with editing, coding, data entry, data analysis. The statistical test in this study used the Chi Square Test. The results of bivariate analysis were obtained from the P Value < α (Chi-Square), namely $0.000 < 0.05$ then H_0 was rejected, if $(p) > 0.05$ then H_0 failed to be rejected.

Result

Sociodemographic of Respondent – Univariate Analyses

Table 1. *Sociodemographic of Respondent – Univariate Analyses*

Variables	F	%
Classified		
Early-Elderly	42	79.2
Old-Elderly	11	20.8
Sex		
Man	39	73.6
Woman	14	26.4
Level of Education		
Elementary School	31	58.6
Junior high school	18	33.9
Senior high school	4	7.5
Interpersonal Communication		
Good	41	77.4
Enough	8	15.1
Not Enough	4	7.5
Family Harmony		
Harmonious	41	74.4
Not Harmonious	12	22.6

According to the findings in Table 1, comprising 42 individuals (79.2%), fell into the early elderly category aged 60-74 years, while 11 individuals (20.8%) were categorized as old, aged 75-90 years. Additionally, the study revealed a gender distribution among respondents, with 39 (73.6%) being female and 14 (26.4%) male. Educational backgrounds varied, with 31 (58.6%) respondents having elementary school education, 18 (33.9%) completing junior high school (SMP), and 4 (7.5%) having completed senior high school (SMA).

Correlation – Bivariate Analyses

Table 2. *Correlation – Bivariate Analyses*

Interpersonal Communication elderly	Family harmony				Total		p-Value
	Harmonious		Not Harmonious				
	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Good	38	92.7	3	25.0	41	77.4	0.000
Enough	2	4.9	6	50.0	8	15.1	
Not Enough	1	2.4	3	25.0	4	7.5	
Total	41	100	12	100	53	100	

Based on table 2 above, it can be seen that the results of the bivariate analysis is $0.000 < 0.05$, meaning that there is a relationship between interpersonal communication and family harmony in the era of globalization in Cibeureum Village, the working area of the Banjar 1 City Health Center.

Discussion

Families in old age are tested with various perceived problems. The main problems experienced by the elderly are caused by biological decline, including: physical decline, organic and systematic changes, brain aging, decreased sensory and psychomotor function, decreased cognitive function and others. The psychological decline usually experienced by the elderly is feeling anxious, irritable, afraid of losing loved ones and even death. Meanwhile, social decline includes withdrawing from social activities, losing people close to you and not wanting to mix with new people. The decline in psychological and social conditions causes the elderly to become less confident, unproductive, lonely and even depressed. Loneliness arises because of a feeling of loss due to severing relationships or social contact with friends and acquaintances which leads to a feeling of loss, isolation and marginalization (Suardiman, 2011).

Another problem felt by the elderly is interpersonal communication problems. This communication is essentially a form of personal communication. Interpersonal communication is communication between people face to face, which allows each participant to capture other people's reactions directly, both verbally and nonverbally. Interpersonal communication has the potential to carry out an instrumental function as a tool to influence or persuade other people, because we can use our five senses to increase the persuasiveness of the messages we communicate to our communicants. This interpersonal communication shapes the human person as a social creature from the development of our daily lives (Chistiany, et all, 2016).

As the most complete and perfect form of communication, interpersonal communication plays an important role at all times, as long as humans still have emotions. In fact, face-to-face communication makes people feel more familiar with each other, in contrast to communication via mass media such as newspapers, television, or via the most sophisticated technology. The purpose of interpersonal communication has various objectives, such as; to know oneself and others, to know the outside world, to create and maintain relationships, to influence attitudes and behavior, to play and seek entertainment, and to help (Wijaya, 2013).

Based on the research results, the results of bivariate analysis were obtained from the P value $< \alpha$ (Chi-Square), namely $0.000 < 0.05$, meaning that there is a relationship between elderly interpersonal communication and family harmony, this proves that good communication will also be created. a harmony in the family. If the family has good communication then if the family finds a problem they will still be able to survive and find a way out of the existing problem.

In Indonesian society, the elderly have an important role in the family and society. However, they are often ignored and considered useless by the younger generation. This kind of attitude can cause gaps between generations which have the potential to cause conflict and threaten family and community harmony (Chistian, et all, 2018). A harmonious family is a family that is full of calm, tranquility, affection, descendants and continuity of generations of society, compassion, sacrifice, mutual complementarity, perfection, helping each other, and working together (Yulianti, 2023). Having time with family, that is, a harmonious family always makes time to be with their family, whether it's just getting together, eating together, accompanying them to play and listening to problems and complaints, in this togetherness they will feel that they are needed and cared for. Good communication within the family will also be able to help the elderly to solve the problems they face due to decreased body function and perceived health conditions.

In a harmonious family, each family member tries to solve problems with a cool head and seeks the best solution to each problem through interpersonal communication. Good communication patterns can create a warm and harmonious atmosphere and conditions between family members, communication can form closeness, openness and satisfaction between families (Yulianti, 2023). The existence of a close relationship or bond between family members determines the harmony of a family. If a family does not have a close relationship, then between family members there will no longer be a sense of belonging and a sense of togetherness will be lacking. This close relationship between family members can be realized through togetherness, good communication between family members and mutual respect (Kembaren, 2016).

Caring for the elderly has many benefits, including: strengthening family and social relationships, improving the health and well-being of the elderly, helping the elderly remain involved in society, helping to reduce the burden on the family, increasing a sense of humanity and empathy (Chistian, et all, 2018). In conclusion, it is important for families to show concern for the elderly. In carrying out caring actions, families will build harmony between generations and avoid conflicts that have the potential to damage the family and society. In an effort to maintain effective interpersonal communication so that family harmony is maintained, families can do various things. Among them: establishing good communication to find out the needs and desires of the elderly, providing time to interact with the elderly. In this interaction, they can help the elderly in various ways, such as daily activities, meeting health needs, and providing attention and affection (Chistiany, et all, 2016).

Teaching technology to the elderly so that they can utilize technology in their daily activities. This will help the elderly to continue to feel involved in increasingly advanced social and technological life. encourage elderly people to participate in social activities, such as religious activities, togetherness activities, or other social activities. This will help the elderly to continue to feel useful and involved in society. In carrying out actions that care for the elderly, families will also feel the benefits, they will learn family values, social values and human values which are important for building harmony between generations and the sustainability of society.

Conclusion

The description in the discussion of this research can be concluded that there is a relationship between interpersonal communication and family harmony in the era of globalization in Cibeureum Village, the working area of Banjar 1 Community Health Center, Banjar City.

Conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest.

Authors' contribution

Each author contributed equally in all the parts of the research. All authors have critically reviewed and approved the final draft and are responsible for the content and similarity index of the manuscript.

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