

The Effect of Communication on the Social Interaction of Parents and Children Living Under the Kalijodo Bridge (West Jakarta)

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Abstract

As social beings, humans like to live and engage in groups or communities. The urge for interpersonal interaction has an impact on someone's behavior, emotions, and mental health. In particular on the mentality of young children. Human beings are complex creatures who possess the ability to think, communicate, perceive, and experience emotions. They have a fundamental need for social connections to fulfill their emotional and psychological requirements, as well as to seek information and assistance. It is also crucial for them to form connections and understand each other. This phenomenon appears in individuals residing in suburban areas outside Jakarta, the capital city, or even those living beneath bridges in large cities. Considering their busy work to afford daily requirements, they scarcely know and appreciate how vital their relationship with one another is. As a result, children frequently become victims at work. They need to put in a lot of effort to survive. At this age, they should have spent more time in school, learning, playing, and spending time with their families than the other way around. This research uses a qualitative method. The aim of this study is to emphasize the significance of active participation in one's own life and skillful communication in fostering healthy relationships among families and communities. Effective communication between parents and the community can promote constructive engagement and positive relationships between parents and their children.

Keywords: Communication, Parents, Children, Suburban Area.

I. INTRODUCTION

Humans rely on communication and interaction with others. This is particularly true in places like Kalijodo, where many residents live under the bridge and make a living through scavenging, performing, and doing sex work. However, due to the demands of their daily work, these individuals often struggle to connect with their community. One resident with a W initial said that because of the work, they spend long hours on the streets without the opportunity to return home and engage with their surroundings (March 12, 2023). Even children in Kalijodo have to work in difficult

conditions, spending their time learning and playing on the streets rather than attending school.

Children in Kalijodo have to work in difficult conditions and be in the reality of commercial sex work. Unfortunately, they are too young to comprehend this matter. However, amidst the hustle and bustle of daily life in Kalijodo, there is a Christian community that actively supports the local residents, especially the children. The primary goal of this Christian community is to assist children in their spiritual and personal growth. The community is eager to help them to communicate effectively with others and foster positive relationships between parents and children. Unfortunately, many individuals living in Kalijodo have lost touch with their community. It leads to a breakdown in communication between parents and children. This research is to highlight the importance of self-involvement and effective communication within families and communities.

Effective communication is crucial for successful social interaction, as it helps to build confidence in expressing oneself, making decisions, and creating understanding. When communication is good, it can promote positive interactions between parents and children by enabling continuous communication and mutual understanding. Daily engagement is part of communication to be able to convey information, ideas, and ideas from one party to another. Social interaction is the key rotation of all social life. Communication includes a reciprocal process with one another, an interaction related to interests, goals, and intentions that are being worked on through interactions with other people (Nasrulla, 2012: 92). As social beings, humans require the presence of others to fulfill their responsibilities and duties within society. Specifically, parents hold a significant role in educating, directing, and guiding their children toward becoming well-adjusted members of society. Additionally, it is the responsibility of parents to actively engage with their children through effective communication, in order to facilitate positive interactions between them.

There are various concerning issues within the relationships between parents and children living in suburban areas, especially those living underneath the bridges. Despite their strict approach to education, parents in this community often prioritize working on the roadside to support their family's basic needs over spending time with their children. Furthermore, parents frequently require their children to contribute to the family's income by performing as buskers, beggars, and vendors on the outskirts of Jakarta. This situation is unfortunate, as children should be receiving love, care, and education from their parents at a young age. It is crucial to recognize the significance of communication between parents and children, both in terms of assigning jobs or responsibilities, as well as preparing time, energy, education, and guidance to help children develop into well-adjusted individuals.

II. METHODOLOGY

During the completion of this writing, the author uses a research methodology that involves desk research and field observation. Library research refers to a research approach that utilizes books and other library resources as sources of data, while field observations involve observing phenomena directly in their natural setting. The author followed a systematic and logical approach to conducting this research process (Mahmud, 2011: 23).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As social beings, humans basically live in communities and desire positive relationships with their surroundings. Communication is a crucial activity that serves a

multitude of purposes, including sharing information, creating understanding, and fostering involvement (Fiske, 2016: 1). Despite its importance, many individuals struggle to define communication accurately. Failure to communicate effectively within familial relationships, specifically between parents and children, can have detrimental effects on a child's emotional development. When parents fail to engage in open communication and discussion with their children, the children may feel isolated and empty, leading them to become apathetic or dismissive towards others in the future.

According to Mulyani (2016: 136), the family is a small social institution that plays a crucial role in promoting peace, security, and prosperity in a loving and caring environment among its members. Communication is an essential element in a healthy family where family members can communicate with ease and comfort, thus fostering love and affection.

Everyone, including those who live under the bridge, can apply communication in their family and society. However, it is difficult for them to do so since they spend most of their time working on the streets to meet their basic needs. This is beyond their expectation, especially in a big city like Jakarta, which has a large population. According to data from the Population and Civil Registry Office, Jakarta had a population of 11,063,324 people at the end of 2019, including 4,380 foreigners. The area of DKI Jakarta is 662.33 km², and about 1,044 people are homeless (<http://statistik.jakarta.go.id/>).

The author has identified several social aspects that are present among street children who live under the bridge, including the lack of access to basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter, the absence of formal education, the prevalence of child labor, and the lack of proper health care. These children are also vulnerable to abuse, violence, and exploitation, and often face discrimination and stigma from society. The author emphasizes the importance of recognizing the rights of these children and providing them with the necessary support and care to ensure their well-being and development.

3.1 The Relationship between Parents and Children

When it comes to the bond between parents and their offspring, it is evident that children are a precious blessing for every parent across the globe, and almost every parent desires to have a child in their family. Children require genuine affection from both parents. In the parent-child relationship, there are obligations that the child has towards their parents and vice versa. The responsibility of parents is to wholeheartedly love their children and provide them with adequate attention to help them become good individuals. The responsibility of a child is to obey their parents and strive to make them proud of their achievements. It is crucial to have a healthy relationship between parents and children as it can positively impact the child's growth.

Maintaining a relationship is important because when it ends it leaves a negative impression on the child and lead them to live a messy life on the streets. Therefore, it is essential to give children proper education and upbringing from a young age so that they develop good character and behavior. Unfortunately, for children living under the bridge, the relationship between parents and children is not always smooth due to the lack of supply of basic family needs. As a result, parents often enforce strict education on their children and require them to work on the streets to support the family.

Parents tend to prioritize their children working over studying, but learning is crucial for a child's development. Through education, children can learn to interact

with others, form relationships, and develop communication skills. Education also allows children to have peers and learn how to communicate well with others. However, children who live under the bridge face economic limitations that prevent them from accessing education. This is because their parents lack the importance of education and even the financial means to afford it (Kadir, 2012: 76). In such cases, parents must take extra time and effort to educate their children at home, covering all aspects of human development including psychological, physical, intellectual, and social (Ahmadi & Uhbiyati, 2015: 242).

Education is a crucial aspect of a child's development as it teaches them fundamental skills like reading, writing, and communicating, and helps them undergo positive changes. However, the reality for many children is that they spend their time working on the streets to support their family's basic needs instead of attending school. Parents are responsible for providing care and affection, as well as looking after their children, but due to economic limitations, they force their children to work on the streets to earn money. Working on the streets all day makes children feel tired and it is even difficult to have time to interact or socialize with others. Children engage in activities like begging, selling at red lights, busking, or scavenging, as they see it as a way to support themselves and their families. This results in minimal communication between parents and children as both parties spend their days working. Due to the burden of survival, the concept of family is reduced to a group of people who contribute to meeting basic needs, and education takes a backseat to street work. Children end up having to work under duress.

The daily income of children who live under the bridge is derived solely from activities like collecting used goods, busking, and selling at red lights, which is insufficient to cover their daily needs. Their economic situation is alarming as even working from morning to night may not be enough to provide for their family's basic needs. Thus, children at a young age have to work hard to support their family's economy. They live in the harsh weather conditions of Jakarta, feeling cold when it rains, sleeping on the side of the road, and some children have to go days without coming home to earn money to support their families. Living under a bridge is a state of having insufficient resources to live a comfortable life, including economic, social, psychological, and spiritual dimensions (Beik & Arsyianti, 2017: 68). The lives of children under bridge live with insufficient income, social isolation, lack of education, and love from their parents, causing them to spend too much time on the streets and become an out of control children.

Parents and children living under difficult economic circumstances are often busy with making money, leaving little time for nurturing a good relationship. As a result, family interactions and cooperation are rare. Children in such families are often under strict upbringing, and this contributes to a strained relationship with their families. In addition, due to their daily struggle to make ends meet, children face problems in building positive relationships with their peers.

The Interactions and Relationships of Street Children with Their Peers

Children living under the bridges form rough and out of control associations, and their lack of education and moral guidance can be attributed to their parents' strict upbringing. Peer groups, on the other hand, are social environments outside of the family that can help individuals develop skills and behaviors that lead to positive outcomes. A peer group can consist of friends who share strong emotional bonds and support each other through exchanging ideas and providing motivation to grow and develop into better individuals (Priyanto & Mulyono, 2017: 43).

Children's peers can have a significant impact on their development by providing encouragement, motivation, and mutual support. Spending a lot of time with peers can sometimes weaken children's connections with their family members. Peer groups play an important role in the growth of these children, as they help children learn to interact better with their parents and the community. The absence of peers and a lack of positive interactions can disrupt the communication process between parents and children. Unfortunately, children who live under the bridges in Kalijodo lack close with their peers, as they have to work hard to help meet their family's basic needs. This lack of social interaction has prevented these children from developing to their full potential within a supportive community.

Children who grow up in a street environment may develop negative behaviors and attitudes as a result of the negative culture of that environment. Street children, including those living under bridges, often choose this lifestyle as a way to cope with economic and social challenges they face. This creates a subculture of urban children who are unable to attend school due to their family's financial limitations. This results in a caste difference between street children and urban children who have access to education, homes, and other basic needs. This division makes it difficult for street and urban children to unite as they live in different circumstances.

Urban children have negative perceptions of children living under bridges, considering them dirty, immoral, and unpleasant-smelling. This makes it difficult for them to socialize and connect with children under the bridge. Similarly, children under bridges are less likely to associate with each other for the same reason. Consequently, the social lives of children under the bridge are mainly limited to their own environment, where they interact with other children living under the bridge or other street children.

To associate with other street children is lack solution for them. Differences arise, such as some children earning money through busking while others look for discarded items. This difference in perspective can hinder their ability to socialize with each other. Moreover, for children living under bridges, their living conditions are far from adequate. Therefore, discussions about a good life or luxury can make them feel inferior and ashamed, as they are accustomed to thinking that their lives are always lacking.

3.2 Relations Between Communities

Human beings are complex and multifaceted creatures that God create. They are social and cultural beings who naturally seek to interact and cooperate with others. This interaction is driven by economic, biological, emotional needs and a desire for social connection factors. Despite their impoverished economic condition, children who live under bridges work hard on the streets but lack the strong social bonds that other children with complete families and supportive communities have. Due to their daily struggle for survival, those living under the bridge have limited opportunities to socialize and connect with others, which is a key aspect of being human. Parents have limited interaction with others, as well as the children also experience the same due to accompanying their parents on the streets while they work. Furthermore, some children and parents are in a state of separation while they search for income, with parents searching for junk and children busking at red lights, which limits their ability to interact and connect with others. As a result of their challenging daily lives, many people living under the bridge forget how to cultivate effective relationships with others.

As social creatures, humans are inherently dependent on others, and thus lack the ability to function normally without social interaction. Social interaction is as dynamic social relationship that relates to individuals, groups to groups, as well as individuals to groups or vice versa (Elly M & Usman, 2011: 63). Social interaction can take place with one's own family, the wider community, as well as with individuals one meets in daily life.

Due to the increasing need to connect and interact with more people in everyday life, many people have forgotten how to have effective relationships with one another. For individuals living under bridges, their busy lives rarely allow for effective relationships with others as they often spend their entire day outside of their homes, leaving them with no time to greet or engage with those around them. Differences in social status may also play a role in their inability to socialize with others they encounter.

There are various differences that hinder socialization with individuals living under the bridge. Differences greatly affect their socialization, meeting with people who have education makes underprivileged children feel inferior because they are uneducated. Meanwhile, the difference in work makes them ashamed, meeting other people who have good jobs makes those who live under the bridge ashamed of the conditions and circumstances of those who only work as scavengers, buskers, selling at red lights and some even become *ondel-ondel* and become clown masks only to earn money. The place where they live is different. Street children do not have a luxurious place to rest when they get home from work. Instead, they only have a place to live under the bridge with a cardboard floor for them to sleep on. Next, education is one of the differences between children in general and those who live under the bridge. Those who live under the bridge do not have a good education or even go to school. Meanwhile, children in general who do not live under the bridge have a good education because they live well enough.

The dissimilarities significantly impact their everyday existence. Being social creatures, humans must have the capability to interact and support one another. These discrepancies have become ingrained in the daily routine of individuals residing beneath the bridge. As a result, they consistently face with these three factors, leading them to believe that the contrast between those inhabiting the luxurious areas and those dwelling under the bridge is substantial. Nonetheless, these differences and contrasts should not hinder their ability to socialize since, as social beings, we naturally have the habit to communicate and interact with each other in group settings in our daily lives.

Establishing communication with others is essential in fostering positive relationships as it plays a crucial role in human existence, allowing individuals to interact with those they encounter during activities within and outside the household. Communication is a process of mutual engagement and transmission of messages from the sender to the receiver, aiming to generate comprehension among the listeners (Smith, 2014: 7).

Maintaining interaction is crucial as it has the potential to alter behavior, meaning, and language. Essentially, interaction enables individuals to acquire information quickly and easily (Fahri, Lalu & Qusyairi, 2015). This highlights the importance of interaction for children, whether it be with parents, society, or peers. Besides providing a good education, parents should dedicate time to interact with their children to cultivate a strong relationship. With many parents occupied with work from morning to night, it is crucial to allocate time to educate, show affection, and give undivided attention to their children. Due to economic constraints, children live without

education. It is the parent's responsibility to educate and guide them to ensure proper mental, spiritual, and social interaction within the community. Social interaction is a dynamic relationship between individuals, groups, and inter-group connections. The basis of social processes is social interaction (Angeline, 2018).

IV. CONCLUSION

Communication plays an important role in people's lives. Living beings are consistently engaged in communication with others on a daily basis. Effective communication with groups or individuals can improve speech skills. Parents residing under the bridge with their children cannot use a lack of time as an excuse. They must dedicate enough time to interact with their children, recognizing that daily communication with the surrounding community can facilitate interaction between parents and children.

Good communication between parents and the community can facilitate positive interaction between parents and children. As a parent, it is important to share time with the family and children. Life circumstances vary for everyone, and no child can choose the family they are born into. As important figures in their children's growth process, even parents from a low economics class need to acknowledge their responsibilities. Moreover, amidst a busy schedule, parents must take up the responsibility of educating, guiding, and showing affection to their children to ensure their overall development. Positive interaction between parents and children can pave the way for good relationships between the family and the environment. Another result is establishing a good collaboration with others, as living things thrive together and without isolation.

The importance of education in a child's development and well-being is of utmost significance. It equips them with cognitive and social skills, broadens career prospects, enhances their quality of life, and fosters personal development. Every child should have equal access to high-quality education to maximize their abilities. In conclusion, adequate parental care and education are crucial for the growth and development of children. They provide love, guidance, education, healthcare, discipline, and open communication to help them flourish and achieve success in adulthood.

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