Parent-Child Communication and Communication Media for New Students of IPB University

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ABSTRACT: Being a new student and living far from parents may be the choice of some children. Thus, communication between parents and children should be maintained to support children who are new students, especially at IPB University. This study aims to describe and explore parent-child communication and communication media used for new students at IPB University. This descriptive qualitative study used 8 informants from 8 provinces in Indonesia, which were obtained using the purposive sampling method where researchers distributed gforms in the IPB University Dormitory then selected and reduced according to research needs and in accordance with purposive sampling. The data obtained were analyzed qualitatively with Miles and Huberman's analysis. The results of the study showed that the majority of informants used WhatsApp to communicate with their parents, the communication was carried out quite often and talked about the new conditions and experiences they got when they entered and lived in the IPB University dormitory provided for new students.

KEYWORDS: Media, mobile phones, new students, parent-child communication, parental roles

I. INTRODUCTION

Communication between parents and children is a fundamental aspect in building harmonious relationships and supporting children's development. This communication process includes the transfer of information, values, and emotions that can affect various aspects of a child's life, including education, psychosocial, and social interactions. Effective communication is characterized by openness, empathy, and respect for the opinions of both parties. Parents who are able to communicate well tend to be more successful in understanding their children's needs and guiding them in a positive direction.

In the context of new students, parent-child communication plays a significant role. The transition from high school to college is often a challenging phase for children. At this stage, new students need emotional support, information, and reinforcement of values from parents to help them adapt to the new environment (Barus & Pradekso, 2018; Trissaputri & Soetjiningsih, 2024). Open communication can be a determining factor in reducing the psychological stress that new students often feel. This is what parents and children who have become new students should do.

In line with this, the development of communication technology has presented various media that facilitate communication and interaction between parents and children. Media such as telephones, short messages (SMS), and instant messaging applications such as WhatsApp, LINE, or Telegram are the main choices for many families to communicate (Sari & Fitri, 2018; Taipale & Farinosi, 2018). In addition, video calls via platforms such as Zoom or Google Meet are increasingly used, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic until now.

In families who live apart, social media is also used to maintain communication and share daily information. However, the choice of media used is often influenced by factors such as geographical distance, digital literacy levels, and individual preferences. However, communication between parents and children must continue to be well established, especially since the child has become a new student. Adaptation to the new living environment is very much needed by the child. Thus, support from parents through communication is very much needed even though the communication carried out is long-distance communication (Dini & Kusuma, 2022).

There have been several previous studies on parent-child communication in long-distance relationships when the child becomes a student at the University of his Choice. Permata (2013) in his study on parent-child communication who are studying separately

from their parents said that communication is carried out using media such as telephones, not face-to-face communication. This long-distance communication causes problems, namely the communication that is established becomes effective or ineffective because of the lack of communication between parents and children. Another problem that arises is the emotional relationship that is no longer well established and the closeness that decreases due to the strained relationship due to lack of communication (Permata, 2013). Then, Barus and Pradekso (2018) also studied students who live far from their parents showing that students experience changes in communication behavior with their parents. These changes are due to students who are increasingly busy with campus activities and organizations. So that students have less time to communicate with their parents even though there are various communication tools that support distance and time (Barus & Pradekso, 2018). In addition, Ramadhina, et al. (2023) said that the results of their research on students who live far from their parents still maintain closeness between the two, there are facial expressions when talking, comfortable talking with their parents. Communication that occurs in the family is democratic communication between parents and children because parents continue to provide guidance, advice, supervision, appreciation, affection, are sensitive to children, love each other, teach children something by giving good examples even though children live far from their parents (Ramadhina et al., 2023).

The above research shows that communication between parents and children who have become students and live far from their parents still requires communication and interaction with their parents. However, sometimes obstacles and barriers also occur, including (1) lack of time, children may be busy with academic and social activities, so communication becomes less frequent; (2) differences in expectations, parents may have certain expectations of their children's achievements or life choices, which are not always in line with the child's wishes; and (3) misunderstandings, lack of communication or messages that are not conveyed properly can cause conflict (Permata, 2013; Tamsil et al., 2024).

Furthermore, communication between parents and new students plays an important role in helping students adapt to campus life. New students often face pressure to adjust to new academic, social, and cultural environments. In this situation, communication with parents is a crucial source of support.

Parents who actively communicate with their children can help them manage stress, provide motivation, and build self-confidence. However, excessive or overly controlling communication can cause students to feel stressed and lose their independence (Amaliah & Shabrina, 2024). Therefore, a balance is needed between providing support and respecting children's privacy. For example, new students who feel listened to by their parents tend to be more willing to ask for advice when facing problems. This is in accordance with research showing that a positive communication relationship between parents and children can improve children's ability to make decisions.

In the context of IPB University, new students who come from diverse geographic and social backgrounds may have different communication needs. These new students are also required to live in campus dormitories provided by IPB University. Thus, the communication process between parents and children is very interesting to study and how the use of communication media between parents and children during the transition process to becoming new students and living in dormitories.

This descriptive qualitative research uses 8 informants from 8 provinces in Indonesia, which were obtained using the purposive sampling method. The researcher distributed the gforms at the IPB University Dormitory in November 2024 for 1 week, then selected and reduced according to research needs and in accordance with purposive sampling. Then interviews were also conducted to obtain the information needed in this study. The primary data obtained were analyzed qualitatively with the analysis of Miles and Huberman (Miles & Huberman, 1994). While the secondary data were obtained from various scientific articles related to the theme of this research.

II. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The origin of IPB started 76 years ago, when the first agricultural higher education was held in the country in 1940. IPB was formally established on 1 September 1963 based on the Decree of the Minister of Higher Education and Science No. 91/1963 and approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Indonesia No. 279/1965. The history of IPB's birth began from the establishment of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, University of Indonesia in Bogor. The Faculty establishment was the origin of IPB and at the same time marked a new phase of agricultural higher education in Indonesia (ipb.ac.id, 2023b).

Since the establishment of the IPB campus, IPB has become one of the best campuses in Indonesia with various innovations and education provided for its students. IPB has won many awards and achievements. In terms of new students, IPB University requires first-year students to live in campus dormitories. This is because IPB University students come from various regions in Indonesia with ethnic and cultural diversity so that IPB University can be said to be a miniature of Indonesia. This cultural diversity is then managed by IPB University through social engineering in the form of a mandatory dormitory policy for new students. The diverse cultures of the archipelago in the dormitory make new IPB University students have superior characters that will be very useful for their lives in the future. The dormitory can be a home in a foreign land. Many friends and dormitory seniors are ready to help students deal with academic and non-academic problems (ipb.ac.id, 2023a).

There are three objectives of the mandatory dormitory policy set by IPB University. First, adaptation to the diversity of cultures, characters and economic backgrounds that are very diverse. Second, increasing academic achievement due to the adaptation of the

residential environment around the campus and third, the existence of the Multi-Cultural Academic Development Program (*Program Pembinaan Akademik Multi Budaya or PPAMB*), academic and non-academic, mental and spiritual development (ipb.ac.id, 2023a).

Living in a dormitory and being away from parents is a new experience for some new students of IPB University. This is interesting for researchers to explore how these new students stay in touch with their parents. After the researchers distributed the gform through the head of the IPB dormitory, the researchers got 8 research informants from 8 provinces in Indonesia. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain the necessary information apart from the questions distributed through the gform. The informant profiles are as follows:

Table 1. Informants

No	Initial	Gender	Age (year)	Province of Origin	Communication Media
1	HZ	Male	18	Central Java	Mobile phones
2	HF	Male	19	Banten	Mobile phones
3	NT	Female	18	Papua	Mobile phones
4	SH	Female	19	West Java	Mobile phones
5	NR	Male	20	Riau	Mobile phones
6	RM	Female	19	East Java	Mobile phones
7	PN	Female	18	Jakarta	Mobile phones
8	YT	Male	18	North Sumatera	Mobile phones

Source: Research Result, 2024

The informants who were willing to fill out the gform and be interviewed were 8 people representing 8 provinces in Indonesia, 4 men and 4 women, aged 18-20 years. The communication media used by all informants was a mobile phone as the main media to communicate with parents. The dominance of mobile phone use indicates that this media is the most practical, affordable, and commonly used means of communication among new students.

Communication Media of Parent-Child

The interview results showed that the choice of using mobile phones showed that communication was mostly done through voice calls, text messages (WhatsApp, SMS), or video calls. This also confirms that digital-based communication media is a mainstay in the modern era, especially for students who live far from their parents. WhatsApp is the main choice because of its accessibility and practicality. In addition, video calls are often used especially for long-distance communication. The reasons for choosing media by students are based on efficiency, ease of use, and availability of tools. Mobile phones are the most dominant media because they are multifunctional.

Frequency, Duration of Communication and Topics of Conversation

Students who live far from their parents tend to communicate at least once a week. However, some students have a more intensive communication pattern, such as every day. For routine communication, the duration ranges from 5-30 minutes. Longer communication, up to several hours, generally occurs when there is an important topic or a holiday. It can be concluded that the communication pattern shows a fairly close relationship with the students' efforts to maintain contact even though they are separated by distance by their parents.

In communicating with parents and children, the main topics discussed by informants are about daily life (campus activities, activities, light stories), financial problems, especially pocket money and other personal issues such as difficulties faced in college. It can be seen that parent-child communication focuses on the news and conditions of students, indicating that new students are still very dependent emotionally and financially on their parents.

Parent-Child Response and Communication

Living far from parents, requires children to be able to communicate well with their parents to avoid misunderstandings. The results of interviews and research show that parents give a positive response to communication with their children. This can be seen from the fact that most parents are happy when contacted by their children, parents are often proactive in asking for news if students are late in contacting, and in certain cases, there is a sense of worry that arises if communication rarely occurs. This shows the closeness and closeness of the emotional relationship built by parents and children. Thus, when living apart from their children, communication functions as an important tool for parents to ensure that their children are doing well.

Mothers are the main support figures when children are away from home. Mothers are the figures most often contacted when students face problems, with the reason that they are more trusted and have a stronger emotional connection compared to fathers. As conveyed by NT, "Mother, because I always trust my mother to give advice, my father can also do it, but my father still lacks understanding, especially since I am a woman, so I prefer to complain with my mother". Then, HF also said, "Mother

and sister, because they are good listeners". Several informants tried to tell their parents if there was a problem because they did not want to bother and be a burden on their parents' minds.

It can be seen that communication between parents and new IPB students shows a fairly close relationship, although with variations in intensity. Digital media plays an important role in facilitating communication, especially WhatsApp and video calls. The topics of conversation show a pattern of high emotional and financial dependence. Positive responses from parents reflect the importance of the role of communication in maintaining the balance of family relationships despite physical distance. Several other studies also emphasize that when children are away from home (becoming new students), communication is more often done using mobile phones and social media, especially WhatsApp (Deianeira et al., 2024; Tamsil et al., 2024; Viola & Wijayani, 2020). Even other studies show that platforms such as Zoom and Gmeet are also used for long-distance communication between parents and children (Apriliyanti, 2023).

The results of this study show that there are no significant obstacles in parent-child communication as new students at IPB University. Although other studies show that when living far from parents, communication barriers also occur (Barus & Pradekso, 2018; Pan et al., 2013; Rahmawati et al., 2021; Widjayanti et al., 2024). The communication barriers that occur can basically be overcome by both parties. The existence of technology and communication media should be an effective means of maintaining relationships and communication between parents and children who live away from home. According to Najmudin et al. (2023), the key to effective and efficient parental roles towards the psychology of their children who are living away from home through long-distance communication includes 1) supporting children who are living away from home emotionally, with emotional support from parents, children will be better able to cope with stress and emotional problems that may arise during the transition to being a child who is living away from home, 2) maintaining good communication, with good communication between parents and children who are living away from home it is very important for children to feel connected to their family and home, 3) providing motivation and support in career and education, to ensure that children can achieve their best potential, and 4) providing financial support, so that children can meet their living needs while living away from home (Najmudin et al., 2023).

Research shows that the role of parents towards children who are living away from home through long-distance communication is very important to support children's success in learning and their psychological well-being. This long-distance communication includes emotional support, motivation in career, financial, and moral support (Najmudin et al., 2023; Viola & Wijayani, 2020; Zatayumni & Siregar, 2024). For this reason, an active role and open parent-child communication are needed for the smooth running of the initial studies of new students who are far from their parents.

Some recommendations for strengthening parent-child relationships are: (1) increasing Communication Intensity, where parents and students can schedule communication time more regularly to maintain close relationships; (2) using more varied media, can utilize features such as screen sharing for joint activities (watching movies, discussing) can improve the quality of communication; (3) emotional support, it is hoped that parents can be more active in asking about their children's emotional news to prevent feelings of loneliness or stress; (4) digital education, by students and parents need to better understand the use of communication technology effectively to support their relationships.

CONCLUSIONS

New students of IPB University have diverse geographical backgrounds, reflecting the university's openness to students from various provinces in Indonesia. To communicate with parents, all informants use mobile phones, which shows the importance of access to communication technology in everyday life. The university can consider this aspect to provide technology-based support services (e.g., digital communication or counseling applications) that can facilitate student interactions with their families. In addition, because the composition of informants is balanced in terms of gender and age, it provides quite representative insights to understand the communication patterns of new students with their parents. Further research recommendations are to explore how the intensity of communication via mobile phones affects students' emotional relationships with their parents and it is important to understand whether students also use other media (such as social media) to communicate with their families.

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