

Family Communication Patterns and Impact of Covid-19 Lockdown on Young Adults in India

Jyoti Mariam Jacob^{1*}, Prof. LalRopuii²

ABSTRACT

Family communication scholars focus largely on communication as a symbolic practice that humans engage in, to co-construct and negotiate the forming of the family and in the process frame their own identity as well. Family Communication Patterns Theory (FCPT) is one of the most useful and empirically tested theories in the area of family communication, albeit being less explored in the Indian society. The present study aims to understand the family communication patterns of young adults from various cities in India. In addition, owing to the unprecedented circumstances of the current times, the research also aimed to understand the impact of covid-19 lockdown on the family communication patterns. The qualitative study was conducted under the purview of the ethnomethodology paradigm. 10 participants volunteered for a semi-structured interview, conducted abiding to the ethical measures. Findings suggest that the interpersonal communication patterns are in line with the existing literature. In addition, 3 communication patterns namely, assertive communication, empathetic communication and detached communication emerged from the data that suggested the perceived communication patterns of the participants. The data also suggested that the lockdown impacted the perceived functionality and satisfaction of their communication patterns with family members. Findings of the present study substantiate that conformity orientation is practiced more evidently viz conversation orientation in the Indian context. The major themes also sheds light on how the young adults of current generation weave out newer communication patterns to bridge the gap with their family members by creating a subjective reality that is best suited for the family dynamic.

Keywords: Family, Communication, Covid-19

The family is the primary framework responsible for shaping children's communication values (Barbato et al., 2003). It is the most important socialization agent that children experience (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002; Socha & Diggs, 1999). Therefore, parenting styles and communication patterns among family members within the families play a pivotal role in mediating beliefs about roles engaged in by the individuals as well as patterns and mannerisms of communication. The institution of family has been dynamically evolving, in response to the structural and organisational shifts in the society.

¹Master's Degree in Psychology, Montfort College, Bangalore North University, Bengaluru, India

²Asst. Professor, Montfort College, Bangalore North University, Bengaluru, India

*Corresponding Author

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There is robust agreement that family is central to human experience and that communication plays a central role in family life (Galvin et al., 2015). However, there is little scholarly agreement regarding appropriate conceptualizations of 'the family' or 'communication'. The concept of family in itself has been tremendously altered ever since the beginning of time. Edwards P.A. (2009) illustrated in his study that the construct of family is defined subjectively and it is strongly associated with an individual's perception of the family dynamics being either identity based, role based or shared reality based. Floyd, Mikkelsen and Judd (2006) detailed three frames or lenses for crafting family definitions—a role lens, a socio-legal lens, and a biogenetic lens.

Looking through the role lens, "relationships are familial to the extent that relational partners feel and act like family"; this creates social behavior and emotional bond as the defining characteristics. The socio-legal lens relies on the enactment of laws and regulations, defining family relationships as those formally sanctioned by law. The biogenetic lens depends on two criteria: the extent to which the relationship is directly reproductive, at least potentially, and whether or not the relational partners share genetic material. The latter point reflects findings that humans have an evolved motivation to be conscious of their levels of genetic relatedness with others. These approaches represent the complexity of defining a family that challenges everyone, from researchers to each individual family's members. Galvin (2006) argued that families depend, in part or whole, on communication to develop, identify as a family and carry out being a family. Noller and Fitzpatrick (1993) define family as a group of intimates who generate a sense of home and group identity and who experience a shared history and a shared future. This transactional definition extends the boundaries of the family and allows research to include a variety of different family types and forms in the analysis.

In the past two decades, the values, behaviours and social environments that affect the family structures have seen a remarkable change and shift, both in terms of structure and function (Fitzpatrick & Vangelisti, 1995). What helps the members stay connected amidst the change in dynamics is communication (Berger & Kellner, 1994). Children learn to socialise and fit into the world is in part, on the way that parents and children communicate (Chaffee, McLeod & Atkin, 1971). The role of family is utmost pivotal because it is the context for conversation and a source for social knowledge (Haslett & Alexander, 1988; Haslett & Samter, 1997; Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002). In the course, children learn how communication is used in interactions to help achieve personal goals.

The Latin root of "communication" – *communicare* – means "to share" or "to be in relation with." Through Indo-European etymological roots, it further relates to the words "common," "commune," and "community," suggesting an act of "bringing together". Family communication scholars focus largely on communication as a symbolic practice that humans engage in, to create meaning. Stewart (1999) defined communication as 'a way humans build reality'. It includes any instance of the creation of symbols in some medium in such a fashion that other people can notice the symbols and make sense of them (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1993). Human worlds are not made up of objects but made up of people's responses to objects or their meanings. These meanings are negotiated in communication'.

Communication is therefore seen as a central process of building the family by which members co-construct and negotiate the forming of the family and in the process frame their own identity as well.

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Theoretical understanding of the area of family communication goes a long way.

Although family as an institution has been at the heart of human history, the study of family in relation to communication is relatively young (Braithwaite, 2017). In 1993, researchers Fitzpatrick and Ritchie attempted to combine the two constructs, thereby formulating a theory called the Family Communication Patterns Theory.

Family Communication Patterns Theory

Both family and communication are constructs that are difficult to define. Therefore, researchers posit that a holistic understanding of family communication will need to consider both intersubjectivity and interactivity (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1993). Family Communication Patterns Theory takes a view of communication that is both cognitive and interpersonal. The theory grows out of mass media research, built on earlier work from cognitive psychology (Koerner and Fitzpatrick, 2006). Intersubjectivity talks about the sharing of cognitions among individuals participating in communication; whereas interactivity refers to the degree to which symbol creation and interpretation are linked. Koerner and Fitzpatrick (1995) developed a general model of interpersonal relationships and the effect of relational schemas on healthy communications. They further deduced the relational schemas into family relationship schemas to understand family communication patterns. These schemas contain declarative and procedural knowledge and interpersonal scripts that apply to all relationships with family members (Koerner and Fitzpatrick, 1995). The knowledge in family relationship schemas fall in different categories that thereby determine the communication orientation within and among the family members. Braithwaite et al. (2017) posits that the theory identifies basic processes of coming to a shared agreement that impact not only concurrent communication behaviours, but long-term information processing, psychosocial, and behavioural outcomes as well. Fitzpatrick and Ritchie (1994) have conceptualized conversation and conformity orientations in families as central beliefs that determine much of how families communicate.

Conversation orientation essentially occurs when families produce a climate in which all members of the family circle are inspired to participate in unrestrained interaction within and among family members. Families on the high finish of this dimension, members freely, frequently, and impromptu move with one another into forming a shared familial reality. All members have an equal voice and therefore, internalise the familial relationship based on the healthy communication and the perceived freedom to voice out opinions. Associated with conversation orientation is the belief that open and frequent communication is important to pleasing and content family life. The other vital belief relating to family communication is conformity orientation. It refers to the degree to that family communication stresses a climate of homogeneity of attitudes, values, and beliefs. Families are characterised by interactions that emphasize a uniformity of beliefs and attitudes. Family interactions usually target harmony, conflict turning away, and the reciprocity of members of the family. In intergenerational exchanges, communication in these families reflects obedience to folks and alternative adults. Associated with high conformity orientation is that the belief in what may be referred to as a standard family structure.

Table 1 Family types created by conversation and conformity orientation

	High Conversation	Low Conversation
High Conformity	Consensual	Protective
Low Conformity	Pluralistic	Laissez-faire

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The Theory also posits four types of families based on the levels of each of the communication orientation prevailing in the families (table 1). A high level of conversation and a low level of conformity results in a pluralistic family. Expectations are implied in a pluralistic family. Conversation is not for the sake of conformity; therefore, it allows open talk, without restrictions. This family has little, if any, negative feelings because of the non-existent pressure put on the children. Families with a low conversation and high conformity orientation to communication are characterised as Protective family. Protective families have high expectations for their children. They do not feel that they need to provide explanations as to why certain decisions are made. There is little conversation. This type of family has high levels of negative feelings and hostility due to lack of open communication. Families with a higher account of both conversation and conformity orientation to communication are characterised as consensual families. Although consensual families encourage their children to speak up, they are expected to agree and follow through with parent's wishes. Ultimately, the children's thoughts and opinions are discounted. Such families rely heavily on outside support. Children are stressed because of parent's expectations. Families with lower account of both conversation and conformity orientation to communication are characterised as Laissez-faire families. These families are pretty laid back. Parents allow children to make many of their own decisions, and they do not show much interest. Because of this, children don't feel like they are part of a family. Communication is minimal.

Existing research sheds little light on the family communication patterns of young adults in the context of the Indian familial systems and its impact on their behavioural and socio-cultural aspects. The theory is also a novel application for the Indian society. India being a collectivistic society bends more towards an order of higher conformity in family communication. However, with the changing times of globalisation and westernisation, the institution of family, the roles undertaken as well as the interpersonal interactions of members have been evolving. Therefore, it seems suited to begin the exploration of the perceived family communication patterns on young adults, who are developmentally predisposed to understand family communication patterns in the light of their own individuated understanding of the family dynamics.

Covid-19 lockdown in India

The covid-19 pandemic hit 213 countries around the globe with first outbreak in Wuhan, China. India witnessed a nationwide lockdown to battle the coronavirus. The lockdown in India had commenced on 25th March 2020 and has been on-going through the time period of the investigation of the present study. As the virus continues to spread across the world, it brings with it multiple new stresses, including physical and psychological health risks, isolation and loneliness, the closure of many schools and businesses, economic vulnerability and job losses (Jones and Isham, 2020). The lockdown may be an important strategy to break the chain of transmission. But it has also created boredom and monotony among office goers and children. In many households, children who end up staying indoors become restless and, in some cases, violent. Many households have even closed windows and doors due to wrong notions regarding the infection. The lockdown have been an unfamiliar and unprecedented circumstance for all human beings, alike. Various researchers and thinkers posit implications of the lockdown on the macro and micro economy, physical and mental health, socialisation as well as the over human psyche. It is the time where individuals spend maximum time with their family members. Therefore, the present study also attempted to explore the impact of lockdown on the family communication patterns.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

From the extensive review of literature, an in-depth understanding of the Family Communication Patterns theory and its impact on the various familial communications and interpersonal interactions has been obtained. The literature reviewed here give a comprehensive understanding of the existing trends of communication among family members and the different orientations to communication, the interpersonal interactions as well as role of socio-cultural factors.

Family Communication Pattern- conformity and conversation orientation

Jenn A. et al. in 2017 conducted a study titled, 'Family Size Decreases Conversation Orientation and Increases Conformity Orientation'. The aim of the study was to explore the relation between family size, depending on the number of siblings and the communication patterns within the family. Method of the study was a correlational survey. Sample consisted of 784 participants, with a mean age of 24.81 years. FCP was measured using the Revised Family Communication Pattern Instrument (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). Relational maintenance was measured using the relational maintenance scale (Stafford et al., 2000).

Demographics too were recorded to evaluate the number of siblings. Results indicate that number of siblings negatively predicted conversation orientation, but positively predicted conformity orientation. Also, conversation orientation positively predicted the use of all relational maintenance strategies; conformity orientation positively predicted all the relational maintenance strategies except positivity and conflict resolution. Therefore, family size impacts family communication patterns and the relational maintenance strategies.

Koerner and Fitzpatrick authored a study in 2016 that has been titled, 'Understanding Family Communication Patterns and Family Functioning: The Roles of Conversation Orientation and Conformity Orientation'. The study discusses theoretical and practical issues relating to the two dimensions, namely conversation orientation and conformity orientation and the family typology that is based on them. The study also discusses the instrument to measure family communication patterns, the Revised Family Communication Patterns instrument (RFCP), and evaluates research that links conversation orientation and conformity orientation and the resulting family types to different behavioural as well as psychosocial outcomes of family functioning in the areas of conflict and conflict resolution, speech act production, and the socialization of children. Results indicate that families high in conformity orientation (i.e., consensual and protective families) display more regulatory behaviours and less confirming behaviours than families low in conformity orientation (i.e., pluralistic and laissez-faire). Also, families high in conformity orientation also exhibit much less empathy and perspective taking than families low in conformity orientation. This finding indicates that family conformity does not imply intimacy or cohesion in families. Rather, conformity has clear coercive characteristics in most families. The fact that conversation orientation of families did not interact with conformity orientation in regard to these outcomes suggests that even in families where parents communicate with their children about their reasons for demanding conformity, conformity is nonetheless coercive in its expression and explanation alone does not aid the development of empathy. In other words, even rational justifications by parents for why they require their children's compliance with their decisions does not do much to change the coercive discourse associated with high conformity orientation.

Keating D.M. in 2016 conducted a meta-analysis on 'Conversation Orientation and Conformity Orientation Are Inversely Related'. Essentially, the study aims to understand

these constructs in their relation to a host of outcomes. The methodology of the present study was a random effects meta-analysis. In determining these orientations, researchers often acknowledge that the empirical relationship between the two constructs tends to be negative. The review assessed the magnitude of this negative relationship. The found that both, conformity and conversation orientation are inversely oriented, thus implying that the variables or moderating factors that relate to any one of the constructs is concurrently subject to its relation with the other construct. The study also considered the respondent type (i.e., child versus parent respondents) as being a moderator. The findings gave preliminary evidence that the relationship was weaker for parent respondents compared to child respondents.

In 2006, Koerner and Fitzpatrick conducted a study titled, 'Family Communication Patterns Theory: A Social Cognitive Approach'. This particular study traces the roots of FCPT as developed by mass media researchers McLeod and Chaffee (1972) and looks at its empirical and socio-cognitive relevance. The study holds the Family Communication Patterns Theory in the logical empirical paradigm owing to its causal explanation of why people communicate the way they do based on cognitive orientations in family relationships. The review acknowledges the study of family communication as the simultaneous interactions that occur both, at an intrapersonal and interpersonal level. Family Communication Patterns Theory recognizes that there is no universally ideal family type or ideal way of communicating within families. Rather, families create their own family communication environments, and behaviours have to be understood and evaluated based on the specific context that is unique to each family type. The review also concluded that the family types that stem from FCP model explains how different strategies that families use to create a shared social reality result in differences in the communication behaviour of families.

Another strength of the family typology-based communication patterns is that it is associated with a strong empirical measure of the underlying dimensions and the resulting family types. The 26-item RFCP is an easily administered questionnaire with robust psychometric properties (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002b). In conclusion, the FCP model borrows from research in cognition about family behavioural and communication patterns. Family communication schemata have the potential to provide an integrative framework not only for research on family communication patterns but also for other research on family communication behaviours, such as communication standards, attachment, and parenting styles.

Family Interaction Satisfaction

Baxter L.A. and Pederson J.R. in 2013 conducted a study on 'Perceived and Ideal Family Communication Patterns and Family Satisfaction for Parents and their College-Aged Children'. The study aimed to understand the gap between the perceived and ideal family communication patterns of college-going children. The study also measured the satisfaction of the participants with their families. A sample of 120 parent-child dyads participated in the study. The mean age of the children was 20 and the mean age of their parents was 51 years. The tools used were the revised Family Communication Patterns instrument (Ritchie and Fitzpatrick, 1991) in addition to a questionnaire made by the current investigators to measure of satisfaction with family Results indicated high correlations between perceived and ideal FCP measures for both parents and their children. The discrepancy scores were calculated by considering the absolute difference between the scores of both parent and child on each item. Parents reported higher scores than children did on perceived conversation orientation, ideal conversation orientation, and ideal conformity orientation. Children

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reported a higher gap between perceived and ideal conformity orientation, the result of a perceived excess of conformity orientation in the family. For both parents and children, unmet conversation ideals were largely the result of insufficient conversation orientation to meet desires. With statistical control, parent satisfaction was negatively predicted from the parent-child discrepancy on conversation orientation, and child satisfaction was negatively predicted from the parent-child discrepancy on conformity orientation.

Schrodt P. et al. in 2008 conducted a meta-analysis on 'Review of Family Communication Patterns and their Associations with Information Processing, Behavioural, and Psychosocial Outcomes'. 56 studies were reviewed and analysed in the current research. The aim was to examine the associations among family communication patterns, being conversation and conformity orientations with information-processing, behavioural, and psychosocial outcomes. When both conversation and conformity orientations are considered collectively, the cumulative evidence indicates a small, but meaningful relationship between family communication patterns and overall outcomes. The results of this meta-analysis suggest that family communication patterns have a meaningful association with a variety of cognitive activities and relational behaviours, as well as individual well-being.

Vieira E.T. in 2015 conducted a study on 'Family Communication Patterns, Sympathy, Perspective-Taking, and Girls' Thoughts about Interpersonal Violence'. Essentially the study hypothesised that sympathy and perspective taking will be moderated by factors about family communication patterns, family types as well as age of young girls. The study also looked for the thoughts about violence in interpersonal relationships as being mediated all these factors. Sample consisted of 253 girls ages 6–16 years. Mean age was 11.34 years. All girls were from different parts of America, Australia and Canada. An online questionnaire was filled by the participants. Tools used were the children's version of the Revised Family Communication Pattern instrument (Koerner and Fitzpatrick 2002b) to determine FCP as well as family types, the affective instrument (Vieira and Krcmar 2011; Vieira 2012) to assess sympathy and The Moral Interpretation of Interpersonal Violence (MIIV) scale (Krcmar and Valkenburg 1999) to measure the assessment of interpersonal violence. To assess Perspective taking, five hypothetical cognitive PT scenarios were adopted from Krcmar and Valkenburg (1999) requiring short openended responses and intercoder-reliability assessment. Analysis of Variance and confirmatory factor analysis were conducted on the obtained data. Using structural equation modeling, findings suggest that families where conversation communication plays a central role nurture abilities to sympathize and for perspective taking. Further, younger girls tend to be driven by sympathy, which shifts to perspective taking as they age. These abilities positively correlate with thoughts about interpersonal violence as wrong whether justified and independent of severity. Error correlations infer that, at some level, justified violence is acceptable and, to a lesser degree, the severity of the violence plays a role in moral reasoning about violence, thus suggesting complex thought.

FCP and Personality

Huang L.N. conducted a study in 2009 on, 'Family communication patterns and personality characteristics'. The aim of the study was to analyse and correlate individual's family communication patterns with their personality features such as self-esteem, self-disclosure, self-monitoring, desirability of control, social desirability, shyness, and sociability. A survey on a convenient sample of 196 individuals was conducted. Mean age of the sample was 21 years. Survey was conducted using the Revised Family Communication Patterns (Ritchie and Fitzpatrick, 1991) for FCP, Snyder (1974) tool for Self-Monitoring, Desirability of

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Control tool (Burger and Cooper, 1979), Social Desirability tool (Crowne and Marlowe, 1960), Self-Esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965), Self-Disclosure Index (Miller, Berg, and Archer's, 1983) and the Shyness And Sociability Scale (Cheek and Buss, 1981). A bivariate correlation analysis was first performed among the seven personality scales to provide a preliminary understanding of their interrelations. Correlations between the seven personality sales and the two FCP scales (conversation and conformity) were then examined to determine how the two dimensions of family communication patterns were related to the set of personality characteristics. Results showed that individuals from conversation-oriented families exhibited greater degrees of self-disclosure, desire for control, self-esteem, and sociability, whereas those from conformity-oriented families were more likely to be self-monitoring and shy and hold lower self-esteem.

Koerner and Fitzpatrick in 2014 studied 'Family Communication Schemata-Effects on Children's Resilience'. The aim of the study was to understand marital and couples communication patterns and how it develops to form parent-child communication patterns and resilience in children. The study uses a systematic review approach and compiles the learnings from the studies that explored the findings of the Relational Dimensions Inventory and the Family Communication Patterns Tool as factors affecting the formation of family communication schematas. The study argues that marital and parent-child communication expresses a common set of underlying ideas about the family. Findings reveal that marital communication and parent-child communication mutually influence one another and often occur in the same context. The study also reviewed research related to how the four family types relate to factors that help children to remain resilient in times of stress. The study explored children of different age and developmental levels from the four family types and found different outcomes regarding the social competence of children, the provision of parental caregiving, the solicitation of social support, and the development of problem solving skills. Families with schemata that support a conversation orientation (Consensual & Pluralistic) are more likely to have children resilient to stress. An open communication climate in the family allows the child and the adolescent to confide in the parents and to look to them as sources of information. Open communication is also related to less destructive conflict at both the family and marital level. An open communication climate in the family allows the child and the adolescent to confide in the parents and to look to them as sources of information. The pressure to conform in an open system (i.e., Traditional/ Consensual) appears to have no immediate negative effects on children. Children might have problems to constructively engage in conflict in interpersonal relationships in adulthood. The pressure to conform, however, in a closed system (i.e., Separate/ Protective system) has a number of immediate deleterious outcomes. Children may suffer from severe assaults on their self-esteem, high levels of verbal aggressiveness, little comforting, and little acceptance of their self-disclosures.

Attitudes towards Communication

Keaten J. and Kelly L. in 2008 conducted a study on 'Emotional Intelligence as a Mediator of Family Communication Patterns and Reticence'. The study tried to understand the relationship between family communication patterns, emotional intelligence and reticence. The investigators used the family communication patterns theory by Ritchie and Fitzpatrick (1990) and looked at how emotional intelligence and personality traits like reticence influence FCP. The aim was to understand if conversation orientation and conformity orientation interact to influence adult children's emotional intelligence. They also investigated if emotional intelligence mediates the associations among FCP and reticence.

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Sample included 296 Undergraduate volunteers who were recruited from a basic public speaking course at a midsized western university. The average age of participants was 19.4 years. The three scales used were (a) the Revised Communication Patterns Scale (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990), (b) the Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte et al., 1998), and (c) the Reticence Scale (Keaten, Kelly, & Finch, 1997). An analysis of partial correlations indicated that the relationship between conversation orientation and reticence was mediated by emotional intelligence. Family types with a higher degree of conversation orientation, regardless of degree of conformity orientation, raise children who have higher levels of emotional intelligence. On the contrary, in family types with higher level of conformity orientation, children perceive poor reflection of feelings, which thereby hinders emotional development. A hierarchical regression on emotional intelligence revealed a significant interaction between conversation orientation and conformity orientation. Findings also suggest that reticence and emotional intelligence are inversely related. That is, children from families of predominantly conversation orientation are seen to be high on EI and low of Reticence and the opposite is true for children from a conformity orientation of FCP.

Avtgis T.A. in 2009 conducted a study titled, 'The relationship between unwillingness to communicate and family communication patterns'. The aim of the study was to investigate the relationship between the general tendency to approach or avoid communicative situations and its relation with communication patterns within the family. The study hypothesised that people who are high in communication reward would seemingly report more independent exchange of ideas or conversation-oriented family communication patterns. Sample included 200 working adults, with a mean age of 32 years. They were asked to complete a questionnaire focusing on the general tendency to approach or avoid communication, degree to which they find communication rewarding, and their perceived patterns of family interaction. Tools used were the Unwillingness to Communicate Scale (Burgoon, 1976) and the Revised Family Communication Patterns Instrument (Ritchie and Fitzpatrick, 1991).

Results indicated that people reporting a tendency to see communication as rewarding reported having conversation oriented family interactions whereas people reporting the tendency for avoiding communication reported decreased conversation oriented family communication patterns. The study also revealed that conformity orientation was inversely correlated with the approach or avoidance towards communication.

Conversation Orientation and Conformity Orientation

Hesse C. et al. in 2017 conducted a conceptual study titled, 'Reconceptualising the Role of Conformity Behaviours in Family Communication Patterns Theory'. The study examines the construct of conformity, arguing that current conceptualizations of conformity put out the behaviour of compliance and conformity as largely a negative familial element.

“Conformity orientation is defined as the homogeneity (similarity) of values, attitudes, and beliefs between family members. Families with a higher conformity orientation also favour what’s good for the family as a unit over what benefits individual members”. The researchers argue that conformity orientation is essentially behaviour of warm conformity behaviour, where parents communicate their philosophies in ways that promote warmth and closeness rather than just adherence to hierarchy and rule. Results indicate that warm conformity was directly correlated with conversation orientation, family closeness, family satisfaction, cohesion, and adaptability, while cold conformity was inversely related with the said constructs. Findings also substantiate that warm conformity was directly correlated with

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conversation orientation, communication competence, both mother and father affection, relational satisfaction with both parents. Such a perspective does not add to the two dimensions of the theory, but rather speaks to the different ways in which parents might communicate the dimension of conformity to their child.

In 2012, a study was conducted by Hamon J.D. and Schrodt P. on 'Do Parenting Styles Moderate the Association between Family Conformity Orientation and Young Adults' Mental Well-Being?' The aim of the study is to investigate parenting styles being authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive as factors affecting the association between family conformity orientation and young adults' self-esteem and depression. Sample included 213 young adult children with 120 females and 93 males. The mean age of the participants was 19.34 years. Participants filled the Revised Family Communication Patterns instrument (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994) and the Parental Authority Questionnaire (Buri, 1991). To evaluate the mental well-being of the participants, the researchers also evaluated the self-esteem and depression scores in the sample. The tools used were Rosenberg's (1965) Self-Esteem Scale and the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (Radloff, 1977). Preliminary analyses substantiated an inverse association between family conformity and young adults' self-esteem, authoritative parenting and self-esteem; and a positive relationship between perceptions of mothers' permissiveness and young adults' depression. Hierarchical regression analyses provided no evidence to suggest that parenting styles moderate the association between family conformity orientation and young adults' self-esteem and depression. However, the results revealed small, but significant positive effects for both mothers' and fathers' authoritative parenting on young adults' self-esteem, as well as a positive main effect for family conformity on depression. Statistical estimate of covariance also suggested that pluralistic families had higher self-esteem and lower depression than young adults from protective, laissez faire, and consensual families.

Family Interaction Patterns

Fitzpatrick M.A and Ritchie L.A. in 1994 authored a study titled 'Communication Schemata within the Family Multiple Perspectives on Family Interaction'. The study has attempted to conceptually and empirically integrate dimensions from both Fitzpatrick's (1988) Relational Dimensions Inventory (RDI) and Ritchie's (1991) Revised Family Communication Patterns (RFCP) approach. Sample included 168 family triads, with father, mother and child. The scales of Revised Family Communication Patterns instrument (RFCP) described by Ritchie (1988; Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990) and a shortened nine-item version of the RDI, Relational Dimensions instrument were used. Systematic analysis of the data obtained was conducted using Pearson r for correlation. Statistical tools of t-test and MANOVA were conducted. Results from the present study yielded a measure of the Family Communication Environment (FCE) that would tap subgroups of individuals who hold different family communication schemata. From the study, there is evidence that when family members did share the same schema for family communication, they would also demonstrate agreement on a number of other dimensions of family life. As hypothesized, the size of the correlations between parent and child evaluations of the family structure as well as the level of cohesion were significantly larger in those families who shared a family communication schema than in those families who did not.

Barbato C.A. et al. in 2003 conducted a study titled 'Communicating in the Family: An Examination of the Relationship of Family Communication Climate and Interpersonal Communication Motives'. This article reports the findings of two studies designed to

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explore the role of family communication climate (FCC) on parent–child communication choices.

The aim was to define family communication climate (FCC), the development of family communication patterns and the impact of conformity and conversation orientation on the motives for communication. The first study explored how FCC as well as demographic factors such as age and gender of both parent and child affected the reasons why parents talk to their children. The second study explored the influence of parents and children's perceptions of FCC on the children's motives for communicating with others. In Study 1, a sample of 258 parents completed questionnaires with Revised Family Communication Patterns Scale (Ritchie and Fitzpatrick, 1990) assessing FCC and their interpersonal communication motives (ICM) for communicating with a target child, and demographics. In Study 2, a sample of 202 parent–child dyads completed questionnaires assessing FCC, ICM, and demographics. Results from these two studies led to the conclusion that FCC had a strong influence on the ICM of both parents and children. Differences in communication climate were linked to marked differences in parents' motives for talking with their children. It was also found that, as predicted, conversation-oriented families communicate with their off springs for relationally-oriented motives such as affection, pleasure and relaxation. In contrast, conformity-oriented families communicate with children for personal-influence motives such as control and escape as well as to show affection. This in turn impacted the children's communication patterns and their schemata influenced their motives for talking with others.

Sibling Interaction Patterns

Hall and McNallee studied 'The Mediating Role of Sibling Maintenance Behaviour Expectations and Perceptions in the Relationship between Family Communication Patterns and Relationship Satisfaction' in 2016. They posit that sibling interactions are influenced by both interpersonal relationships as well as family as a whole. The study aims to understand whether communicative relationship maintenance plays a role in the relationship between FCP and sibling relationship satisfaction. Sample included 327 adult siblings, spread across the ethnic and gender spectrum through America. Convenient sampling method was used.

Tools used were the Relationship Maintenance Strategy Measure (Canary & Stafford, 1992) and The Revised Family Communication Patterns (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). The results suggest that the parent-child relationship remains important long after children become adults as it continues to influence interpersonal relationships with others. Findings also state that siblings from high conversation-oriented families engage and exhibit more openness and positivity. These siblings would expect and perform a lot of maintenance behaviours based on the way they were trained to socialize and act with one another. Siblings from high conformity-oriented families, then, engaged in higher expectations for their siblings' maintenance behaviours, but exhibited low levels of maintenance behaviours.

Paul Schrodtt in 2016 conducted a study titled, 'Self-Disclosure and relational uncertainty as mediators of family communication patterns and relational outcome in sibling relationships'. This research tested the degree to which self-disclosure and relational uncertainty serially mediates the associations among family communication patterns (FCP). Family communication patterns of conversation and conformity orientations were considered. The study also considered the relational outcomes of closeness and satisfaction in the sibling relationship. Participants included 329 emerging adults with a mean age of 19.6 years. The participants completed online questionnaires. The tools used were the Revised Family

Communication Patterns scale (Ritchie, 1991) to evaluate communication orientation. The adapted version of Wheelless's (1978) Revised Self-Disclosure Scale (RSDS) was used to assess self-disclosure. Three distinct indirect effects emerged for conversation orientation on both relational outcomes through self-disclosure, relational uncertainty, and disclosure to uncertainty paths, respectively. Likewise, conformity orientation produced indirect effects on both outcomes through self-disclosure and disclosure to uncertainty, as well as a direct, negative effect on sibling satisfaction. These indirect effects were analysed using post-hoc analysis, which proved that the effects are significant. Collectively, the results support FCP theory and extend an understanding of how family communication environments enhance (or inhibit) emerging adults' sibling relationships.

Samek D.R. and Rueter M.A. conducted a study on 'Associations between Family Communication Patterns, Sibling Closeness, and Adoptive Status' in 2011. The study was based on Family communication patterns theory that suggested that to function optimally, families create a family shared social reality. Families create a shared reality using a combination of two orientations, conversation and conformity (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2006); leading to consensual families, protective families, pluralistic families and Laissez-Faire families. In addition there is evidence that FCPT communication patterns are associated with interpersonal closeness (Ledbetter, 2009). Therefore, the present study aimed at anticipating sibling closeness. The moderating effect of adoptive status is expected to be due to different associations between pluralistic and protective families and sibling closeness. Specifically, we expect that adopted siblings in pluralistic families will report greater closeness than adopted siblings in protective families. Sample included 616 adoptive and non-adoptive families with two adolescent children. Hypotheses were tested using structural equation modelling. Results suggest that sibling closeness was highest in families that emphasized both conversation and conformity and lowest in families that emphasized only conversation or neither conversation nor conformity. The findings also predict that emotional and behavioural closeness was differentially associated with adoption status, sibling age, and sibling gender. A post-hoc analysis of sibling closeness suggests that for younger sisters, the combination of conversation and conformity orientations were particularly important for increased emotional closeness. In contrast, for younger brothers, an emphasis of either conversation orientation or conformity orientation or the combination of those two orientations were sufficient for increased emotional closeness. Interestingly, conformity alone was sufficient for increased behavioural closeness for younger brothers.

Family Type and Conflict Patterns

Another study was conducted by Koerner & Fitzpatrick in 1997 titled 'Family type and conflict: The impact of conversation orientation and conformity orientation on conflict in the family investigating the links between family types and conflict'. The study aimed to understand how adult children of different family types communicate during conflict in their romantic relationships. Participants were 260 undergraduate students who, at the time of the study, were independently involved in a dating or marital relationship. The mean age of the 156 female and 104 male participants was 21.5 (range 18–32 years). Participants responded to questionnaires containing the RFCP and Communications Patterns Questionnaire (CPQ) by Christensen and Sullaway's (1984). The data thus obtained was evaluated using multiple linear regression and MANOVA. Results showed that participants originating from consensual families, which are high in both conformity orientation and conversation orientation, reported less mutually positive behaviours, more complementary behaviours, more aggressive behaviours and less conflict avoidance in their conflicts with their romantic partners than participants originating from protective families, which are high in conformity

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orientation but low in conversation orientation. Similarly, participants originating from pluralistic families, which are low in conformity orientation but high in conversation orientation, had more mutually positive behaviours, less complementary behaviours, less aggressive behaviours, and less conflict avoidance in their conflicts with their romantic partners than participants originating from laissez-faire families, which are low in conformity orientation and low in conversation orientation.

Zhang Qin in 2007 conducted a study titled, 'Family Communication Patterns and Conflict Styles in Chinese Parent-Child Relationships'. The study aimed at understanding Chinese family communication patterns, their impact on children's conflict styles. The study also looked at the children's perceptions of parent-child relationship satisfaction. From an emic perspective of the Chinese culture, the Confucian notions of hexie (harmony) and mianzi (face) are among the main determinants of Chinese communication patterns and conflict styles. A Sample of 340 students with 123 male and 217 female participated in the study. Mean age of the participants were 19.22 years. Tools used were the Revised Family Communication Pattern Instrument (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990), the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (Rahim, 1983) and a specifically created item for tapping parent-child relationships in the form of a questionnaire. The study found that Chinese family communication patterns are more conversation-oriented than conformity-oriented, and the collaborating and accommodating styles are the children's most preferred and the competing style the least preferred. The children from families with conversation-oriented families are most likely to use the collaborating style but unlikely to use the avoiding style, whereas the children from conformity-oriented families are most likely to use the competing style but unlikely to use the collaborating style. The finding also indicated that children are more satisfied with the conversation orientation than with the conformity orientation and with the collaborating, compromising, and accommodating styles than with competing and avoiding styles in parent-child relationships.

Dumlao R. and Botta R. in 2000 studied, 'Family Communication Patterns and the Conflict Styles of Young Adults Use with Their Fathers'. The study aimed to understand conflict styles as influenced by family communication patterns. Researchers consistently assert that conflict behaviours are likely to begin at an early age and that learned patterns may carry into later life. The study tested the possibility that family communication environments establish relational schemata that steer individuals toward different cognitive foci and different interpretations about conflicts. The study used a survey approach with 211 undergraduate students. The participants' age ranged from about 18-22 years old. The Revised Family Communication Patterns (Ritchie and Fitzpatrick, 1991) instrument was used to tap young adults' ideas about how they typically communicate with their fathers. Questions were modified such as to respond with respect to communication with fathers. In addition, a modification of Rahim's Organization Conflict Inventory (ROCI- II) measured participants' ideas about how they communicate in conflicts, with their fathers. Findings support the hypotheses of the study. Individuals with a laissez-faire father, most likely have a conflict style with their father that does not accommodate, does not collaborate, and somewhat does not confront. Individuals with a protective father avoid conflict with their father, and they accommodate and do not collaborate. Individuals with a pluralistic father, who does not promote conformity but promotes conversation are most likely collaborate with their father rather than avoid conflict. Individuals with a consensual father, who promotes conformity and conversation, collaborate with their fathers and accommodate to a lesser extent. Results show that family communication patterns between fathers and their

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young adult children were linked to conflict styles that college students reportedly use with their fathers.

Koerner and Fitzpatrick in 2014 conducted a study titled, 'You never leave your family in a fight: The impact of family of origin on conflict-behaviour in romantic relationship'. The aim of the study was to investigate the influence of communication patterns of families of origin on conflict behaviours of adult children in their romantic relationships. Based on self-reports of 260 participants, differences in conflict behaviours were observed for persons stemming from consensual, pluralistic, protective, and laissez-faire families. The differences involved mutually positive and mutually negative behaviours, as well as in the complementary behaviours of avoiding, threatening, and resisting. These results support hypotheses predicting a socializing influence of the family's communication patterns on adult children's communication in subsequent romantic relationships. In addition, by associating the different family types with different socialization outcomes, this study further demonstrates the importance of assessing family types in investigations of family communication and of interpersonal conflict.

FCP and Culture

Shearman S.M. and Dumlao Rebecca in 2008 conducted a study on 'A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Family Communication Patterns and Conflict Between Young Adults and Parents'. The cross-cultural comparison was conducted among families from Japan and United States. Communication and conflict between adolescents and their parents often involves renegotiating rules, roles and relationships concerning day-to-day issues like activities, friends, responsibilities, and school (Laursen, 1995). Based on existing literature about family communication patterns and conflict patterns, it is evident that children from families with high conformity tend to avoid conflict; high conversation-oriented family members are not likely to avoid conflict. Further research examined individualism and collectivism and the compared the communication styles, conflict patterns, as well as communication satisfaction. Present study examines possible associations between culture and family communication patterns through the perceptions of young adults in the United States and Japan. Sample included a total of 304 undergraduate students in the United States (n=173) and in Japan (n=131). The mean age of the sample was 19.9 years with approximately equal representation both, male and female genders were included. Data was collected using a survey method. The survey included the Ritchie and Fitzpatrick (1990)'s 26-item revised family communication pattern scales, the Rahim's (1983) 25-item measure of conflict styles, and a 5-item semantic differential family communication satisfaction measure. Results showed that the consensual family type was most common in the United States, while the laissez-faire family type was most common in Japan. Across cultures, high conversation orientation was associated with the young adult's preference for integrating and compromising strategies in conflict with their parents, while high conformity orientation was associated with avoiding and obliging strategies. A strong positive correlation between conversation orientation and communication satisfaction was observed for both countries, while a strong negative correlation between conformity orientation and communication satisfaction was found for Americans.

Guan X. and Li X. in 2017 conducted a cross-cultural study titled, 'Examination of Family Communication Patterns, Parent-Child Closeness, and Conflict Styles in the United States, China, and Saudi Arabia'. The study examined the impacts of family communication patterns (FCP), relational closeness, as well as the influence of culture on adult children's conflict styles with their parents. A survey method was used for the study. Sample included

594 participants from the United States, China, and Saudi Arabia. Participants included those who were attending college and those who were not. They completed self-report questionnaires where the instruments of Revised Family Communication Pattern (Ritchie and Fitzpatrick, 1991), Subjective Closeness Index (Perry, Cavanaugh, Dunbar, & Leerkes, 2015) and Rahim's (1983) Organizational Conflict Inventory—II. The questionnaire was translated to Arabic and Chinese languages. The results show that conversation orientation is a positive predictor of collaboration and compromise as conflict styles whereas conformity orientation is a positive predictor of accommodation and avoidance, and relational closeness is a negative predictor of dominance across cultures. Relational closeness also interacts with conversation orientation to influence dominance. The cross-cultural invariance provides empirical evidence of the universal application of FCP in family conflict communication. More importantly, significant interactions between culture and conformity orientation and closeness show that culture's influence on family communication is better understood through indirect rather than direct roles.

Cyril S. et al. in 2016 conducted a study on 'Relationship between body mass index and family functioning, family communication, family type and parenting style among African migrant parents and children in Victoria, Australia: a parent-child dyad study'. The aim of this study was to investigate childhood obesity and examine the difference between children and parental perception of family functioning, family communication, family type and parenting styles and their relationship with body mass index. Although childhood obesity incidence is stabilised in developed countries including Australia, it is still a burning problem among migrants and socially disadvantaged groups in these countries. African migrants and refugees in particular, are at high risk of obesity due to changes in their family dynamics. A cross-sectional parent-child dyad study was conducted among 284 African families from migrant and refugee backgrounds. The children in these dyads were aged between 12-17 years. All the participants were residents of metropolitan Melbourne, Australia. Bilingual workers were trained to collect demographic details including ethnic race information and questionnaire data on family functioning, parenting, family type and family communication. The tools used were the Revised Family Communication Pattern (Ritchie and Fitzpatrick, 1991) to assess communication patterns. A single item developed by Radziszewska et al. [41] was used to quote the parenting style among both parents and children, based on the authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and unengaged types. Results reveal that both parents and children reported different levels of family dynamics. Children reported a higher prevalence of poor family functioning and protective family type but a lower prevalence of authoritative parenting style than parents. There was a positive relationship between poor family functioning and child BMI both before and after controlling for confounders, and an inverse relationship between consensual family type and child BMI after adjustment. There was no significant relationship between parental BMI and family functioning, communication, family type or parenting style.

FCP and Gender Differences

McNaughton J. in 2000 studied, 'Gender Differences in Parent Child Communication Patterns'. The aim of the study was to explore differences in the ways that males and females communicate. The study also looked at the possible reasons for these differences. One possible reason that was explored in depth is differences in the ways parents communicate with sons versus daughters. A total sample of 101 participants, with 48 males and 53 females. The communication patterns of conversation orientation and conformity orientation were measured using the Revised Family Communication Pattern Instrument (Ritchie and Fitzpatrick, 1991). Results indicated that no significant difference was found

between the average responses between females and males on either scale. Thus, total data does not support the hypothesis that females will have more agreement to the conversation orientation than males and less agreement with the conformity orientation than males. Significant differences were found, however, in the responses of males and females to some of the items. The items that showed significant difference were those that correspond with the research stating that parents communicate more openly with daughters than with sons, as well as items that revealed the increased level of protectiveness that parents have towards their daughters.

Bakir A., Rose G.M. and Shoham in 2008 conducted a study on 'Mothers' and Fathers' Communication Style and Children's Perceived Influence in Family Decision Making'. The study aims to understand the perceived influence of four types of family communication patterns on family decision making among children. Decision making on purchase was evaluated for three types of products. The study also explored communication differences between Israeli mothers and fathers. The study conducted was on parents on children between the age range of 8-12 years. A total sample of 117 parents, roughly equated between numbers of fathers and mothers completed the questionnaire. Mean age of participants were clustered as 31-36 years, 36-40 years and 41-45 years. Family communication patterns and family types were determined using the Moschis, Moore, and Smith's (1984) scale for Parental Style and Consumer Socialisation of Children. This scale is found to have high construct validity with RFCP instrument, thus determining conversation and conformity orientation as well as the four family types. The Child's perceived influence on purchase was measured on three types of products being durable, non-durable, and children's products. A MANOVA was conducted with mothers' or fathers' perceived influence of their children for durables, non-durables, and children's products as the dependent variables and family communication pattern as the independent variable.

Perceived product importance had an impact on child's perceived influence among family communication patterns. Furthermore, gender differences among family communication patterns were also found such that mothers were found to be more nurturing, warm and expressive indicating conversation orientation, whilst fathers tend to be more protective, dominant and authoritarian in nature, owing to a higher conformity orientation. All these gender differences are in line with previous research and expected traditional roles.

Parent-Child Interaction Patterns

Dunleavy K.N. et al. conducted a study titled 'Daughters' Perceptions of Communication with Their Fathers: The Role of Skill Similarity and Co-Orientation in Relationship Satisfaction' in 2011. The study aims to understand the impact of communication skills and family communication patterns on father-daughter relationship satisfaction. Specifically, the study examines father daughter communication skill similarity, co-orientation, and family type in relation to daughters' relationship satisfaction. Participants for the present study included 186 female undergraduate students. The average age of the participants was 20.39 years. Demographically, the participants varied in terms of nativity, family of origin, etc. A survey method was used to collect data. Scale for interpersonal communication competence (Rubin and Martin; 1994) was used to assess communication skills discrepancy. Revised Family Communication Pattern (RFCP) by Ritchie and Fritzpatrick was used to assess co-orientation through communication patterns. Results suggest that perceived similarity was related to relational satisfaction and quantity of communication. In addition, the communication similarity and relationship satisfaction within the father-daughter bond differed depending on the family type.

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Punyanunt in 2008 investigated, 'Father-Daughter Relationships: Examining Family Communication Patterns and Interpersonal Communication Satisfaction'. The study investigated how college-aged daughters' perception of family communication patterns between themselves and their fathers influence the fathers' and daughters' interpersonal communication satisfaction with each other. Sample included 207 father daughter dyads. The mean age of the daughters was 20.8 years and the mean age of fathers is 49.2 years. The tools used were the Revised Family Communication Patterns instrument (Ritchie and Fitzpatrick, 1991) and the Interpersonal Communication Satisfaction Inventory (Com-Sat) developed by Hecht (1978). Both the scales were individually filled in by both, daughter and father. Results revealed that conversation but not conformity orientation was associated with both daughters' and fathers' communication satisfaction. The results of this study is relevant in the light of providing an in-depth understanding of the ways to improve interpersonal communication patterns between fathers and daughters.

Young S.L. in 2009 conducted a study on 'The Function of Parental Communication Patterns: Reflection-Enhancing and Reflection-Discouraging Approaches'. The theory aimed to combine multiple models of parental communication patterns to examine the extent to which different methods of parental communication help foster adult children's confidence in their functional competencies. A sample of 215 university students (134 women and 81 men) participated in the study. The mean age of the participants was 22 years and they were from different parts of Europe and America. The tools used were the Revised Family Communication Patterns Model (Ritchie and Fitzpatrick, 1990) to assess conversation and conformity orientation to family communication pattern. Parents' perceived reflection- enhancing communication also was measured by asking participants to rate their parents' emotion-coaching behaviours. Reflection discouraging patterns by parents were also assessed using a 12-item scale created and face validated by experts. Participants' perceived communication competence was assessed using Wiemann's (1977) Communication Competence scale. The method of Canonical Correlation was used since it is the appropriate method of analysis when the aim is to investigate the relationship between two sets of conceptually related variables to define which set of independent variables is more closely associated with which set of dependent variables. The findings revealed that person-centered parental strategies (e.g., conversation orientation and emotion coaching) were positively linked. The position-centered parenting technique of emotion dismissing was negatively associated with adult children's perceived development of specific social competencies. In summary, people's perceptions of their parents' communication seem to have long-lasting implications on individuals' own levels of perceived healthy interpersonal relations.

Schrodt P. et al. in 2009 conducted a study titled, 'Family communication patterns as mediators of communication competence in the parent-child relationship'. The aim of the study was to understand communication proficiency within the parent-child relation and its impact on developing FCP, being conversation and conformity orientations to communication. Participants included 417 young adult children from the United States. The participants reported that both of their parents were living and had been married an average of 25.7 years. Young adults' communication competence and perceptions of their parents' competence were operationalized using Guerrero's (1994) instrument. The Revised Family Communication Patterns (RFCP) instrument (Ritchie and Fitzpatrick, 1991). Although measurement invariance was established for both sons and daughters, separate models were tested to account for significant differences in correlations between both groups. For daughters, the association between perceptions of parents' communication competence and

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their own competence was fully mediated by conversation orientations. For sons, conversation orientations only partially mediated the effects of parental communication competence. Conformity orientations did not emerge as a significant predictor of young adults' competence, although perceptions of mothers' competence were an inverse predictor of family conformity.

To sum up, existing literature details parent-child interaction patterns, cultural norms and perceived gender roles as mediating factors for communication competencies with adults' interpersonal relations, conflict resolution patterns and health related conversations. Personality factors too, influence the manifestation of conversation orientation and conformity orientation among family members within the family. Although there are considerable studies in the eastern cultures like China, Japan, Saudi Arabia and Israel, the present literature pool does not illustrate any study conducted and investigated in India. The Indian subcontinent homes diverse communities based on ethnic and racial differences.

Therefore, the existing review of literature indicates a lack of studies that considers the diversity of the Indian society, thereby implying the scope and need for the same. In addition, the institution of family is consistently undergoing a transition, both structurally and functionally. Family communication studies need to incorporate the dynamics of the family structure and function, and its influence in investigating communication patterns. Therefore, the present study attempts to understand the perceived family communication patterns of young adults in India and in addition, explore the impact of Covid-19 lockdown on the same.

METHODOLOGY

Research Question

- What are the Family Communication patterns of young adults in India?
- How has the Covid 19 lockdown impacted communication patterns?

Paradigm for research

The present study was conducted under the purview of the paradigm of ethnomethodology. According to Coulon (1995), ethnomethodology is a research paradigm that systematically examines the everyday interactions between people. It refers to the methods people use to make sense of the world around them.

Settings

Participants were also informed about the objective of the study prior to the interview. Telephonic interviews were conducted for the present study due to the nationwide lockdown over Covid-19. The participants preferred time and date of convenience was set prior to the interview slot.

Population and Participants

The present study investigates the family communication patterns on young adults in India. From a developmental perspective, this is an age-band between 18-35 years old (Papalia, 2007). Young Adulthood is the time beyond adolescence to the novel obligations and roles of adulthood including career prospects, marriage and parenthood. Young adults are identifying who they're and what they need out of work, family and marriage. It is also a time of immense instability and self-focus (Arnett, 1995). They perceive greater freedom of the parent- and society-directed recurring of faculty; young people attempt to decide what they need to do, where they need to go and who they want to be with.

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A sample of 10 participants volunteered for the study. The participants of the present study were individuals between the age band of 23-27 years. Purposive sampling method was used to contact participants. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling that is widely used in qualitative research. It involves the researcher's own judgement when choosing the members of the population to participate in the study (Bryman, 2012). The participants included 6 women and 4 men, thus attempting for fairly equal representation of the two genders. The inclusion criteria maintained for the research were-

- The individuals should have been currently staying with their first-degree family members for at least 2 years.
- Individuals with heterosexual parents and at least one sibling, all living together were chosen for the study
- Individuals were chosen from urban areas to maintain uniformity.
- Individuals with a 'single' marital status were chosen in order to understand the direct communication patterns with parents and siblings.
- The exclusion criteria maintained were:
- Individuals who have been a single child were excluded to maintain uniformity
- Individuals who were adopted, orphaned, coming from families of homosexual parents, single parent households and divorced/separated parents' households were excluded in the present study in order to maintain uniformity.

Data Sources and Collection Process

Semi-structured interview was conducted with the participants for the purpose of data collection. Based on the criteria for sampling mentioned above, a list of 40 individuals was created and each of them was contacted via email providing a brief about the study and the ethics of the research process. The first 10 individuals who responded to the mail accepting the request were then chosen as participants for the research. The participants were further detailed about the objectives of the research, the code of ethics followed and the interview process. Consent was obtained from each participant for the participation in the interview and to audio record the same.

Data Coding

The audio files which were obtained from the interview through the digital recorders were then transcribed. A code is a word or short phrase that suggests how the related components of data inform the research objectives. Significant data were extracted from the transcribed format and cumulated in a Microsoft excel file. These data extracts were then coded using significant components from the transcription. Codes were created based on prior knowledge of the family communication patterns theory and the existing literature.

Some newer codes also emerged from the data that were worded acknowledging the participants' narratives.

Data Analysis Strategy

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the obtained data. The transcribed data was then coded to generate sub-themes, which were analysed to arrive at a parent theme. The sub-themes were identified through analysis of the prominence in the participants' responses, after which the major themes was identified.

Ethics: Participants were informed about the objective of the study. Consent was obtained from the participants for the interview and audio recording of the same. The participants were assured that the data obtained will be used only for academic and research purposes.

FINDINGS

The present study investigated the family communication patterns of young adults in the Indian society. Participants were all between the age range of 23-27 years and the participants included 6 females and 4 males. All participants lived with their family members that included both parents and one or more siblings. 3 of the participants lived in a joint family, with grandmother/sister-in-law. The socio-economic status of the participants ranged from middle-class to upper class and all of them reported to adhere to familial religious practices. Five participants were university students, while remaining five were working.

The family communication patterns theory describes two major orientations to communication that family member's exhibit, thereby creating a shared social reality. The conversation orientation posits an unrestrained, free and impromptu communication among family members where equal voice and the perceived freedom to express opinions are fundamental to experience content within the family. On the contrary, conformity orientation seeks out a standard family type typically exhibited by the homogeneity and uniformity of attitudes, beliefs and values, turning away conflicts, harmony in interactions and practicing of hierarchical obedience in a multi-generational setup (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 2002)

The present study explored the family communication patterns of young adults in India and also investigated the impact of the nationwide lockdown due to Covid-19 pandemic on the communication processes of participants. The participants interviewed for the present study were all located in metropolitan cities of India and were all second generation university students/ pass-outs. This implied that all participants belonged to families with educated and employed parents and other family members. The qualitative data was analysed and interpreted using coding and Thematic Analysis, under the ethnomethodology paradigm. It was found that for all the participants, conformity orientation to family communication patterns were high. On the contrary, conversation orientation seemed to vary in each case.

Therefore, the family type of these participants can be understood to be on a continuum from protective to consensual families (Table 1).

Interpersonal Family Communication Patterns

These patterns layout the common trends in how individuals communicate and associate with their first degree family members, being father, mother, brother and/or sister. The interpersonal communication patterns exhibited by the participants were in line with the existing literature. The most common patterns unveiled are the distinguishing communication patterns with the paternal and maternal figures.

Communication with mother. All the 10 participants reported comfortable and open communication with mother. Communication with the mother was mostly described as being, 'open and warm'. Participants reported that they perceived greater level of comfort and emotional intimacy from the mother viz other family members. Some of the data excerpts that substantiate this understanding are as follows:

"With my mother, ya we have daily conversations and lengthy conversations. She believes me to be her good friend and me likewise. So, we are comfortable to talk casually and openly about anything and everything. So ya, I am her first person to talk mostly".

"With my mother it is more about how I feel, basically my emotions. I can openly express how I feel. But sometimes, there is this question of how much should I tell her because

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sometimes, she gets worried. I can talk to her when I am sad or happy or even when confused”

“I talk more with my mother more, like in general”.

“With my mother, it's like she is my weakness I can't take anything against her. She is also my go-to person. I respect her maternal position and age and all, but still we can be like friends many a times”.

“My communication level is quite honest and frank with my mother. Like, it is not like a parent child relation. Our interactions are friend-like. Like there are no formal filters before talking, we share almost everything with each other”.

“I do not really communicate the sensitive topics to my family members, other than my mother. Only to my mother. I shared these topics. And sometimes I do not need her opinion. I just want her to listen so I made sure that I tell her that I only want you to listen to this, because I want to share it with someone”

“Uhh...not with my father about personal issues, but I sometimes share with my mother”

R3 reported that albeit her inhibitions to open conversations with family members, she shares some personal aspects owing to the mother taking keen interest in her life and the shared familial tasks.

“I think that if I share my sensitive topics or things from my personal life, it is only with my mother. And that is mostly because my mother is around me most of the time. She always takes an interest in my life and she sits with me or with the family members, and she takes an interest in all of our lives. She and I engage in work together like we do gardening or cooking or something like that. So eventually, there is more conversation between me and my mother”.

R5 reported that although her mother manifested a strict and disciplined demeanour, it was easier to communicate with her due to her nurturing and problem-solving capacities.

“My mom as I told you no matter how strict she was it was always easier to communicate with her because she always made sure that it wasn't difficult. Even if I know there's something that is so sensitive that she'll shout, she's going to yell, punish because that is wrong, at the end of the day I know I have to tell her because she is the one who will get me out of it”.

Communication with father. Participants also showed a common trend in the patterns of communication with the father. The communications were cordial, need based and specific.

“With my father, mostly when I speak I talk about the decisions that I make. Uh...or any problems that I feel that I can't handle, And when I feel that I need the support from my father. Or if I am in a crisis situation...like that and all I will speak to my father”

“With my father, it is mostly about career...like what all I need to do, what I should do, and related to finances maybe”.

“As far as dad is concerned I think all the practical and financial aspects, news and everyday life, current topics and all we discuss together because dad is more into it”

“With my father, it is mostly work related. Like if I need him for something we talk. It is very specific with him”.

Three participants also reported that the perceived lack of openness from the father caters to the superficial communication patterns. This pattern was reported to emerge out of the perceived gender and familial roles exhibited by the father.

“Like when we have something to tell, like, Did someone come home? Or did something happen at home or something like that? Then, very casually in the moment, we just share

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that piece of information and we pass off. Otherwise, we don't really talk about things. But in terms of communication, he doesn't really show that interest in communication or you know, in giving that platform to talk in the family”

“When it comes to dad we are not so interactive, like he is not very interactive with me because he talks a lot to mom”.

“And dad, initially he was working...so I only had mom to talk to. And while he was working he would come back late and only then we'd talk. Right now, he has retired. But still, I talk more with my mom”.

“With my father, I share a close rapport and all but I don't perceive a father authority from his side, mostly because he was mostly unavailable to us in my childhood years. So I am comfortable with him, but not attached with him”.

“Regarding my father, I think he tries to protect me and my brother a little too much so he tries to avoid giving us too many things to think about and end up worrying. So he does not talk much or open up a lot of discussions with me”.

The male participants showed a common trend reporting that although they did not share serious matters with their fathers, they were able to communicate more openly and engaged in frequent impromptu conversations.

“dad and I have lesser arguments. Like many a times, we have similar views”.

“Dad was always there like a normal friend so you can go and tell dad if you want to go to a picnic rather than mom. So that's how it was”.

“If it's with my father then, we are comfortable with casual conversations and disagreements also. Like I can even argue, because he may try to understand”

“Even with my father, regarding sharing something to him I think I am pretty comfortable with him and he is also comfortable with me”.

Four out of the six participants also reported to perceive instilled patriarchal values in the family that impacted the father-daughter communication patterns.

“like my father is a kind of person who is quite rigid about the moral values and all that needs to be followed and he brings them up in the family when any decision is made or when we have any differences of opinions”.

“If I upset my parents, I can openly with my mom but I don't think I can do that with my father...like I try but I think he gets very annoyed when I ask him. So I kind of wait for things to cool down and then I ask him what is on his mind. And sometimes, if the situation is very weird it becomes difficult for either of us to accept the other opinion. So then, we just don't talk about nor address it. We just let it go and we just leave it to see what happens”.

“But in terms of communication, father doesn't really show that interest in communication or you know, in giving that platform to talk in the family. So I also have not really found that level of comfort to share personal stuff with him or you know, to talk about anything and everything with him”.

“My father is usually rigid and set in his ways. He usually takes the final decision for the family and we are expected to conform. So I also have not really found that level of comfort to share personal stuff with him or you know, to talk about anything and everything with him”.

“My father is mostly to himself, he, he's very, you know, he keeps himself you know, like he's a little I won't say disengaged, but he's quite reserved that way. He doesn't really talk a lot or sit with the children and talk in a family or anything unless he has to tell us about any family decision or something like that. Like that he is usually a private person. So, I had never grown up, you know, talking to him or sharing anything with him, but he's

always there like as a protective figure, he's always there when I need something he's always there”.

Communication with siblings. While examining the interpersonal communication patterns with siblings, participants reported mixed patterns. Participants with sisters reported a perceived maternal attachment with them, thereby developing a warm and unrestrained communication with sisters.

“So I had more connection with my second sister because she was less like a sister and more like a mother figure for me. Because I would share everything with her and anything I want and I don't get from my mother I have to tell her, I have to butter her and She'll go and tell mom”.

“With almost all discussions, I think my mother and sister are also very open and considerate and open”.

“With my sister, I share whatever I think is important. Like there is no filter”. “With my sister I am a bit more close”.

“With my sister, the topics are same, and in addition we also share our feelings and emotions and all that, without censoring”.

“with my sister I am I am super chill, we make fun of each other and we are very comfortable with each other”.

Participants with brothers reported frequent unrestrained communication albeit perceived patriarchal interactions and values of the family created some distance in communication.

“Me and my brother are very interested like we used to share all our secrets with each other and we would do a lot of fun stuff, like we were very close. But now that he got married, he has his own family and other responsibilities to look after. So, it has decreased over time”

“With my elder brothers, communication is quite informal and friend-like. We talk openly and comfortably. Some patriarchal boundaries are maintained obviously, but still we talk very comfortably”.

Delving further into the data, a comprehensive and novel understanding about the communication patterns of Indian young adults have been unveiled. It was found that the participants have internalised their family values to be inclined towards conformity and harmony in interaction while their process of individuation demands freedom to voice out opinions and be treated acknowledged of their perspectives and choices. This unique characteristic of the participants posed a friction between the aspects of conformity and the need for conversation orientation to family communication. Thus, it was found that the participants engaged in communication patterns that addressed the prevailing circumstances of family reality.

Although the interpersonal family communication patterns are in line with the existing knowledge, another significant theme that emerged was that participants' family communication patterns seemed to be intermediary patterns of communication between conversation and conformity orientation. It was found that the family dynamics, familial beliefs and traditions, perceived emotional connect with family members and the perceived individuality of self all play a role in shaping the communication patterns of these individuals. Therefore, these communication patterns evolved as a result of coping with the increased prominence for conformity in the family types. These intermediary orientations to communication are the core themes emerging from the present study. They are as follows:

Assertive communication

While the term assertive communication is not a first-hand expression; it is novel in the realm of family communication research. Assertive communication is an aptitude to express positive and negative ideas and feelings in an open, unrestricted and honest way. It recognises and validates the individuals' perspectives and opinions whilst respecting the values and beliefs of other family members. It also allows individuals to take responsibility for oneself and the subsequent actions without judging or blaming their significant others and primary care givers.

Empathetic communication

Empathetic Communication can be understood as an attempt to evaluate oneself and the other person's words and deeds and its impact on the interpersonal communication patterns. Empathetic communication facilitates a communication of understanding and mindfulness. Individuals are able to accommodate the nuances of family values and the latent roots of the existing familial communication patterns. This enables them to transcend above the self and comprehend interpersonal communication with family members as being a platform to convey familial values and subjective experiences.

Detached communication

The term has been coined to understand the participants' restrained and inhibited communication patterns with their family members. Detached communication is essentially disconnecting from the family members due to the lacking scope of open conversation and unmet conversation ideals. It is characterised of reduced self-disclosure and shallow communication showcased by the participants to maintain the homeostasis of the family dynamics while not losing their individuality to stereotyped familial conventions.

Delving further into the data, an in-depth understanding about the themes has been obtained. The sub-themes emerged and the characteristic features of the communication patterns are as detailed below.

Assertive Communication

Assertive communication pattern was exhibited by all the 10 participants who responded in the present study. Participants reported to understand the difference between aggression and assertiveness, thereby choosing the latter. They reported that developing an assertive communication pattern is a result of years of habituation with the family dynamics and its laid-in fundamental ideologies. It is a product of personal growth and awareness that conforming to pre-existing social and familial norms without catering to rational thinking and subjective preferences is a life less lived. Assertive communication patterns were evidently seen in aspects of decision making specially topics and conversations regarding individuals' sexual preferences, career choices, views on social issues like patriarchy, feminism, etc. as well as national and regional politics. Some of the excerpts that verify this pattern are as follows:

"I just say out whatever I feel like saying. Because, I feel like in our family, we four have different opinions, different perspectives. And it is so hard for me, like It is so hard for me to go along with their perspectives. So, from childhood itself, I am okay with disagreements. I have learnt like how to go about, that is I make my statement and how I feel about something".

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“Umm...I just say mine, they just say their opinions. we agree to disagree with each other. Especially with my father and my brother, we have very different perspectives so we rarely come to a common ground”.

“So my way of handling disagreements is that I talk. I don't like to be passive- aggressive by just thinking about different things and sit around. I will just go ahead and tell them how I feel, and then will try and understand their part also. Like I try to go to my family members and talk it out”.

“There are times when my mother and I have very strong debate on something and it kind of affects my mood. So earlier I just wouldn't talk about things. But over time I am less affected by what my mother says, if I feel something strongly, I want fight with my parents but I put out my opinion and stand for it”

“With mom I usually talk about religion and feminism stuff and some of my career plans and all. Usually, she has a lot of differing opinions and I seldom agree to her because it might be very different from what I want”.

“Although there is a discipline at home, like how certain things need to be done should be done and all of that. I don't really follow it if I don't feel like because I feel like that part is in my control”.

“With my parents, I let them know how I feel about something even though the final decision may not be in line with what I agree”.

“So what happens is I tell them my opinion, they tell me their opinion I listen to them like okay this is your opinion but my opinion is still my opinion”.

“like many a times, I consider my parents opinions and viewpoints to make a decision, owing to their experience and all but sometimes, if we have very different outlooks, then I draw the boundary and do what I want”.

By practicing assertive communication, participants reported to perceive greater autonomy in their family interactions. They were able to engage in conversations without letting go of their rationality and intellect as well as respecting and accommodating the pre-existing stance of family communication patterns.

Auxiliary findings. Albeit the existing evidences for assertive communication, P3 reported that the guilt from making wrong choices in the past and letting down the family members, have contributed to an increase in her level of conformity orientation.

“Another reason I think is that, in the past there have been a couple of mistakes that were made and I kind of feel responsible for the same. So I think I don't want to let them down again. So I feel it is better to listen to them than to take a chance again. Like, I don't want to let them down again”.

Empathetic communication

The term empathetic communication has been coined to describe the communication that takes into account what individuals do or say, alongside being mindful of its impact on family members. As this awareness grows, individuals create better communication patterns by being compassionate of the family members' life reality, thereby executing strategic channels of communication. Empathetic communication is manifested by defusing the conformity orientated interactions as a product of parents' belief systems, ideologies of the generation as well as societal and moral norms. Thus, empathetic communication is indicative of the individual's emotional intelligence. It also included strategic communication with family members by accommodating family members' temperament and perceived instrumentality in the topic to be discussed. The factors that characterise

empathetic communication is mental and physical health of the family members, perceived efficacy of family members,

“Sometimes I see everyone working and I know that sometimes Not each person is very well-versed to take care of themselves as well as the other person. So sometimes I feel like if I share it with them and it becomes a burden to them it might become very difficult for them to handle the situation. So that is when I don't share with them”

“Once I'm sure that you know that this is what I really want to do, then I will tell everyone about it. I would tell mostly during like a dinner time or something like that when everyone is there, or sometimes even after dinner, when we sit down and we share about each other. That is a relatively relaxed time”.

“Sometimes they understand me that depend on the sensitivity of the topic or the situation, but mostly I evaluate what I have to share by considering their mental status, openness to a fair discussion and also my perception of how that topic may affect or challenge my parents and the balance of the home atmosphere”.

“Over time, I have also worked on myself to let go of the emotional responsibility and to recondition myself, you know, and to be mindful about what is happening. It has helped my communication with my family members like the traits in the family cannot be changed. But earlier it was me overcompensating for it, eventually I was losing myself. But now I am trying to be more authentic to myself and take me away from the enmeshment of the family dynamics”.

Detached communication.

Detached communication pattern arises as an adaptive coping strategy in response to the perceived familial demand for homogeneity and uniformity of values, beliefs and opinions. The factors that contribute to developing a detached communication pattern are generation gaps between self and parents, perceived rigid and inflexible social and familial schemas, perceived stereotypes and prejudices based on gender, culture or familial hierarchical values like patriarchy, increased expressed emotions due to mental health disorder and conflict avoidance. Therefore, detached communication can be seen as a consequence of conformity orientation to communication although indirectly. Some of the excerpts from the participants' responses are as follows:

“Usually I don't communicate much of the sensitive topics to my parents”

“I think is, we don't really, you know, try to convince each other of our opinions because we're all well rooted in our own ways. So I think we have opinions and we keep it to ourselves”.

“I think that my family members my parents don't understand my point of view, my perspectives and my opinions. It might be because of the generation gap”.

“the difference in you know how they have been as children to their parents and now when we are their children, they might be expecting for us to do the same things”.

“like they expect us to agree to everything and not to argue, to be very obedient and not have their own opinions, to obey parents blindly and all of that. But in our current generation, that's not the case. And I have very strong opinions about everything in my life. So many times I feel they can't digest it, then I don't share with them”.

“I actually don't communicate Sensitive topics with my family members. Because I feel like the difference in opinions will be very vast. So I avoid discussing them at all”.

Some other significant reasons that catered to detached communication are the fear of disappointment, birth order of the individual, etc. Participants reported to fear creating displeasure to their parents with their decisions and life subject matters.

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“Mostly because I think I will hurt them. So, I don’t really communicate a lot of things about the sad things that happen in my life”.

Another factor that created a reduced self-disclosure is the birth order. Participants who were the elder child reported to perceive the pressure of being the role model of an ‘ideal child’ for younger siblings, thereby imposing them with expectations to manifest obedience and conformity to family norms. This expectation intervenes with their individuality thereby creating a detached communication. On the contrary, younger child participants reported that the family members showcased a hierarchy in authority, thus often being inconsiderate to the opinions and choices of the younger child. This in return, turned them down from open and unrestrained communication.

Auxiliary Findings

Alongside the reduced self-disclosure to family members, participants who reported the above mentioned communication patterns also reported a higher level of comfort in communication of sensitive or personal matters with their peers, colleagues and friends. As reported earlier in the interpersonal communication patterns, some participants also reported a close comfort for unrestrained communication with siblings owing to the reduced generation gap and increased empathy.

“Sometime communication with family members is just so difficult that I feel like I might as well keep it to myself or share it with people who can understand or whom I can have a wavelength with. So mostly friends or someone like that I talked to”.

“Mostly I don’t open up easily with my parents. I instead share it with few of my close friends. And sometimes, I don’t share things with anyone at all”.

“Usually I don’t share sensitive topics with my family members; I sometimes share it with my friends rather”.

Therefore, confiding in friends and colleagues was a common pattern across participants. Such interpersonal interaction patterns could be indicative of the participants’ desire for increased open conversation and the need for perceived freedom for autonomous expression of choices and opinions. Therefore, as compared to family members, friends and other acquaintances are chosen by the person due to seemingly similar wavelengths and increased acceptance.

Impact of Lockdown

Findings suggest that the lockdown impacted the existing family communication patterns to determine the participants’ perception of satisfaction and usefulness of familial communication. Some participants also reported a difference in their interaction patterns with their family members. Participants reported that the perceived quality time spent and the topics discussed had increased during the lockdown. The newer topics of discussion included health concerns, parents’ retirement plans, childhood memories, movies, parents’ dormant hobbies, etc.

“I feel lockdown has put everyone together and it is kind of nice right now that everyone is together and spending time together”.

“the pressure is high with the lockdown specially academic and also financially like the business is low now. But now that we are together, we are all talking and most importantly we are all there to listen to each other”.

“Like my parents are also getting the time to talk and come out with their problems and all listen. And we all also talk about our old happy memories, we have time to talk about the future as well. So I think lockdown is helping in that sense”.

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“last past few months during the lockdown you can say that most of our communication are regarding problems that my parents are facing in their life, like retirement and all that...we are really opening up more and thinking about things we sidelined all these years”.

“during lockdown, the topics discussed are increased. since everyone is together, we are also spending a lot of time together. So to some extent, we have more quality time”.

R9 also responded that as everyone is at home, it was difficult for her to spend quality alone time with her mother.

“I and my mom are very close to each other. And we also like to spend time with each other, alone, like when no one is there or without any other person. So now that lockdown is on, and everyone is at home, every time. Me and my mother have been able to spend less time. So now as everyone is available and we don't have a personal time”.

Alongside, 6 participants reported that an increased availability of the father increased the paternal interactions and conversations. There was an increased amount of time spent, thereby translating into shared household chores, common meals and free time spent with the father, thus increasing the amount of time and perceived comfort.

“My dad is available more now, earlier after office he would just be by himself. Now we he helps little in gardening and cooking, so we kind of bond more”

“Both my parents are working but dad usually used to come back and help out mom or do his own work. Now in the lockdown, I think there is a lot of time that we are spending more time, talking, eating together and all”.

“There is relatively more time spent together and I think we talk more and that has made us a little more closer. I think satisfaction has increased because, now we are all together and we divide work and we all help each other”.

Participants who earlier reported to exhibit increased empathetic communication also perceived an increased satisfaction in their family communication patterns during the lockdown.

“Like we do have arguments and all that have increased. But like I said, I am used to handling it so it's not a big deal. But overall, when everyone is more relaxed and have more time and all, even if we have differences of opinions, it is okay. The quality time has increased and that brings more satisfaction”.

Participants who earlier reported to majorly exhibit assertive communication perceived no significant change in satisfaction in the family communication patterns during the lockdown.

“Lockdown hasn't really changed much, I think with respect to the time we spend together or the quality of time as well, it is pretty much the same”

Participants who reported to exhibit detached communication patterns as their primary mode reported a decreased satisfaction of communication patterns. R3 and R6 also perceived dysfunctionality and reduced familial cohesion during the lockdown period.

“to some extent, this lockdown has also been stressful because there is no, you know, a change of atmosphere”.

“like many a times, familial opinions come with stereotypes and prejudices and I can't agree with it, but in lockdown I am stuck in that debate or conversation. It gets too much sometimes”.

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Therefore, family communication patterns exhibited by the participants have all been impacted by the covid-19 lockdown. The bearings have majorly been in line with the existing family dynamics, interaction patterns and personality.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

The present study investigated the family communication patterns on 10 young adults using a semi-structure interview. The ethnomethodological paradigm provided a foundation to understand the interacting patterns of peoples' lives and cultures within the institution of family. The interpersonal communication patterns are in line with the existing base of literature. Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2006) suggested that families create their own communication environments, and behaviours have to be understood and evaluated based on the specific context that is unique to each family type. It was found that participants perceived warm and open communication patterns with their mothers and sisters. This increased the cohesion among both parties. On the contrary, father-daughter communications are cordial and limited to matters of career, moral etiquettes, safety and protection. Father-son communications are more elaborate and comprehensive but seldom include personal matters and topics of conflicting opinions. The participants' family types can be broadly scaled to range between consensual and protective families. Owing to a higher level of conformity in all cases, data also revealed an increased intimacy of participants with their friends and colleagues. This pattern of increased self-disclosure and perceived understanding from individuals outside family has been attributed to the intertwining play of familial values, generation gaps and societal norms.

The three major themes that emerged from the data describe the communication patterns employed by the participants in order to maintain cordial and affectionate familial communication patterns. These themes are assertive communication, empathetic communication and detached communication patterns. The narratives obtained from the participants suggest that these communication patterns evolved as a result of coping with the communication patterns thriving in the family unit. Assertive communication has been characterised by engaging in non-confrontative yet direct and open posing of opinions and perspectives. It was predominantly seen in participants from consensual families. Assertive communication creates an environment for arguments and redressal of conflict. Huang (2009) suggested that families high on conversation orientation exhibited greater degrees desire for control, self-esteem, and sociability. Assertive communication is therefore in line with the existing understanding of individual communication preferences. Empathetic communication has been characterised from a stance of increased understanding and compassion for other family members as well as perceived family closeness. It was seen both in consensual and protective families and was therefore a result of individuals' predisposing personality characteristics, emotional intelligence, increased habituation and acceptance of the dynamics of the familial values. Empathetic communication results in increased perspective taking and an acknowledgement of the impact of the individuals' psyche on the manifested communication and interaction by the family members. Keaten and Kelly (2008) suggest that family types with a higher degree of conversation orientation, regardless of degree of conformity orientation, raise children who have higher levels of emotional intelligence. This study explains the development of an empathetic communication patterns in consensual families. Hesse (2017) explained that conformity orientation that was 'warm' in nature was directly correlated with conversation orientation, family closeness, family satisfaction, cohesion, and adaptability, thereby nurturing the development of empathetic communication patterns among participants from protective

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families. Detached communication results in a decrease in communication and interactions with family members. It was seen to arise as a result of the dislike and hostility towards the perceived generation gap, differences of opinion and the demand for homogeneity of familial values and ideologies. Detached communication was predominantly seen in participants belonging to protective families. Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2014) evidenced that the pressure to conform, in a protective system has a number of immediate deleterious outcomes. Children may suffer from severe assaults on their self-esteem, high levels of verbal aggressiveness and little confidence to engage in self-disclosures.

Probing the functionality of the existing family communication patterns during the lockdown phase, data revealed mixed results. Participants who reported to primarily use assertive communication testified no significant difference in satisfaction. Participants who reported to primarily use detached communication testified a decrease in satisfaction with the family communication patterns while participants who reported to primarily use empathetic communication testified a mild increase in satisfaction and usefulness of family communication patterns. Baxter and Pederson (2013) reported that, unmet conversation ideals were largely the result of insufficient conversation orientation to meet desires, thus reducing satisfaction. Therefore, as implied from existing literature, detached communication patterns is the consequence of an insufficient conversation orientation, thereby reducing satisfaction in overall family interactions. A significant commonality reported by all the participants was the acknowledgement of quality time spent; the range of topics discussed and shared household responsibilities that translate into increased interaction with family members.

Limitations

Participants in the present study were only from the middle class and upper middle class. In addition, all participants belong to urban population, giving little representation to the rural population. A small sample size further limits the applicability of the findings to the participants. Although it was not intentional to exclude any member by virtue of their socio-economic status or geographic location, the present study acknowledges that a comprehensive understanding of the communication patterns in India can be explored with a greater sample size representative of the Indian population.

CONCLUSION

The family communication patterns theory by Fitzpatrick and Ritchie (1995) holds true to the social institution of family in India. The current study highlights patterns of communication knit out by the participants in order to assimilate their personal integrity with the foundational layout of family dynamics prevailing in the Indian society. The study also highlights the various factors contributing to the moulding of novel communication patterns among family members. Owing to the Covid era in which the present research has been conducted, the study also attempts to understand the impact of covid-19 on the pre-existing patterns of communication and the perceived satisfaction in family interactions.

The research attempts to understand the implications of assertive, empathetic and detached communication patterns on the individuals' interpersonal interactions. The present study therefore stands in its uniqueness and paves way for a whole new conduit of research and investigation on the family communication patterns in India and the various factors that impact the same.

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Conflict of Interest

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