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## Communication Patterns of Working Husband and Wife Families in the Habits of Preschool Children's Independence

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### ABSTRACT

In Indonesia, many married couples spend time outside the home due to work demands, resulting in ineffective communication patterns and time with children. This study aims to describe family communication patterns in familiarizing preschool children's independence. Using descriptive quantitative method, data was collected through questionnaire (Google Form) with Guttman scale, involving 21 respondents through purposive sampling. The results showed that most families applied open, honest, and discusive communication patterns. A small proportion used unbalanced communication patterns, where there was dominance and compliance. Some families also apply balanced communication patterns, although with differences in teaching. In conclusion, in teaching independence, families in Pasir Angin Village mostly use equal communication patterns. Recommendations for parents and the community are to communicate better and spend time with children. Future research is suggested to examine the effectiveness of each type of communication pattern.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Informal education according to Indonesian Law No. 20 of 2003 CHAPTER I Article 1 Paragraph 13 is a family and environmental education path in the form of independent learning activities. Education in the family and environment is used as a foundation before humans carry out education both formally and non-formally, because parents are the first teachers to provide education starting at birth until further development (Atmaja, 2011).

The family is also the first and main educational institution in society, because when humans are born, the family becomes the party responsible for the growth and development of children until they grow into adults (Wahy, 2012). The development is not only seen from the physical but cognitive and affective development such as knowledge, character, character, personality and affection. In providing teaching to children, parents can provide direction, guidance, discuss or interact both verbally and non-verbally in everyday life. Therefore, communication in the family has an important role because it affects the successful achievement of educational goals in the family itself (Helmawati, 2018: 2).

Family communication according to Wibowo (2016) is communication that occurs in the family which is a way for family members to interact with each other, and as a medium for forming and developing basic values in family life. Communication activities in the family can be done through dialogue, and exchanging opinions. However, not all families are able to carry out effective communication within the family, especially for families who have their own busy lives and spend a lot of time outside. One example is a family with a working husband and wife (Adelina et al., 2014). The phenomenon of husband and wife working families is one type of family in Indonesia called a dual career family. Families with working husbands and wives spend more time outside the home, especially with office operational working hours. Time with the family will automatically decrease, communication with each other becomes limited even though they still live in one house, because they spend more time outside the home (Januarti, 2010). Problems in dual career families exist in the division of time between family and work and limited communication.

In the process of delivering information or communicating within the family, there is a form of communication that takes place reciprocally and alternately which forms a pattern called family communication patterns (Djamarah, 2004). Communication patterns according to Devito (2007) consist of four types, namely Equality Pattern, Balance Split Pattern, Unbalanced Split Pattern and Monopoly Pattern.

The pattern of equality (Equality Pattern) is communication between husband and wife prioritizes honesty, upholds equality, and there is open communication. Then in the balanced split pattern, communication is established with a balanced division of roles so that husband and wife still have their respective authorities. In the Unbalanced Split Pattern, communication that occurs in the family has one person in control who is usually considered to have advantages or superior to other family members. Meanwhile, in the monopoly communication pattern (Monopoly Pattern) there is one person as the holder of power who dominates and more often gives orders (Sutika, 2017).

Appropriately applied communication patterns can affect character building in children, one of which is children's independence. Sahrip (2017) explains that there is a direct influence between interaction or communication in the family in the formation of independence, the existence of communication in the family can increase children's self-confidence so as to form an independent attitude.

Habituation of an independent attitude needs to be taught and trained by the family as early as possible, namely since the child is three years old, where the child has begun to interact a lot with other people, not only with those closest to him (mother and father) but

also has begun to interact with people he has just met, in situations like this, children can be taught to socialize while training and teaching independence in children (Sa'diyah, 2017).

So as a working parent, it should provide teaching about independent attitudes regardless of any busyness. Parents must cooperate with each other in controlling and supervising children, communicating with each other about how to train children to be independent as a shared responsibility.

Based on this description, the researcher is interested in conducting research and reviewing more deeply the types of communication patterns of working husband and wife families in habituating the independence of preschool children in Pasir Angin Village, Cileungsi District, West Java.

## **2. METHODS**

### **2.1. Research Design**

This study uses a descriptive quantitative approach, with data collection techniques through questionnaires (google form) using the Guttman scale. Determination of the sample using the purposive sampling method with the characteristics of the distributed questionnaire totaling 40 questions that have been adjusted to the research instrument grid.

### **2.2. Respondents and Research Location**

In this study, the population in question is families with children aged 3-6 years who are studying at preschool institutions. Researchers took data from three preschool institutions in Pasir Angin Village, namely Uswatun Hasanah Kindergarten, Nurul Iman Kindergarten and Al-Fatah Kindergarten with a total of 21 respondents.

### **2.3. Data Analysis**

Data analysis was carried out after the required data had been collected or after the questionnaire was distributed to respondents. The data obtained will be processed using the following percentage formula:

$$P = F/N \times 100\%$$

Description:

P = Percentage

F = Number of answers from all items

N = Number of items multiplied by respondents

Furthermore, the percentage results of the data obtained are then interpreted into the interpretation limitation criteria according to the following table

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1. RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **3.1.1. RESPONDENT DATA**

In the respondent characteristics data, the researcher categorizes them based on the respondent's age, last education, occupation, gender and age of children, and length of marriage.

(i) Respondent Age

The following is respondent data based on the age of husband and wife working in Pasir Angin Village:

**Table 1.** Respondent Characteristics Based on Respondent Age

No	Age	Husband		Wife	
		f	n	f	n
1.	20-25	0%	0	5%	1
2.	26-30	14%	3	24%	5
3.	31-35	19%	4	24%	5
4.	36-40	33%	7	42%	9
5.	41-45	24%	5	5%	1
6.	46-50	10%	2	0%	0
Amount (N)		100%	21	100%	21

(ii) Last Education

The following is respondent data based on the last education of husband and wife working in Pasir Angin Village.

**Table 2.** Respondent Characteristics Based on Last Education

No	Last Education	Husband		Wife	
		f	n	f	n
1.	SMP	10%	2	10%	2
2.	SMA/SMK Equal	71%	15	71%	15
3.	College	19%	4	19%	4
Total (N)		100%	21	100%	21

(iii) Occupation

The following is respondent data based on the husband and wife's occupation working in Pasir Angin Village:

**Table 3.** Respondent Characteristics Based on Occupation

No	Work	Husband		Wife	
		f	n	f	n
1.	PNS	10%	2	0%	0
2.	Teacher	5%	1	33%	7
3.	Private sector employee	75%	16	57%	12
4.	Self-employed	10%	2	10%	2
5.	Other	0%	0	0%	0
Total (N)		100%	21	100%	21

## (iv) Gender and Age of Preschool Children

The following is respondent data based on the husband and wife's occupation working in Pasir Angin Village:

**Table 4.** Respondent Characteristics Based on Child Gender and Age

No	Child Gender	f	n
1.	Woman	43%	9
2.	Man	57%	12
Amount (N)		100%	21
No	Child Age	f	n
1.	3 years	0%	0
2.	4 years	19%	4
3.	5 years	67%	14
4.	6 years	14%	3
Amount (N)		100%	21

## (v) Length of Marriage

The following is respondent data based on the length of marriage of working couples in Pasir Angin Village:

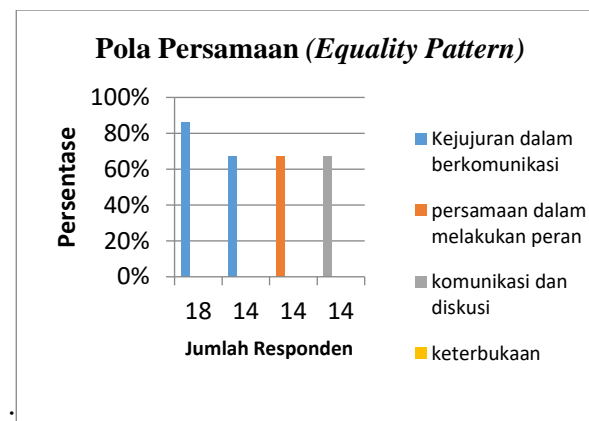
**Table 5.** Respondent Characteristics Based on Length of Marriage

No	Lama Pernikahan	f	n
1.	1-5 years	10%	2
2.	6-10 years	43%	9
3.	11-15 years	33%	7
4.	16-20 years	4%	1
5	Diatas 20 years	10%	2
	Total (N)	100%	21

### 3.2. FAMILY COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

#### 3.2.1. Equality Pattern

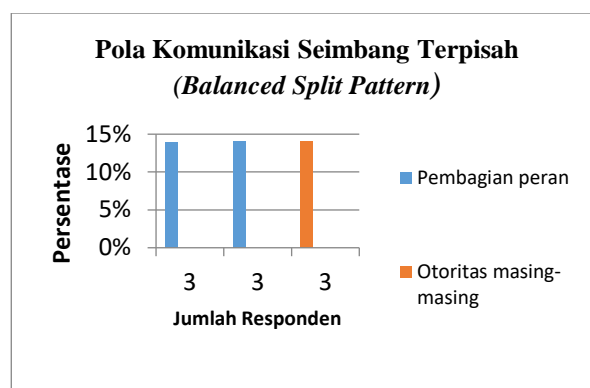
Data on the equality pattern of working husband and wife families in accustoming children to independence is shown in the following table.

**Figure 1.** Communication Pattern Data Equation

Based on Figure 1 above, seen from the first indicator, namely honesty in communication, it shows that most (86%) or 18 respondents always apply honesty in communicating with their families. The next indicator is equality of roles, there are 14 respondents or more than half (67%) who have the same role or task in teaching independence to children. In line with the equality indicator, it was found that more than half (67%) or 14 respondents applied communication and discussion. Furthermore, the last indicator is openness, as many as 14 respondents or most (67%) apply openness in communicating with their families.

#### 3.2.2. Balanced Split Pattern

In the separate balanced communication pattern there are 3 indicators, namely the division of roles or tasks, the authority of each, and the support of each other. Data on the separate balanced communication pattern of husband and wife working families in the habituation of child independence are shown in the following table:

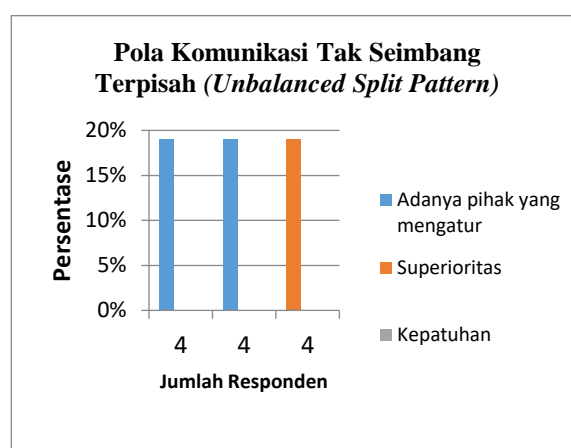


**Figure 2.** Communication Pattern Data Equation

Based on Figure 2 above, the first indicator, namely the division of roles and tasks, shows that a small portion (14%) or 3 respondents always apply the division of tasks in teaching independence to children. The next indicator is the existence of each authority, there are 3 respondents or a small portion (14%) who have the power or authority to teach children according to the abilities of husband and wife. Furthermore, the last indicator is the existence of support, as many as 3 respondents or a small portion (14%) provide support to each other even though there are differences in how to teach independence to children.

### 3.2.3. Unbalanced Split Pattern

In the unbalanced split pattern, there are 3 indicators, namely the presence of a controlling party, superiority and obedience. Data on the unbalanced split pattern of working husband and wife families in accustoming children to independence are shown in the following table:



**Figure 3.** Data on Unbalanced Communication Patterns Separately in the Habits of Preschool Children's Independence

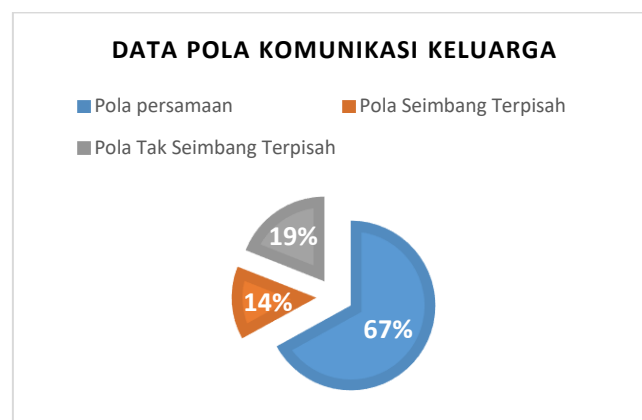
In Figure 3, the data on unbalanced communication patterns are separated based on the indicators above, the first indicator, namely the existence of a controlling party, shows that a small portion (19%) or 4 respondents have one party who always regulates everything, especially in teaching independence to children. In the superiority indicator, it was also found that 4 respondents or a small portion (19%) had superiority in teaching children independence habits. This is because in teaching children, mothers are considered to understand and

comprehend better so that they are more superior. Furthermore, the last indicator is compliance, there are 4 respondents or a small portion (19%) who agree that there is compliance in the process of teaching children independence habits. This compliance is related to the existence of regulations made by one dominant party, so that other family members must follow the existing regulations. Based on these findings, it shows that working husbands and wives in Pasir Angin Village apply more equal communication patterns in teaching children independence habits. Data on the implementation of the type of communication pattern between husband and wife at work is depicted in the diagram below:

### 3.3. RESEARCH DISCUSSION

#### 3.3.1. Habits of Preschool Children's Independence

The findings obtained from the study are that working husband and wife families have accustomed their children to being independent since an early age, namely preschool age. The efforts made by working husband and wife are by providing good habits to children, as well as communicating with children, so that by providing regular and targeted stimulation in the family environment, children will be independent more quickly. There are 6 aspects in the habit of independence in children, namely: compliance, there are 4 respondents or a small part (19%) agreeing that there is compliance in the process of teaching children to be independent. This compliance is related to the existence of regulations made by one party that dominates, so that other family members must follow the existing regulations. Based on these findings, it shows that working husbands and wives in Pasir Angin Village apply more equal communication patterns in teaching children to be independent. Data on the implementation of the types of communication patterns of working husbands and wives are depicted in the diagram below:



**Figure 4.** Implementation Data of Family Communication Pattern Types in Pasir Angin Village

(i) Be confident

Husband and wife work to accustom children to be confident, by getting children accustomed to daring to ask and answer teacher's questions in class. Husband and wife work also to accustom children to speak freely and not criticize anything expressed by children.

(ii) Controlling Emotions

In terms of controlling emotions, working husband and wife have already implemented a habit for their children not to be spoiled or whine when they are



accustomed to playing with friends without always being accompanied by their parents. Children can control their emotions as seen when they are able to join with friends and can control their emotions when they cooperate with other friends. In addition, working husband and wife also get their children used to always going to school without being waited on by their parents. This shows that children's independence in controlling emotions is also seen when children are separated from their parents after being taken to school and do not show crying or angry behavior.

(iii) Want to share

In terms of sharing, children are accustomed to having empathy for the people around them. Husband and wife work to accustom children to be able to share, namely by inviting children to socialize with their environment, and teaching them to always share with others. Instilling this mindset can be exemplified by teaching children to share food and lend toys when playing with friends.

(iv) Motor Skills

Working husband and wife have accustomed their children to always eat by themselves by preparing their favorite lunch menu so that they are motivated to eat by themselves. Then for toilet training habits, working husband and wife also always accustom and give examples to their children to do toilet training by themselves.

(v) Discipline

Teaching independence in this aspect is done by getting children used to wearing their own shoes or clothes, and always tidying them up after use. Husband and wife work to teach children to wear their own clothes and shoes, namely by guiding children and giving examples of how to wear them correctly and appropriately. Then children are also accustomed to always tidying up clothes and shoes that have been used.

(vi) Responsibility

In terms of responsibility, working husbands and wives have also accustomed their children to have a sense of responsibility by making clear and firm rules for their children. These rules require children to always clean up their own toys after playing both at home and at school. With a responsible attitude, children will be more careful in acting so that children can minimize mistakes by learning from the mistakes they have made and making children learn from their experiences (Utami et al., 2019:155).

### **3.3.2. Communication Patterns of Working Husband and Wife Families in Cultivating Children's Independence**

#### **3.3.2.1. Equality Pattern**

Based on the results of the data interpretation analysis, it is known that there are three types of communication patterns applied by working husbands and wives in the habit of child independence in Pasir Angin Village. The three types of patterns are explained as follows: In teaching the habit of independence in the equality communication pattern, husband and wife have the opportunity to communicate equally and in balance, have

balanced roles and no power. The absence of this division of power makes husband and wife have one understanding in teaching children, and have the same method of teaching independence to children. Husband and wife both make clear and firm rules such as having to clean up their own toys after playing both at home and at school so that children can be disciplined. Husband and wife together teach independence by providing guidance and giving examples at the beginning, such as in teaching children to take off their clothes, put on their clothes and toilet training themselves.

In the equality pattern, honesty and openness are also very important when communicating in the family. Husband and wife always get children used to being honest according to their wishes by always asking children to choose the food menu they like as motivation for children to want to eat themselves. An open nature also teaches children to freely express themselves and not be shy when talking to people, so that children can play alone with their peers but are still supervised by both parents. Furthermore, dual-career families also always discuss in decision making. One of them is discussing to discuss children's independent behavior, giving each other opinions, input and good and appropriate teaching ideas.

### **3.3.2.2. Balanced Split Pattern**

In a separate balanced communication pattern, husband and wife have their respective tasks or roles. In accustoming children to independence, husband and wife always divide the tasks in teaching children according to the division of work shift schedules, and roles in the household.

The division of tasks for teaching independence can be adjusted to the roles in the household. The wife, as well as her role as a mother, teaches children to get used to eating alone by cooking and preparing their favorite lunch menus. Meanwhile, the task carried out by a husband in teaching children independence is that the husband has the task of firmly explaining the importance of tidying up toys so that toys are not damaged, and not messy so that children get used to tidying up their own toys. The husband can also encourage children to face challenges, encourage children to talk to others so that children can actively answer and ask questions at school.

This division is also applied when teaching children to toilet train and wear their own clothes. The habit of independence is taught based on gender, namely boys are taught by the husband while girls are taught by the wife. Similarly, in teaching children to wear clothes, husband and wife divide the tasks to teach children to wear clothes according to their gender. For example, a husband teaches a boy to wear a shirt and pants while a wife teaches a girl to wear a dress, skirt. Although different roles and duties, husband and wife still support each other without any conflict.

### **3.3.2.3. Unbalanced Split Pattern**

In a separate unbalanced communication pattern, the wife is required to continue to take care of the child and teach everything alone while the husband only supervises. All tasks in teaching children to be independent start from paying attention to and preparing the child's favorite school supplies, so that the child remains happy and motivated to eat by themselves. The wife also teaches everything alone without the help of others, starting from teaching how

to toilet train both girls and boys and teaching children to be trained to wear their own clothes.

Communication between the wife and husband continues, but all decisions are left to the wife. The wife is free to organize and make rules so that the child remains disciplined and obedient. For example, the wife has the authority to make a housework schedule so that the child also helps clean the house. That way, the child gets used to having the sensitivity and responsibility to always keep his own things neat, such as tidying up toys after playing. The rules that apply at home are also regulated by the wife so that if the child makes a mistake, the wife will also be punished according to the mistake. Meanwhile, the husband can supervise, provide encouragement to the child, direction and guidance if needed.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the Equality Pattern in the habit of preschool children's independence is by implementing honesty, openness, communication and discussion and equality of parents' roles in teaching children's independence habits. Most husbands and wives working in Pasir Angin Village use the equality communication pattern type. Furthermore, the Balanced Split Pattern in the habit of preschool children's independence is by implementing a division of tasks, having authority in teaching independence but still supporting each other. Only a small number of husbands and wives working in Pasir Angin Village use the balanced split pattern type. Finally, the unbalanced split pattern in the habit of preschool children's independence is the presence of a regulating party, superiority and obedience. Only a small number of husbands and wives working in Pasir Angin Village use the unbalanced split pattern type.

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