

## THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN ESTABLISHING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN THE MODERN ERA

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### **Abstract**

*Communication between parents and children plays a crucial role in fostering positive relationships and supporting children's social, emotional, and moral development in the modern era. The rapid advancement of digital technology and changes in family lifestyles have created various challenges that affect the quality of family communication. This study aims to analyze parent-child communication patterns, factors influencing communication, communication challenges in the modern era, and the role of communication in building positive relationships between parents and children. This study employed a literature review method with a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were obtained from relevant scientific articles and analyzed using thematic synthesis to identify similarities, differences, and trends in previous research findings. The results indicate that the authoritative communication pattern is the most effective approach in promoting positive child development because it balances affection, supervision, and open communication. In contrast, permissive and authoritarian communication patterns are generally associated with various obstacles to children's social and emotional development when applied dominantly. Furthermore, communication quality is influenced by internal factors, such as personality, family values, and openness, as well as external factors, including digital technology development and the social environment. Communication challenges in the modern era require parents to adopt adaptive communication strategies by balancing technology use with direct interpersonal interaction. Therefore, open, responsive, and empathetic communication is essential for establishing positive parent-child relationships and supporting optimal child development.*

**Keywords:** *amily communication; positive relationships; parents; early childhood; digital era.*

### **Abstract**

Communication between parents and children is a crucial factor in building positive relationships and supporting children's social, emotional, and moral development in the modern era. The development of digital technology and changes in family life patterns present various challenges that affect the quality of communication within families. This study aims to analyze communication patterns between parents and children, the factors that influence communication, the challenges of communication in the modern era, and the role of communication in building positive relationships between parents and children. The study used a literature review method with a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were obtained through searching for relevant scientific articles and analyzed using thematic synthesis techniques to identify similarities, differences, and trends in previous research findings. The results of the study indicate that authoritative communication patterns

(authoritative/democratic) are the most effective communication patterns in supporting positive child development because they balance affection, supervision, and open communication. Conversely, permissive and authoritarian communication patterns tend to be associated with various obstacles in children's social and emotional development when applied predominantly. In addition, communication quality is influenced by internal factors, such as personality, family values, and openness, as well as external factors, such as the development of digital technology and the social environment. Communication challenges in the modern era require parents to develop adaptive communication strategies that balance the use of technology and face-to-face interaction. Therefore, open, responsive, and empathetic communication is key to building positive parent-child relationships and supporting optimal child development.

**Keywords:** family communication; positive relationships; parents; early childhood; digital era.

## INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has transformed various aspects of family life, including communication patterns between parents and children. Easy internet access and the increasing use of digital devices among children expose them to a wide range of information from an early age. This presents both opportunities and challenges for families in building healthy interactions. While technology can support learning and communication, it can also reduce the intensity of face-to-face interactions between parents and children if not balanced with appropriate guidance. Therefore, communication within the family is becoming an increasingly important aspect to consider in the modern era.

Communication is the process of exchanging messages that enables understanding, emotional closeness, and the formation of positive social relationships. In the family context, communication serves as the primary means for parents to convey values, norms, and expectations to their children. Effective communication serves not only as a medium for conveying information but also as a means of building trust, emotional security, and attachment between parents and children. Research by Sopiah and Nursyahbani (2024) shows that parental communication plays a crucial role in supporting early childhood development, particularly in language, social, and emotional aspects.

Studies on family communication cannot be separated from the parenting patterns applied by parents. Baumrind (1966) explained that the authoritative parenting pattern (*authoritative parenting*) is characterized by a balance of warmth, supervision, and communication that is responsive to the child's needs. Parents who adopt this parenting style tend to set clear boundaries while respecting their child's opinions and feelings. Various

studies have shown that open, warm, and responsive communication contributes to better social-emotional development, increases children's self-confidence, and helps children develop self-regulation and positive social skills.

In addition to its role in social and emotional development, interpersonal communication between parents and children is also a crucial tool in the internalization of values and character formation. Through daily interactions, children learn about honesty, responsibility, empathy, and the social norms that apply in their environment. Open communication allows children to express their thoughts and feelings, allowing parents to more accurately understand their needs and challenges. Therefore, effective communication is a crucial foundation for creating harmonious family relationships while supporting optimal child development.

However, the development of digital technology presents new challenges for family communication. Easy access to various information via the internet increases the likelihood of children being exposed to content that does not always align with norms and family values. Furthermore, excessive use of gadgets has the potential to reduce the frequency of direct interactions between parents and children. Sari et al. (2024) explain that parental involvement in assisting children with digital technology use and open communication about their children's online activities contribute to more positive family interactions. These findings indicate that the quality of family communication remains a crucial factor in navigating the dynamics of modern life.

Various previous studies have discussed communication between parents and children from various perspectives, such as parenting styles, language development, character formation, and the influence of digital technology on family interactions. However, these studies generally address these aspects separately. A more comprehensive study is needed to understand communication patterns, the challenges of communication in the modern era, and the role of communication in building positive relationships between parents and young children.

Based on the description, this research is focused on answering the following research questions: (1) what communication patterns are applied in the relationship between parents and early childhood children; (2) what factors influence communication between parents and children; (3) what communication challenges are faced by families in the modern era; (4) what is the role of communication in building positive relationships between parents and children. Therefore, this research aims to analyze various previous research findings

regarding the role of communication in establishing positive relationships between parents and children in the modern era through a literature review approach.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study uses a literature review method with a qualitative descriptive approach to examine various research findings related to the role of communication in establishing positive relationships between parents and children in the modern era. This method is used to identify, examine, and synthesize previous research findings to obtain a comprehensive understanding of family communication patterns, factors that influence communication, communication challenges in the modern era, and the role of communication in building positive relationships between parents and children.

The literature search process was conducted through the Google Scholar, Garuda, and SINTA databases. The article search used several keywords, namely "parent-child communication," "family communication patterns," "family communication," and "family communication in the digital era." The literature searched was limited to articles published between 2020 and 2025 to align with developments in family communication studies in the digital era.

The inclusion criteria for this study include: (1) articles that discuss communication between parents and children; (2) articles that examine family communication patterns, parenting patterns, positive parent-child relationships, or family communication in the digital era; (3) articles published in national and international journals; (4) articles available in full text form (*full text*); (5) articles published in the 2020-2025 period. The explicit criteria include: (1) articles that are not directly related to parent-child communication; (2) duplicate articles; (3) articles that are only in the form of abstracts or cannot be fully accessed; and (4) articles published outside the specified year range.

The stages of the literature review refer to the PRISMA principle (*Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta Analyses*), which includes identification, screening (*screening*), eligibility determination (*eligibility*), and inclusion (*inclusion*). Articles that met the criteria were then grouped based on research themes, namely family communication patterns, factors influencing communication, communication challenges in the modern era, and the role of communication in building positive relationships between parents and children. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using thematic synthesis techniques to identify similarities, differences, and trends in findings from various studies that had been reviewed. The results of this synthesis became the basis for compiling the discussion and drawing conclusions from the research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Family Communication Patterns

In perspective *Family Communication Patterns Theory* Developed by Koerner and Fitzpatrick, family communication patterns refer to how family members establish, maintain, and manage interactions through ongoing communication processes. These communication patterns influence how families convey values, build interpersonal relationships, resolve conflicts, and shape children's behavior and character. Therefore, the quality of communication within the family is a crucial factor in determining a child's social, emotional, and moral development.

In his parenting studies, Baumrind (1966) grouped parenting patterns into several categories which were then further developed by Maccoby and Martin (1983), namely permissive parenting patterns (*permissive*), authoritarian (*authoritarian*), and authoritative or democratic (*authoritative*). Each parenting pattern has different communication characteristics and has a different impact on child development.

#### a. Permissive Communication Patterns

A permissive communication pattern is characterized by a high level of freedom granted to children and low levels of parental control and supervision. In this pattern, children are given the freedom to make their own decisions, with relatively limited parental involvement (Haulussy & Lopulalan, 2022; Muttaqin & Azmussya'ni, 2021).

According to Baumrind (1966), parents who apply a permissive pattern tend to show high levels of warmth, but provide less consistent limits, rules, and supervision. Maccoby and Martin (1983) explain that low demands (*demandiness*) and its height (*responsiveness*) is the main characteristic of this pattern. As a result, children have wide freedom in determining their behavior, but often lack adequate guidance in developing self-discipline and responsibility.

Several studies have shown that permissive communication patterns are often associated with low self-control, difficulty understanding rules, and weak emotional regulation in children. Wahyuni and Junaidi (2023) found that a lack of parental supervision regarding device use has the potential to increase the risk of antisocial behavior and difficulty managing emotions. These findings align with various international studies showing that a lack of parental boundaries and self-control can impact the development of self-discipline, responsibility, and decision-making skills in children.

Based on various research findings, permissive communication patterns provide children with ample freedom. However, if not balanced with adequate guidance and

supervision, these patterns tend to create various challenges in a child's social, emotional, and behavioral development.

b. Authoritarian Communication Patterns

Authoritarian communication patterns are communication patterns characterized by high parental control and low opportunities for children to express opinions or be involved in decision-making. In authoritarian patterns, communication tends to be one-way, where parents set rules that must be obeyed without providing adequate explanations to children (Yukianti et al., 2023). According to Baumrind (1966), the authoritarian pattern emphasizes obedience, strict discipline, and high control over children's behavior.

Various studies have shown that authoritarian communication patterns are often associated with low self-confidence, social skills, and decision-making abilities in children (Yulianti et al., 2023; Haulussy & Lopulalan, 2022). This condition occurs because children are accustomed to receiving instructions without being given the opportunity to express their opinions, discuss, or consider alternative solutions to problems. As a result, children's ability to express themselves and develop independence is less than optimal.

Furthermore, excessive control can cause psychological stress, leading to anxiety, fear, mistakes, and a tendency to withdraw from social settings. In some cases, authoritarian communication patterns can also lead to rebellious behavior when children begin to seek independence because their psychological need for autonomy is not met. These findings align with various international studies showing that authoritarian parenting styles are associated with lower social competence and psychological well-being in children compared to more responsive parenting styles.

c. Authoritative/Democratic Communication Pattern

Authoritative or democratic communication patterns are characterized by a balance between affection, supervision, and open communication between parents and children. In this pattern, parents still set clear rules and boundaries, but provide opportunities for children to express opinions, ask questions, and participate in decision-making processes appropriate to their developmental level (Hasiana, 2021). According to Baumrind (1966), authoritative patterns combine an adequate level of control with a high level of responsiveness to children's needs.

Various studies have shown that authoritative communication patterns are proven to be one of the most effective in supporting positive child development. Two-way communication between parents and children helps build self-confidence, openness, and emotional closeness within the family. Children raised with this communication pattern tend

to have better self-confidence, greater emotional regulation skills, and more developed social skills than children raised with permissive or authoritative communication patterns.

Furthermore, children's involvement in communication and decision-making helps develop critical thinking skills, responsibility, and independence. Children not only learn to obey rules but also understand the reasons behind them, thus better internalizing the values and norms taught by the family. These findings explain why authoritative communication patterns are consistently identified in various studies as the communication pattern that best supports children's social, emotional, and moral development.

Based on the results of the literature review, authoritative communication patterns demonstrate the most positive contribution to child development because they are able to balance children's needs for affection, guidance, and independence. Conversely, permissive and authoritarian communication patterns tend to create various obstacles to social and emotional development when applied predominantly without considering children's developmental needs.

## **2. Factors Influencing Communication**

Factors that can influence communication are divided into two categories: internal and external. Internal factors typically arise from within the individual, such as personality. External factors, on the other hand, are influences from outside sources, such as technology and the environment.

### **a. Internal factors**

Internal factors originate from within the individual and influence the quality of communication between parents and children. These factors include personality, family values, and openness in communication.

#### **1) Personality**

Personality is one of the factors that influences how a person interacts, conveys messages, and responds to communication with others. From a theoretical perspective, *Big Five Personality*, individuals have a high level of openness (*openness*) and extroversion (*extraversion*). Those with high self-esteem tend to express their thoughts and feelings more easily, resulting in more open and effective communication. Conversely, individuals with introverted or less open tendencies often take longer to express their opinions and build interpersonal relationships.

In the context of family communication, a child's personality characteristics can influence the interaction patterns they have with their parents. Children who

are more open and confident generally find it easier to express their needs, experiences, and feelings. Conversely, children who tend to be introverted often have difficulty communicating the problems they face. Therefore, warm and supportive communication from parents is necessary to help children develop self-confidence and the ability to interact positively with their social environment. Ramdani and Nuriyah (2023) explain that positive communication patterns contribute to the development of character, emotional health, and social skills in children.

## 2) Values in the family

Values instilled in the family, such as independence, courtesy, responsibility, honesty, and respect, form the basis for children's communication patterns. Through everyday communication, children learn social norms and accepted ways of interacting within the family and community. Wardani et al. (2022) explain that instilling the value of independence from an early age helps children develop a sense of responsibility, courage in expressing opinions, and the ability to make independent decisions.

Furthermore, the responsibility instilled in the family encourages children to be consistent between words and actions. Meanwhile, the values of honesty and mutual respect contribute to building open and trusting communication. Thus, the family serves not only as a nurturing environment but also as a primary vehicle for developing a child's character and communication skills.

## 3) Openness

Openness is the ability of family members to share information, opinions, feelings, and experiences honestly without fear of rejection or punishment. In family communication, openness is a crucial element in fostering a warm and trusting relationship between parents and children.

Research by Abdillah and Tohari (2025) shows that low openness in communication can create emotional distance between parents and children. These findings align with various studies of family communication, which confirm that openness allows for effective information exchange, increases understanding between family members, and helps resolve conflicts constructively. Children who are accustomed to communicating openly with their parents tend to be more comfortable expressing problems, needs, and experiences. Conversely, a lack of openness can hinder the communication process and potentially lead to misunderstandings in family relationships.

Therefore, openness is one of the main foundations in building positive communication because it allows for closer relationships, mutual trust, and supports children's emotional development more optimally.

#### b. External Factors

External factors that influence communication between parents and children in the modern era, namely:

##### 1) Advances in digital technology

Advances in digital technology are an external factor that significantly impacts communication between parents and children. Parents and children can communicate easily and quickly, without the constraints of distance and time, using technologies such as smartphones and instant messaging apps. This technology allows parents to monitor, support, and be involved in their children's lives even when they are not present (Thoha et al., 2023). Furthermore, digital technology can enhance children's creativity and communication skills when used appropriately. Parents must monitor and support their children to ensure that technology becomes a positive tool for learning and communication.

##### 2) Parenting patterns

Parenting styles significantly influence a child's communication development. Children can experience communication difficulties due to authoritarian or unresponsive parenting styles. These parenting styles can make children withdrawn, uncomfortable, and lack self-confidence. Children raised in an authoritarian manner tend to have low self-efficacy, difficulty making decisions, and lack the ability to solve problems independently (Yulianti et al., 2023).

Meanwhile, a democratic and supportive parenting style encourages children to interact more openly with others. To make children feel valued and heard, democratic parents encourage two-way discussions. Research shows that democratic parenting helps young children communicate well with others. Children raised this way tend to be more confident, open, and capable of effective social communication (Hasiana, 2021).

##### 3) Surrounding environment

A child's environment, including peers, neighbors, and community traditions, greatly influences how they communicate. Children will develop their social and language skills in a supportive, safe, and communicative environment. Children learn to interact socially outside the family in this environment, which helps them learn language and communication (Nurainun & MayanaFutri, 2024).

Furthermore, their neighbors and surrounding environment also serve as models for social and linguistic norms. Children raised in a friendly and communicative environment are more frequently exposed to a variety of language styles and interaction patterns. This helps them expand their vocabulary and adapt to communication. Conversely, an unsupportive or conflict-ridden environment can reduce a child's chances of learning to communicate effectively.

Internal and external factors interact to influence the quality of communication between parents and children. Parents' role in instilling positive values and supporting their children in the digital age is crucial to successful communication.

### **3. Communication Challenges in the Modern Era**

The development of digital technology and social change have influenced communication patterns within families, including interactions between parents and children. Various studies have shown that the increasingly intensive use of digital devices in early childhood brings both benefits and challenges to family communication processes. On the one hand, technology can be a tool for effective learning and communication. However, on the other hand, excessive technology use has the potential to reduce the frequency of direct interactions between parents and children and affect the quality of interpersonal relationships within the family (Sari et al. 2024).

One of the main challenges facing families in the modern era is the increasing use of gadgets by young children. Various studies have shown that excessive screen time can reduce children's opportunities for direct interaction with their parents and their surroundings. Yet, face-to-face interaction plays a crucial role in language development, social skills, and the ability to understand others' emotions. Reduced direct communication can lead to suboptimal values, character formation, and strengthening of emotional bonds within the family.

Furthermore, easy internet access allows children to access a wide range of information without limits. This situation requires parents to act not only as supervisors but also as companions, helping children understand and filter the information they receive. Numerous studies on digital parenting show that parental involvement in children's digital activities contributes to safer and more responsible technology use. Therefore, open communication about children's online activities is a crucial strategy in addressing communication challenges in the digital age.

Another challenge is the increasing busyness of parents due to work demands and social activities. Limited time can reduce opportunities for quality communication with

children. Several studies have shown that the quality of family communication is determined not only by the length of time spent together, but also by the quality of the interactions that occur during the communication process. Therefore, setting aside dedicated time for communication, listening to children's experiences, and engaging in activities together is crucial for maintaining emotional closeness within the family.

Based on the results of various studies, the challenges of family communication in the modern era stem not only from the development of digital technology, but also from increasingly dynamic changes in society's lifestyles. Therefore, parents need to develop adaptive communication strategies by balancing the use of technology and direct interaction to maintain positive parent-child relationships.

#### **4. The Role of Communication in Positive Relationships in the Modern Era**

##### **a. Building trust and emotional closeness**

Open and empathetic communication can build trust and emotional closeness between parents and children. Warm and responsive dialogue helps children feel heard, valued, and emotionally secure. This is a key foundation for creating healthy and harmonious family relationships (Yulianti et al., 2023). Children who grow up in an environment of positive communication tend to be more confident, independent, and adaptable to social situations.

##### **b. Instilling positive values**

Through daily communication, parents can instill values such as honesty, responsibility, courtesy, and independence. These values form the foundation for a child's character development and are crucial for building positive relationships, both within the family and in society (Wardani et al., 2022). Democratic communication patterns, in which parents allow children to express their opinions while still providing guidance and boundaries, have proven most effective in fostering positive character in children (Hasiana, 2021).

##### **c. Prevent conflict and misunderstanding**

Open communication also helps prevent conflict and misunderstandings between parents and children. Providing a space to share thoughts and feelings allows problems to be resolved in a healthy and constructive manner. This strengthens positive relationships and maintains family harmony amidst modern challenges, such as the influence of technology and social change (Sari et al., 2024).

##### **d. Supporting optimal child development**

Positive communication not only strengthens emotional bonds but also supports children's cognitive, social, and moral development. Children raised in an environment

with good communication tend to have a strong interest in learning, strong social skills, and a healthy self-concept (Srnita & Mahmud, 2021). Parents who are able to provide encouragement, appreciation, and understanding through daily communication will help children develop optimally.

e. Adaptation in the modern era

In the digital age, communication challenges are increasingly complex. Parents need to balance technology use with direct interaction to maintain positive values. Openness and supervision in technology use are key to ensuring children continue to benefit from modern advancements without losing fundamental family values (Thoha et al., 2023).

Overall, the role of communication within the family is closely linked to the creation of positive relationships between parents and young children. Effective, open, and empathetic communication not only builds trust and emotional closeness but also instills positive values, prevents conflict, and supports children's overall development. Therefore, communication is key to maintaining harmony and creating a healthy family environment in the modern era.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results *literature review*, it can be concluded that communication between parents and young children is a crucial factor in building positive relationships and supporting children's social, emotional, and moral development. The study results show that family communication patterns have varying effects on child development. Authoritative communication patterns consistently demonstrate the most positive contribution because they balance affection, supervision, and openness in communication. Conversely, permissive and authoritarian communication patterns tend to create various obstacles to children's social and emotional development when applied predominantly.

This study also shows that the quality of communication between parents and children is influenced by various internal and external factors. Internal factors include personality, family values, and openness in communication, while external factors include the development of digital technology, the social environment, and changes in modern family life patterns. Furthermore, the development of digital technology presents new challenges in family communication, requiring parents to implement more adaptive communication strategies, including providing guidance on technology use and maintaining a balance between digital interactions and face-to-face communication.

Theoretically, the results of this study reinforce the view that family communication is a primary foundation for character formation, emotional regulation, and children's social skills. Practically, the findings of this study can serve as a reference for parents, educators, and early childhood education practitioners in developing more open, responsive communication patterns that are appropriate to children's developmental needs in the digital age.

This study still has limitations because it only used a literature review approach with literature sources limited to articles that met the research selection criteria. Therefore, further research is recommended to conduct empirical studies using quantitative, qualitative, or quantitative approaches. *mixed methods* in order to obtain a more in-depth picture of the effectiveness of various family communication patterns in supporting early childhood development in various social and cultural contexts.

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