
Strict Parenting Communication Experience for Students in the Era of Generational Shift

Alfina Azzahra^{1*}, Athalla Zayyani², Syifaa Nara³, Sri Wahyuningsih⁴, Nayla Raya⁵

^{1,2,3,4,5} Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura, Jawa Timur, Indonesia

Corresponding author: alvinazzahraa@gmail.com

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Abstract

Family communication experiences play an important role in shaping how students interpret relationships with parents and express themselves. This study aims to explore the communication experiences of students raised under strict parenting in the context of generational shifts. Using a descriptive qualitative approach with a phenomenological method, data were collected through in-depth interviews with seven students of Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura. The findings show that students' communication experiences are marked by strong parental control, limited dialogue, and predominantly one-way communication. These conditions lead to selective communication, cautious self-expression, conflict avoidance, and adaptive strategies such as withholding information and seeking emotional support outside the family. Generational value differences further intensify communication distance between parents and students. The study concludes that strict parenting shapes students' communication experiences, self-expression, and social relationships in the university environment.

Keywords– Communication Experience, Strict Parenting, Family Communication, Z Generation.



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1. Introduction

Strict parenting is a parenting pattern characterized by high control, rigid discipline, and great demands on children with limited emotional support (Hasibuan et al., 2024). Pola ini juga dicirikan oleh kontrol emosional yang kuat, aturan yang ketat, dan ekspektasi tinggi dari orang tua (Haris, 2025). Conceptually, strict parenting is understood as a modern form of authoritarian parenting, in which parents demand absolute obedience, limit the space for dialogue, and apply strict control and punishment to children (Santrock, 2010 dalam Widyarini, 2009). According to (Juliawati Jessica, 2022), the term strict parenting is widely used today to describe authoritarian parenting that is still relevant in the context of the modern family. Adzani (2021, in Juliawati Jessica 2022) emphasized that this pattern tends to have a negative impact on children's psychological development.

Strict parenting not only impacts behavior, but also on the communication experiences they have with parents. Communication experience refers to the process by which individuals experience and experience communication interactions, both verbal and nonverbal, that form specific meanings, emotions, and psychological responses. Adolescents aged 18–24 years old are at a crucial phase in the development of self-identity and the need for privacy (BKKBN in Bulan, 2023). However, in families with strict parenting, these needs often clash with strict supervision and restrictions, creating communication barriers and encouraging children to hide personal information to avoid conflict.

The communication model basically describes the process of interaction between the communicator and the communicator, where the message is conveyed with the aim of influencing the attitude and behavior of the recipient. In the family context, communication not only functions as a conveyance of information, but also as a means of forming values, attitudes, and patterns of relationships between family members. The family is the main space where authoritative, protective, and affective messages are conveyed repeatedly and shape the experience of individual communication from an early age (Wahyuningsih et al., 2025). Viewed from the perspective of communication psychology, the experience of communication involves complex mental processes. Fisher (1978 in Husni 2019) explained that

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communication experience includes four main stages, namely Sensory Reception of Stimuli, Internal Mediation of Stimuli, Prediction of Response, and Reinforcement of Responses. This process shows that the experience of communication does not only look at communication behavior, but also involves processing meaning and emotions internally. In families with strict parenting, communication experiences dominated by demands and control have the potential to form fear of mistakes, anxiety, and limitations in expressing opinions.

This phenomenon is increasingly complex when associated with generational shifts. Generational shifts are changes in values, perspectives, and patterns of interaction that occur between generations due to differences in historical experiences and social contexts (Kartika, 2019). Generation Z as the current generation of students grew up in a digital environment with the value of openness and freedom of expression, while their parents generally came from Generation X or Baby Boomers who were shaped by the values of discipline and hierarchy (Mannheim, 1952 in Kartika, 2019). This difference in values often gives rise to distance and communication tension in the family, especially when strict parenting is applied. Therefore, this research is important to understand how students interpret their communication experiences in strict parenting in the era of generational shifts.

2. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with the constructivist paradigm, which views social reality as the result of the construction of meaning from individual subjective experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009; Creswell et al., 2014). This paradigm is relevant because the research focuses on students' communication experiences in dealing with strict parenting in the midst of a generational shift.

The type of research used is phenomenology, with the aim of understanding how students interpret, feel, and interpret their communication experiences with parents. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews, non-

participant observations, and documentation to obtain a comprehensive picture of the communication experience.

The determination of informants was carried out using purposive sampling, with the criteria of Trunojoyo Madura University students who have experience in communication in the family with strict parenting. The number of informants is determined based on the principle of data saturation.

Data analysis is carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 2014). The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation of sources and techniques to ensure the consistency and credibility of research findings.

3. Result and Discussion

Student Communication Experience with Strict Parenting Style

The communication experience of students who grew up in *strict parenting* shows that there is a communication adaptation process that takes place in a sustainable manner. Communication with parents is not interpreted as a free space to express personal feelings and views, but rather as a situation that demands caution, self-control, and emotional management. Students tend to filter the information conveyed to parents by considering potential conflicts, judgments, and negative responses that may arise.

In general, the informant's communication experience is characterized by the limitations of open dialogue spaces. Students continue to communicate with their parents, but more discuss topics that are considered safe and normative, such as education, daily activities, or family obligations. The need to share different emotions, personal problems, and views is often transferred to others who are perceived as more receptive, such as relatives or close friends. This condition forms a selective and not fully open communication experience.

The communication experience shapes students' sensitivity in reading their parents' emotional situations and conditions. Students learn to adjust the timing, method, and content of message delivery so as not to trigger tension. This ability develops into an adaptive communication strategy, but at the same time reinforces

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the tendency to restraint and avoid conflict. Communication is no longer understood as a process of mutual understanding, but as a mechanism to maintain the stability of family relationships.

Communication experience is also interpreted as a form of control and supervision. Communication is perceived more as a means of conveying rules, evaluating behavior, and affirming parental authority. This experience fosters fear of being wrong, excessive caution in expressing opinions, and a tendency to avoid conversations that have the potential to cause differences of opinion. The impact of these experiences is not only felt in the family context, but also affects the way students communicate in the broader social environment. These findings are in line with protective family communication theories that emphasize parental control, child obedience, and the restriction of discussion space in daily interactions. The theory explains that communication in the family is directed to maintain stability, regularity, and conformity of children's behavior with the values set by parents (Mutmainna, 2024).

Haris 's research (Haris, 2025) shows that children who are raised through protective communication patterns tend to develop a cautious attitude in speaking, choose safe topics, and use conflict avoidance strategies to maintain the harmony of family relationships. Moreover, these findings are in line with Baumrind's theory of authoritarian parenting which emphasizes high control and low responsiveness (Vivianti & Sarajar, 2025). Research (Muttuqin & Azmussyani, 2021) shows that communication in authoritarian families tends to be one-way and limits children's expression. The results of the interviews reinforced these findings by showing that students develop selective communication as a form of adaptation. The generational shift widens the communication distance because the values of freedom and self-expression that students embrace are not fully accommodated by parents.

The communication experience of students who grew up in *strict parenting* shows that students do not completely close themselves off from their parents, but undergo communication in a controlled and selective manner. These experiences shape individuals who are structurally obedient to authority, reflective in managing

emotions, and sensitive to power hierarchies in interpersonal relationships, both in the family environment and in the broader social context in the midst of generational shifts.

Student Communication Experience in Facing Parental Control, Limitations, and Supervision

The communication experience of Trunojoyo Madura University students who grew up in *strict parenting* shows that there is an interaction that is full of control, limitations, and supervision from parents. This control is experienced by students not only as a rule of behavior, but also as a communicative experience that shapes the way they speak, convey permission, and manage personal information in family relationships. Communication with parents is perceived as a space that demands care, calculation, and compliance, so students tend to adjust to parents' expectations in order to maintain relationship stability.

Time restrictions, such as play hours and curfews, are the most dominant communication experiences felt by students. These rules not only function as activity controllers, but also become a symbol of parental authority in determining children's movement space. Students experience a repetitive communication process in the form of permission requests, explanations of activities, and limited negotiations that ultimately remain on the side of the parents' decision. This experience shaped the understanding that communication does not always mean equal dialogue, but rather a monitoring mechanism that must be followed.

Communication experience is also characterized by the obligation to give permission in detail before carrying out activities outside the home. Students are used to explaining the purpose, location, and party they meet as part of the communication process with parents. This condition encourages students to manage information selectively, simplify stories, or withhold certain details to avoid rejection and conflict. Communication is no longer understood as a space for free expression, but rather as a strategy to gain approval.

Control over social relations and privacy also forms a defensive communication experience. Supervision of socializing, romantic relationships, and

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personal activities makes students more careful in conveying personal feelings and experiences. This kind of communication experience forms a habit of restraint, avoiding sensitive topics, and seeking alternative communication spaces outside of the nuclear family, such as peers or siblings, to meet emotional needs.

These experiences show that communication in *strict parenting families* is more understood as instruction, direction, and behavioral evaluation than as a space for sharing feelings. Students learn to adjust the way they speak, choose the right time to express their opinions, and anticipate their parents' responses before communicating. This process forms a structurally compliant communication character, but there is little room for negotiation. These findings are in line with research (Moh.Fahmi & Dindin, n.d.) regarding strict parenting *communication behavior* in Generation Z, which shows that this parenting style forms hierarchical and compliance-oriented communication. Thus, this study reinforces previous findings that *strict parenting* not only limits behavior, but also forms communication patterns that lack dialogue and negotiation.

Overall, the various forms of control found, such as time restrictions, detailed permission obligations, privacy controls, and restrictions on social relations, show the characteristics of authoritarian parenting as proposed by Diana Baumrind. This pattern is characterized by high compliance demands and communication that tends to be one-way.

The implementation of curfews that are still imposed on students shows that parents emphasize obedience more than adjustments to children's independence. Parental dominance in decision-making limits children's space to convey needs and views. In the long run, this excessive control has the potential to hinder the development of autonomy, as can be seen from the decision of some informants to choose to study outside the region as an effort to gain freedom and independence.

Communication Experience in the Midst of a Generational Shift

The results of the study show that students' communication experiences with parents who apply *strict parenting* are greatly influenced by generational differences. Students as part of Generation Z grew up with more open and

dialogical values, while parents still hold the values of previous generations that emphasize obedience, control, and hierarchy. These differences form a communication experience that is often unequal and lacks space for dialogue. Students' communication experiences show that parental control is often interpreted as a restriction of freedom and self-expression. Decisions related to education, social activities, and independence are still largely determined by parents, so students feel that the need for independence has not been fully recognized. This condition creates tension between the child's desire to make life choices and the parent's orientation to safety and control.

The experience of communication in *strict parenting* families is also selective. Students tend to limit the topic of conversation with their parents to things that are considered safe and avoid issues that have the potential to trigger conflict. Communication more often functions functionally, such as conveying obligations or activity reports, rather than as a space for sharing personal feelings and experiences. In response to these generational differences, students develop communication adaptation strategies, such as holding opinions, delaying the delivery of desires, avoiding conflicts, and hiding information. This strategy was chosen to maintain the stability of family relationships, although it has an impact on reduced openness and emotional comfort in communication with parents. Communication experiences are also influenced by parents' assertive, instructive, and high-pitched messaging styles. This style is often interpreted by students as a form of rejection or anger, not as advice. The difference in how to interpret these messages widens the communication distance, especially in the context of academic activities, organizations, and the use of technology that parents do not fully understand.

The research findings show that communication experiences are not always negative. In some families, strict control is balanced by room for dialogue and reflection. This kind of communication experience allows for two-way adaptation, where students learn to express their opinions in a more structured way, while parents gradually loosen control. This emphasizes that the quality of communication is an important factor in determining how *strict parenting* is

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interpreted by children.

These findings are in line with research (Labaso' et al., 2024) that shows that strict or *authoritarian parenting* shapes control-based communication experiences with limited dialogue space. The generational difference further strengthens this condition because of the differences in values, historical experiences, and communication styles between parents and children. Previous research (Juliawati Jessica, 2022) also confirms that *strict parenting* tends to limit the self-openness of late adolescents, so children prefer to adjust rather than communicate openly.

Based on the overall results, students' communication experiences in the midst of generational shifts show that communication in *strict parenting families* is more often interpreted as an arena for self-adjustment than an equal dialogue space. This condition has the potential to create emotional distance and limit the development of healthy two-way communication in the family.

The Impact of Strict Parenting Communication Experience on Student Personality and Relationships

The results of the study show that the experience of communication in the family with *strict parenting* style has a sustainable impact on the formation of personality, self-expression, and social relations of students in the campus environment. The communication experience characterized by high control, close surveillance, and lack of dialogue forms a relatively similar response pattern in most informants, although it appears in varying forms.

The most dominant impact was seen in the development of defensive communication strategies, such as the tendency to lie, hide information, and avoid conflict. This strategy is used as a self-protection mechanism to avoid anger, punishment, or stricter restrictions from parents. This condition shows that the experience of communication in the family has not been fully perceived as a safe space for openness and honesty.

Stressful communication experiences also have an impact on inhibiting self-expression. Students tend to be cautious in expressing opinions, fear of being

blamed, and choose to remain silent in situations that have the potential to trigger conflict. This attitude develops into a habit of passive and reflective communication. For some informants, this pressure gives rise to indirect resistance behavior, such as covert rule violations or symbolic rebellions in an effort to gain space for freedom. In the context of personality, the experience of *strict parenting* communication forms a character that is closed, careful, and socially accepted. Some students internalize parental control into a people pleaser attitude, which is the tendency to give in, avoid conflicts, and adjust excessively in order to maintain harmonious relationships. Although it may seem adaptive, this pattern is rooted in a fear of rejection and conflict, rather than in a healthy developed freedom of expression.

The experience of communication in the family is also carried over into social relations and the campus environment. Students show a disciplined, polite, and obedient attitude to the rules, but experience obstacles in the courage to speak their minds, participate in discussions, and take an active role in the organization. Social relationships with peers are built selectively and carefully, with a tendency to maintain emotional distance and limit self-openness. Emotional closeness develops slowly due to the habit of holding back feelings and filtering out personal information. On the other hand, some students actually show excessive emotional expressions outside the family environment. The communication pressures experienced at home encourage the emergence of reactive, emotional, and difficult to control communication behaviors in campus social interactions. This pattern indicates the ambivalence of communication, where strong control in one space triggers the venting of emotions in another.

Interaction with lecturers and authority figures on campus is also influenced by family communication experiences. Students tend to show a respectful and orderly attitude, but are passive in academic discussions. In some cases, excessive control actually gives rise to a resistive attitude towards authority outside the family. This confirms that *strict parenting* not only forms obedience, but also has the potential to give birth to confrontational communication patterns as a form of seeking autonomy.

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These findings are in line with Diana Baumrind's authoritarian parenting theory that emphasizes high control and low responsiveness, thus limiting the child's space for negotiation and expression. Previous research has also shown that communication experiences in authoritarian families shape individuals who are defensive, cautious, and have low self-openness (Moh.Fahmi & Dindin, n.d.). Research by Louw & Rahmatulloh (2024) shows that children from authoritarian families tend to have social anxiety, low self-openness, and excessive caution in interactions. The results of the interviews strengthened this theory by showing the variation in the impact in the form of low courage to speak up, the development of independence, and the emergence of social adaptation mechanisms in the campus environment. The experience of *strict parenting* communication in the era of generational shifts has shaped students who are obedient and reflective, but face challenges in expressing themselves openly in academic social spaces. In the perspective of social learning, family communication patterns serve as the main model for the formation of individual communication behavior in the broader social space.

The relationship between interview results, family communication theory, and previous research shows that the experience of communication in the family serves as the main foundation in the formation of social relationship patterns in the early adult phase (Ramadhani & Tesniyadi, 2025). Generational shifts reinforce these dynamics through the demands of a campus environment that emphasizes openness, active participation, and adaptive interpersonal communication skills. Overall, *the experience of strict parenting* communication produces students who are obedient, reflective, and controlled, but face challenges in expressing themselves openly and building equal social relationships. Generational shifts reinforce these impacts because the demands of the campus environment emphasize openness, active participation, and adaptive interpersonal communication skills. The experience of communication in the family thus becomes the main foundation that influences the way students interpret themselves, interact, and negotiate in academic and social life.

4. Conclusion

This study shows that the communication experience of students who grew up in strict parenting tends to be formed through one-way, controlled, and emphasizing obedience communication. Communication in the family is more interpreted as a means of supervision and behavioral regulation than as a space for dialogue and emotional openness. This condition encourages students to develop adaptive communication strategies such as filtering information, holding opinions, avoiding conflicts, and hiding personal experiences in order to maintain the stability of relationships with parents.

The communication experience has a sustainable impact on the social and academic life of students. Students show discipline, caution, and obedience to authority, but tend to be passive in expressing opinions, building open dialogue, and actively participating in the campus environment. In the context of a generational shift, the difference in values and communication styles between parents and students widens the communication distance, so that students are more adaptable than negotiating equally. These findings corroborate Baumrind's theory of authoritarian parenting and protective family communication that emphasizes high control and low responsiveness.

Communication experiences in the family play an important role in shaping students' interpersonal communication skills. Communication experiences dominated by control and lack of dialogue have the potential to limit students' openness, courage to express their opinions, and self-expression in the early adulthood phase. These findings can serve as a basis for the campus environment to provide a mentoring space as well as the strengthening of assertive communication skills for students who grow up in a rigorous family communication experience.

This study recommends that parents build a more dialogical and adaptive communication experience in accordance with the development of the current generation, without eliminating the supervisory function. The next research is suggested to examine the experience of communication from the perspective of parents and expand the context of the study through a comparison of cultural

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backgrounds, regions, or other forms of family communication experience to obtain a more comprehensive understanding.

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