

# Parental Communication Patterns Towards Children with Special Needs During Puberty in Malalayang District, Manado City

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**Abstract.** *Children are a gift that must be guarded, cared for and educated. Children who are born in a healthy or normal condition are the pride of parents. However, in reality there are still parents who have children who experience obstacles, disorders and delays in mental and physical growth called Children with Special Needs. The challenge is when children start to enter puberty, children will enter adolescence at this age, of course it will affect their physical and mental, for example, girls are marked by menstruation or menstruation. Conditions like this affect not only children but also parents. Because automatically parents must go directly to help. Unlike boys, physical changes do not have a big impact. Based on the characteristics of psychological growth, ABK is actually almost the same as normal children, for example, emotionally, the instinct to sympathize with others or the opposite sex is there. It's just that self-control is limited. For that, children with special needs in adolescence must continue to receive supervision from parents who must be more intensive in accompanying and even controlling children's actions. Based on the above phenomenon, the researcher is interested in conducting further research and this study is entitled Interpersonal Communication Patterns of Parents and Children with Special Needs During Puberty in Malalayang District. The aim is to find out how the communication patterns of parents who have children with special needs with the type of intellectual disability. Using the theory of Interpersonal Communication from Joseph Devito using qualitative methods and purposive sampling techniques where the informants needed in this study are parents who have adolescent children with special needs in Malalayang District, Manado City.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Puberty or puberty is part of human development. Puberty is a time when a child experiences physical changes, attitudes or behaviors and maturation of reproductive organs. Boys and girls who enter puberty mean that the child is entering adolescence. In general, puberty in girls occurs faster than in boys. Puberty in girls occurs in the time span of 10-14 years. while boys at the age of 12-16 years. but the process can occur at different times according to the condition of the human body.

Every parent longs for their child to be born and grow up healthy and normal. However, there are some parents who have children with physical and mental limitations (Pratiwi, 2021; Harisa, 2023; Tarigan, 2022). Often the presence of children with special needs in the family is viewed differently by each parent. based on the results of research that has been studied by previous researchers, it states that parental communication with children with special needs with

an intentional orientation is seen from the attitude of parents who have a negative self-concept who can only see the weaknesses and shortcomings of children who focus on the child's abnormalities with the perspective of the child being useless. Of course, this greatly influences the actions of parents in carrying out their duties and functions. While extensional orientation is the attitude of parents who have a positive self-concept where parents not only see, but feel their children through their characteristics, uniqueness and even advantages that other normal children may not have (Hereyah & Purwanti, 2021). The type of parents with this orientation is categorized as being able to accept their children's limitations and are able to devote their full attention and affection with a big heart to see that whatever the child's condition is, it is a gift from God (Marcelina, 2013; Widya et al., 2020).

However, the challenge is when children begin to enter puberty where children will enter adolescence which will affect their physical and mental state, for example, girls are marked by menstruation or their first period. Conditions like this affect not only children but also parents (Sigel et al., 2014; Zarit et al., 2005). Because parents automatically have to get involved directly to help and even control. Unlike boys, physical changes do not have a big impact, but emotional changes will be seen in their behavior. Based on the characteristics of mental growth, ABK is actually almost the same as normal children, for example, emotionally, the instinct to feel sympathy, feel attracted to other people or the opposite sex, it's just that self-control is limited. Acting shyly by showing his nonverbal style. For that reason, children with special needs in adolescence must continue to receive supervision from parents, namely building interpersonal relationships with children so that children can feel the touch of real affection (Diadema & Ambarwati, 2022; Ashilah et al., 2020; Hasanah, 2021). Because children with special needs have their own sensitivity in interpreting messages when carrying out the communication process. Based on the results of the study, it shows that communication between parents and children with special needs during puberty is humanistic communication that prioritizes empathy, respect for individuals and justice, this approach not only aims to convey information but also build deeper and more meaningful relationships.

## **METHODS**

Subjects of the study Parents who have children with special needs with intellectual disabilities. Data were obtained through observation, in-depth interviews with informants. These informants were selected using purposive sampling. Informants in the study consisted of primary informants and main informants. (Key Informants) Kontjaraningrat stated that primary informants are people who are considered willing to provide information. and are able to provide recommendations to other people who are also willing to provide information. According to Wakarmamu (2022), informants were selected purposively because: (1) subjects who are willing to accept the presence of researchers well are considered compared to each other. (2) their ability and willingness to express past and present experiences (3) anyone who is considered interesting, for example having special experiences, (4) it would be wiser to avoid resolving subjects who have professional relationships and other special relationships that have special assumptions or assumptions that can color their interpretation of what is expressed.

This study uses a qualitative approach method. Trying to find the real, actual or natural conditions of the subjects studied. Parents have special needs children aged 12-25 years considering that the development and growth of special needs children experience physical and mental delays compared to other normal children. The informants in this study consisted of 7 informants who had children with needs who were categorized as being of mature age or entering puberty. Data collection was carried out using methods commonly used in qualitative approaches, namely observation (participants), in-depth interviews, and document studies. This was done with the aim of capturing and understanding events holistically, so data collection was carried out by interacting with informants in this study, the main technique used by researchers was:

## **Participant Observation**

Researchers participate in entering the field with the hope of establishing a relationship with the subject or a basis of trust and a free and open exchange of information. (Fachan) explains that researchers remain relatively passive while carrying out tasks in the field. In-depth interviews. Researchers will also use this technique on data sources selected by purposive sampling, with the researcher considering that these data sources provide accurate data.

## **Document study**

The accuracy of research data, researchers will also use document studies. Data and documentation obtained in the field related to the focus of the research. In qualitative research, data analysis is carried out from the beginning and throughout the research process. In this study, qualitative data analysis will be used with an interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman, namely:

### ***Data Reduction***

Data obtained at the research location (field data) will be poured into a description or field report by the researcher will be reduced, summarized and selected the main points, focused on the important things. Data reduction will continue throughout the process.

### ***Data Presentation***

Data presentation or data display is intended to make it easier for researchers to see the overall picture or certain parts of the research, the data in this study can be presented in the form of a matrix, and narrative description.

### ***Drawing conclusions***

Data verification in this study will be carried out continuously throughout the research process. Since the beginning of entering the field and the data collection process, researchers have tried to analyze and find meaning from the data collected, namely obtaining models, themes, similarities that often arise.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Communication comes from the Latin *communis* which means "same". *Communico*, Communication or *Communicare* which means to make the same (make to common). Simply put, communication can occur if there is a similarity between the sender of the message and the person receiving the message. Therefore, communication depends on our ability to understand each other (Communication depends on our ability to understand one another). According to DeVito (2011) communication refers to the action, by one or more people who send or receive messages that are distorted by interference, occur in a certain context, have a certain influence and there is an agreement to provide feedback. Communication is important, it means that humans are very clear, because without communication there will be no interaction and no exchange of knowledge and experience. Effendy (2011) communication is the process of stating "The word communication as a message, influence or specifically as a message to the patient to the psychotherapist.

Messages are delivered from one person to another with the aim that the message can be understood or can change the behavior of others (Putri, 2016; Inah, 2013). In the process of communicating, it has different goals and functions. Thomas M. Scheidel stated that we communicate primarily to express and support self-identity, to build social contact with people around us, and to influence others to feel, think, or behave as we wish (Oseroff-Varnell, 1992). The function of communication as social communication at least suggests that communication is important for building self-concepts, for survival, to earn a living, to avoid stress and tension, among others through entertaining communication and fostering relationships with others. Through communication we can work together with other group members, and of course communication is carried out by achieving togetherness Mulyana (2001). The purpose of

communication according to Effendi (2002) is: (1) Changing attitudes (To Change The Attitude) influencing a person's behavior after someone expresses what information they want to convey, the next stage is whether or not a person will be affected by the information or message conveyed and then whether or not this will change the person's attitude. Communication is expected to change a person's attitude according to what is expected by the communicator. (2) Changing opinions/views. (To Change Opinion). Furthermore, communication aims to change someone's opinion or opinion according to what is expected by the communicator. (3). Changing Behavior (To Change the Behavior). After obtaining information, the purpose of communication is so that someone who receives the information can behave according to the stimulus given or in other words behave as expected.

A pattern is a form or model that is usually used to produce something or part of something, especially if something that is produced is sufficient to reach the type of basic pattern that can be shown or seen, Communication Patterns are interpreted as a form or pattern of relationship between two or more people in the process of sending and receiving the right way so that the intended message can be understood (Djamarah, 2004) Communication Patterns consist of:

### **Primary Communication Pattern**

Primary communication pattern is a process of delivery by the communicator to the communicant using a symbol as a medium or channel. in this pattern is divided into two symbols, namely verbal and nonverbal.

### **Secondary Communication Pattern**

The process of delivery by the communicator to the communicant using a tool or means as the first media. Communicators who use media or channels.

### **Linear Communication Pattern**

Linear here contains a straight meaning which means a journey from one point to another in a straight line, which means a journey from one point to another means the delivery of a message by the communicator to the possibility as a receiving point.

### **Circular Communication Pattern**

Literally circular means round or around. In the circular process or the occurrence of feedback, namely the occurrence of a flow from the communicant to the communicator, as the main determinant of communication success.

According to Mulyana (2001), interpersonal communication is face-to-face communication between humans, which allows participants to capture the reactions of others directly, both verbally and nonverbally. Humans are social creatures, therefore human life is marked by social interaction. Human interaction is one form of communication event in society. Parents are older people or people who are respected, consisting of fathers and mothers who are teachers and primary examples for their children because parents interpret the world and society to their children (Larasati, 2020; Nasution, 2024).

In addition, parents are the father and/or mother of a child either through biological or social relationships. Generally, parents have a very important role in raising children. Parents are everyone who is responsible for a family or household tasks who in everyday life are referred to as father and mother. Children with special characteristics that are different from children [in general without always showing mental, emotional or physical disabilities. Those included in ABK include: Blind, Deaf, Mentally Disabled, Physically Disabled, Emotionally Disabled, Learning Difficulties, Behavioral Disorders, Health Disorders and Difficulties in Socializing. Other terms for children with special needs are extraordinary children and disabled children. Because of the characteristics and obstacles that ABK has, they need a form of special education service that is adjusted to their abilities and potential. Puberty is a growth phase where children finally experience or reach reproductive maturity. During this puberty, the brain will also experience

rapid development. Identity formation will also occur so that many emotional changes occur for both boys and neutral children. Adjusting to puberty can be difficult for parents and teenagers can go through puberty well. <http://www.helodock.com.kesehatan>. Interpersonal Communication Theory According to Devito is: a) Openness is the ability to respond happily to information received in dealing with interpersonal relationships; b) Empathy is a person's ability to know what another person is experiencing at a certain time, from that other person's point of view, through that other person's eyes; c) Supportiveness an open situation to support effective communication is a relationship where there is a supportive attitude. Individuals show supportive attitudes and descriptive attitudes, not evaluative, spontaneous, not strategic. This theory is related to the research problem because communication is considered important in building interpersonal relationships between parents and children during puberty. What is experienced by children with special needs is certainly not an ordinary thing when parents respond to it. Through openness, empathy and support are the main keys to bringing children to learn to train themselves even with physical and mental limitations.

The results of this study on the seven informants on how the communication patterns of parents and children during puberty consist of three aspects, namely openness, empathy and support. Each informant expressed the form of openness in communicating between parents and children in the form of two-way communication, although communication often experiences obstacles due to limitations in expressing messages, both verbally and nonverbally based on the child's condition and disability. However, communication messages can be captured and accepted by parents. Open communication between parents and children during puberty, such as complaints about changes in themselves, both physically and emotionally, such as female ABK who have just experienced menstruation in their first period, of course, as parents, they must intervene to help and try to provide clear and easy-to-understand explanations. In this phase, parents are required to provide extra care until they can adjust and begin to adapt to the situation. Different statements from informants who have sons, the changes that appear are almost the same as other normal children, such as changes in voice, hair growth on the body and so on. This difference is also experienced by ABK. Even though in the condition of entering the puberty phase, children with disabilities do not really understand their existence, in exploring each of these changes, the challenge lies with the parents. parents are required to be more sensitive to the condition of their children (Alfiana, 2023).

This is also acknowledged by the five informants who have children with special needs. The mentoring process must be carried out optimally and openness is one of the attitudes that parents must apply in order to understand the condition of their children, both healthy and unhealthy. In his book, Joseph Devito states that openness is a type of communication where individuals reveal personal information that individuals usually hide from others. However, in this study, the openness in question concerns the interaction between parents and children with disabilities, more on the form of spontaneous openness from children who show new symptoms that are felt in themselves and require a direct response from parents (Niedbalski, 2021). although the handling carried out by informants in this study varies according to the type of disability.

These seven informants also expressed an attitude of empathy in communicating with children such as trying to accept all their shortcomings, being willing and always being a helper when they need it, being a friend when they are in trouble and feeling what they are experiencing. Empathizing by providing continuous services in the physical and mental training process. Likewise, the attitude of emotional support is to provide attention and affection because children with disabilities have more sensitive feelings than normal children (Babik & Gardner, 2021). Children with disabilities are more sensitive to the stimuli that come, they know which ones are truly loving, caring and sincere and which ones are not. The effect of people's insincerity in treating them is that they will become rude. And no longer want to accept or even communicate.

Based on the research results, the communication pattern between parents and children during puberty is a humanistic approach communication pattern. Parents must have humanistic



characteristics in responding to the existence of children. (1). Personal, seeing someone as a whole individual. Namely treating them as humans. Parents must view children as a gift or even a gift so that they can accept the existence of their children. (2). Unique. Accepting the existence of children as unique individuals who have their own characteristics is the most valuable characteristic. (3). Active. Mental processes are always related to activity. Basically, parents are not only recipients of internal and external stimuli but also as an active system that continuously responds to and creates appropriate stimuli. (4) Self-awareness that in every communication situation, they are often faced with various choices of actions.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of interviews with informants in this study, it includes three dimensions of interpersonal communication. The openness of parents and children in communicating during puberty is two-way, even though the communication that takes place often experiences obstacles due to the child's condition in communicating, even though the communication message can be received and even understood by the parents. In responding to limitations based on the type of child's disability. Empathy in communication is the attitude of parental concern in helping children deal with disorders or new cycles felt by children during puberty. Support in communication is emotional support, namely showing attention and affection. The communication pattern that occurs between parents and children with special needs is a communication pattern with a humanistic approach with the characteristics of Personality, Uniqueness, Activeness and Self-awareness through communication and the way parents view children with special needs.

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