

Adaptive Interpersonal Communication Model for Multicultural Families in Indonesia's Digital Era: A Literature Review

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Abstract

The digital era has changed the method of communication and interaction within families and multicultural groups in Indonesia, thus creating new challenges in building effective interpersonal communication. On that basis, the research aims to develop an adaptive interpersonal communication model for multicultural families. By conducting an analysis literature through approach content thematic through the stages of coding, categorization, synthesis findings, and development framework theoretical to various publication scientific 2021-2025 period which discusses family interpersonal communication, communication multicultural, and adaptation digital technology, this qualitative research based on literature studies identifies that the challenges main interpersonal communication of multicultural families in the digital era includes gap digital literacy, preservation

mark culture, complexity interpretation meaning, and management platform communication. Family multicultural development strategy adaptation, structural, functional, and relational, to overcome challenges in those factors. Success adaptation covers digital literacy, quality family connections, accessibility to technology, the presence of digital mentors, and organizational capability. The Adaptive Interpersonal Communication Model (ADAC) was developed with four components integrated: Assessment, Adaptation, Application, and Evaluation. This model provides a framework for helping families to build communication harmoniously, integrating digital technology and the diversity of values and cultures in the multicultural context of Indonesia.

Keywords: *Interpersonal Communication, Family Multicultural, Digital Era, Adaptive Model, Communication Intercultural*

1. Introduction

Digital transformation over the past two decades has fundamentally reshaped how individuals communicate and interact within families. The rapid expansion of internet access, mobile communication technologies, and social media ecosystems has intensified the complexity of interpersonal communication in everyday life. In the digital era, communication is increasingly mediated through platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Zoom, each of which embeds distinct norms, affordances, and interaction patterns that influence how family members express emotions, negotiate roles, and maintain relationships. These transformations are particularly significant in Indonesia, a country characterized by extensive cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity, where increased social mobility, urbanization, interregional migration, and globalization have accelerated the formation of multicultural families. As digital technologies permeate domestic life, families must continuously adapt their interpersonal communication practices to manage both cultural diversity and technological change.

In this study, multicultural families are understood as family units whose members come from different cultural, ethnic, linguistic, or socio-cultural backgrounds and who must negotiate diverse systems of meaning and value in daily interaction (Nurfajriyah et al., 2024). Communication in such families is shaped by differing norms of expression, expectations regarding authority and intimacy, and culturally embedded interpretations of behavior (Yemmardotillah & Indriani, 2021). These differences can enrich family life but may also generate misunderstandings and tensions if not managed through adaptive communication processes. The challenges are compounded by disparities in digital literacy and media preferences across generations. The coexistence of digital-native and digital-immigrant

family members often produces asymmetries in communication competence, patterns of media use, and expectations regarding privacy and immediacy (Zein et al., 2022). These asymmetries can create communication gaps that influence relational cohesion, emotional closeness, and conflict management within the family.

Scholarly work on family communication has increasingly recognized the need to situate interpersonal interaction within broader sociotechnical contexts. Theoretical discussions of communication adaptation can be anchored in Communication Accommodation Theory, which explains how individuals adjust their communicative behaviors to achieve social approval, maintain identity, or manage interpersonal distance (Chatlina et al., 2024). This perspective highlights processes such as convergence, divergence, and mutual accommodation that are especially relevant in culturally diverse families. Complementing this view, Family Systems Theory conceptualizes the family as an interdependent relational system in which changes in communication patterns reverberate across the entire unit. Together, these theoretical traditions provide a foundation for understanding how families negotiate difference and maintain equilibrium (Jumiliadi et al., 2020). However, their application to digitally mediated communication in multicultural Indonesian families remains limited. Much of the existing research examines multicultural interaction, digital media practices, or intergenerational communication in isolation, resulting in fragmented insights that do not fully capture the dynamic interplay between culture, technology, and family systems (Sihombing & Perangin-Angin, 2023).

A critical synthesis of the literature indicates that current scholarship lacks an integrated framework capable of explaining how multicultural families adapt interpersonal communication in response to rapid digital transformation. Prior studies often describe patterns of media use or cultural negotiation without linking them to a coherent theoretical model of adaptation (Agustina, 2024). As a result, the mechanisms through which families achieve effective communication in digitally saturated environments remain insufficiently articulated. There is also limited conceptual discussion of what constitutes successful adaptive communication in multicultural family contexts, particularly within Indonesia, where sociocultural diversity intersects with uneven technological access and adoption. This gap suggests the need for a model that connects intercultural communication processes, family system dynamics, and digital mediation into a unified analytical structure.

The present study responds to this need by asking how an adaptive interpersonal communication model can be conceptualized to support

harmonious and sustainable relationships in multicultural families in Indonesia's digital era. Adaptive interpersonal communication is conceptualized here as a continuous, context-sensitive process through which family members adjust communicative strategies, interpretive frameworks, and media practices to maintain relational effectiveness amid cultural diversity and technological change. This perspective emphasizes flexibility, reflexivity, and mutual negotiation as core features of family interaction in contemporary digital environments.

The gap from this research is the absence of an integrated conceptual framework that systematically explains how interpersonal, intercultural, and digital communication dynamics interact within multicultural family settings, particularly in the Indonesian context. Although previous studies have examined interpersonal communication within families, intercultural communication processes, or the influence of digital technology on relationships, these strands of scholarship have largely developed in isolation. As a result, there remains limited theoretical synthesis that clarifies how cultural diversity and technological mediation simultaneously shape adaptive communication practices within family systems.

Existing literature often focuses on either cross-cultural interaction in broader social contexts or digital communication in general relational settings, without specifically addressing the unique dynamics of multicultural households. This lack of integration creates a conceptual gap in understanding how families negotiate cultural differences, maintain relational harmony, and adapt communication patterns in an increasingly digitalized domestic environment. In the Indonesian setting, characterized by rich cultural diversity and rapidly expanding digital connectivity, scholarly attention to these intersecting dimensions remains particularly limited. This research addresses the identified gap by synthesizing theoretical perspectives from interpersonal, intercultural, and digital communication studies to develop a context-sensitive adaptive interpersonal communication model for multicultural families. By articulating the relationships among cultural diversity, technological mediation, and family system functioning, the study provides a structured conceptual foundation that can guide future empirical research as well as practical efforts to strengthen communication and relational well-being in culturally diverse households.

2. Method

This study employs a systematic literature review with thematic synthesis to develop a conceptual model of adaptive interpersonal

communication in multicultural families in the digital era (Ari et al., 2024). Rather than treating the research as primary qualitative fieldwork, the study positions itself as a structured synthesis of existing theoretical and empirical scholarship. The objective is to integrate dispersed findings into a coherent conceptual framework that explains communication adaptation processes in multicultural family contexts.

2.1 Literature Search Strategy

The literature search followed a structured multi-stage protocol adapted from established systematic review procedures. Searches were conducted in major academic databases, including Google Scholar, Crossref, and the Indonesian academic portal Garuda, as well as selected international journal repositories relevant to communication and social science research. The search covered publications from 2010 to 2024, a period chosen to capture the rapid expansion of digital communication technologies and their impact on family interaction. Search queries combined Boolean operators and keyword clusters in English and Indonesian, including terms such as *family interpersonal communication*, *multicultural family*, *intercultural communication*, *digital communication*, *communication adaptation*, and *digital era*. Synonyms and related terms were iteratively added during pilot searches to increase coverage. Reference lists of key articles were manually screened to identify additional relevant studies not captured through database searches.

2.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Studies were selected using explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria. Included sources were peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly book chapters that (a) examined interpersonal communication in family settings, (b) addressed multicultural or intercultural family dynamics and/or digital communication practices, and (c) presented a clear theoretical or empirical contribution. Publications were required to be available in full text and written in English or Indonesian. Excluded sources consisted of opinion pieces without methodological grounding, publications lacking clear relevance to family communication, non-scholarly materials, and duplicate records. No restriction was imposed based on journal indexing status alone; instead, methodological clarity and conceptual relevance served as primary quality filters.

2.3 Screening and Selection Process

The screening process proceeded in three stages: title screening, abstract review, and full-text assessment. Duplicate records were removed prior to screening. During title and abstract review, articles were evaluated for thematic relevance. Full-text assessment applied the inclusion and exclusion criteria systematically. The final corpus consisted of a

purposively selected body of literature representing diverse disciplinary perspectives within communication and family studies. While the review does not claim statistical exhaustiveness, it aims for analytical saturation, meaning that additional sources yielded diminishing conceptual novelty.

2.4 Analytical Framework and Thematic Synthesis

Data analysis employed thematic content synthesis to identify recurring concepts and relationships across the selected literature. An initial coding framework was developed deductively from key theoretical constructs in interpersonal, intercultural, and digital communication research, including adaptation strategies, intergenerational dynamics, media affordances, and relational outcomes. During iterative reading, inductive codes were added to capture emergent themes.

Coding was conducted in multiple cycles. The first cycle involved open coding to identify salient concepts. The second cycle organized codes into higher-order thematic categories that reflected patterns of communication adaptation. These themes were then compared across studies to identify consistencies, tensions, and explanatory mechanisms. The final stage involved integrating thematic findings into a conceptual model that maps relationships among cultural diversity, digital mediation, and family system processes. To enhance analytical rigor, coding decisions were documented through an audit trail that recorded category definitions and examples. Interpretive consistency was strengthened through iterative comparison of coded segments and repeated engagement with primary sources.

2.5 Validity and Reliability Measures

Several strategies were used to strengthen the trustworthiness of the synthesis. Source triangulation was achieved by incorporating literature from multiple disciplinary traditions and methodological approaches, enabling comparison across theoretical and empirical perspectives. Analytical transparency was supported by explicit documentation of search procedures, coding decisions, and synthesis steps. Reflexive review was applied throughout the analysis to examine potential interpretive biases and ensure that conclusions were grounded in the literature rather than in prior assumptions.

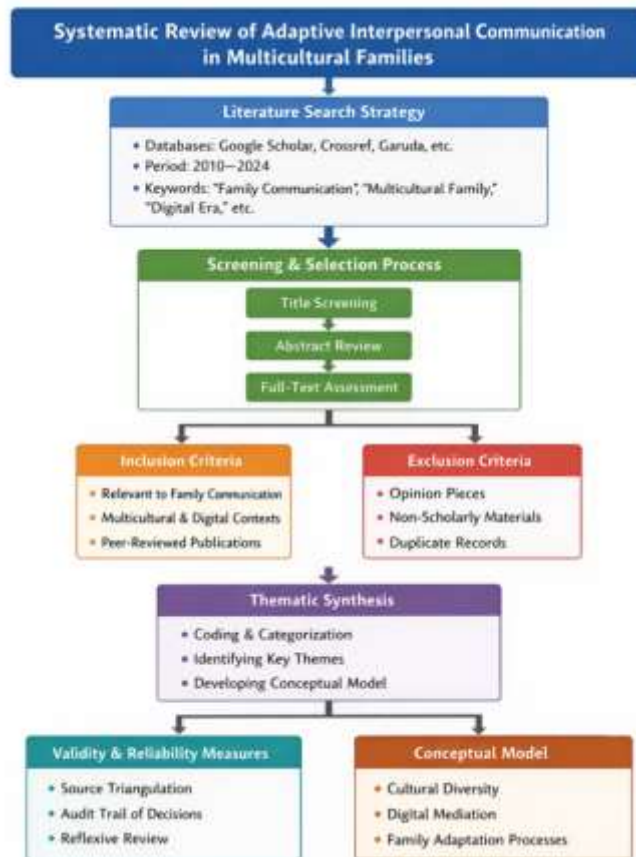


Figure 1. Research process flowchart on family communication

3. Results

3.1 Characteristics of the Reviewed Studies

The systematic literature review identified 20 eligible studies that met the inclusion criteria. These studies were published between 2015 and 2024 and examined interpersonal communication patterns in multicultural families within digital environments. Most studies employed qualitative or mixed-method approaches focusing on family communication practices, digital media usage, and intercultural interaction. Table 1. Summarizes The Main Communication Challenges Identified Across The Reviewed Studies.

3.2 Communication Challenges in Multicultural Family Interaction

The thematic synthesis revealed four dominant categories of communication challenges: intergenerational digital asymmetry, negotiation of cultural communication norms, ambiguity in digitally mediated expression, and platform management complexity.

Table 1. Synthesized Themes of Communication Challenges

| Theme | Operational Description in Reported Reviewed Studies | Effects on Family Communication |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Intergenerational digital asymmetry | Differences in digital skills, technological familiarity, and dependence on digitally platform preferences between younger and older family members | Uneven participation, and dependence on digitally skilled members, or collaborative digital learning |
| Negotiation of cultural norms | Adjustment between embedded traditions and interaction styles | Changes in politeness norms, language selection, and interaction rituals |
| Ambiguity in digital expression | Limited nonverbal cues and reliance on emojis, abbreviations, and symbolic expressions | Misinterpretation of messages and need for clarification strategies |
| Platform management complexity | Simultaneous use of multiple digital platforms with different interaction characteristics | Negotiation of communication appropriateness, privacy management, and accessibility issues |

The data synthesis indicates that intergenerational digital asymmetry was the most frequently reported challenge. Several studies observed that older family members often experience lower confidence in digital communication tools, resulting in reduced participation in online family interaction (Van Baelen et al., 2025).

3.3 Adaptive Communication Strategies in Multicultural Families

In addition to identifying communication challenges, the literature synthesis also revealed several adaptive strategies used by multicultural families to maintain effective communication in digital contexts.

Table 2. Synthesized Adaptive Communication Strategies

| Strategy Cluster | Operational Description in Reviewed Studies | Communicative Function |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Negotiated communication norms | Agreements regarding language use, response time, and digital communication etiquette | Reduces misunderstandings and aligns communication expectations |

| Strategy Cluster | Operational Description in Reviewed Studies | Communicative Function |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Hybrid media practices | Combining face-to-face interaction with digital and communication channels | Improves message clarity and communication flexibility |
| Cultural mediation roles | Specific family members act as translators or interpreters of cultural or technological differences | Bridges cultural and generational gaps |
| Relational maintenance rituals | Routine digital interactions, such as scheduled video calls or family group chats | Strengthens emotional connection and family cohesion |

The synthesis shows that negotiated communication norms represent the most common adaptive strategy. Families often develop explicit or implicit agreements about preferred communication languages, appropriate response times, and acceptable digital etiquette (Sallay et al., 2024). These agreements help reduce ambiguity and align communication expectations among family members. Another widely reported strategy involves hybrid media practices, where families combine digital communication with face-to-face interaction. Studies indicate that sensitive or emotionally complex discussions are more frequently conducted through synchronous communication channels such as video calls, while daily coordination tends to occur through text-based messaging.

3.4 Factors Influencing the Success of Communication Adaptation

The review further identified several factors that influence the success of communication adaptation in multicultural families.

Table 3. Factors Influencing Communication Adaptation

| Factor | Description | Impact on Communication Adaptation |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| Digital literacy | Ability to access, understand, and critically use digital technology | Facilitates participation in digital communication |
| Intercultural competence | Ability to understand and adapt to cultural differences | Reduces cultural misunderstandings |

| Factor | Description | Impact on Communication Adaptation |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Technological infrastructure | Availability of stable internet, communication devices, and technical support | Enables continuous digital interaction |
| Internal mentoring dynamics | Informal guidance among family members regarding technology and culture | Encourages collaborative learning and communication adjustment |

Among these factors, digital literacy and intercultural competence appear as the most influential determinants. Successful adaptation requires the integration of digital competence with cultural understanding and relational sensitivity (Cesário & Campos, 2025). Technological infrastructure also plays an important role. Limited access to stable internet networks or digital devices may create inequalities in participation and restrict communication opportunities (Richter et al., 2023).

3.5 Development of the Adaptive Interpersonal Communication Model

Based on the synthesis of communication challenges, adaptive strategies, and enabling factors, this study proposes an Adaptive Interpersonal Communication Model (AICM) for multicultural families in the digital era.

Table 4. Components of the Adaptive Interpersonal Communication Model

| Model Component | Main Focus | Function in Family Communication |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Assessment | Identification of cultural background, communication needs, and digital literacy levels | Provides a diagnostic understanding of family communication conditions |
| Adaptation | Adjustment of communication styles and technological use according to cultural diversity | Develops culturally sensitive communication strategies |
| Application | Implementation of communication strategies through digital platforms | Strengthens emotional connection and collaborative interaction |

| Model Component | Main Focus | Function in Family Communication |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Evaluation | Continuous reflection and feedback on communication effectiveness | Supports ongoing and improvement in communication sustainability |

The proposed model conceptualizes communication adaptation as a cyclical process consisting of four interconnected phases: assessment, adaptation, application, and evaluation. This process reflects patterns observed in the reviewed studies, where multicultural families continuously negotiate, implement, and refine communication practices in response to technological and cultural changes (Rusdiansyah et al., 2025). The model highlights that effective communication in multicultural families requires a balance between digital competence, cultural sensitivity, and relational awareness. Through this iterative process, families can maintain communication harmony while adapting to the evolving dynamics of digital interaction.

4. Discussions

4.1 Challenges of Multicultural Family Interpersonal Communication in the Digital Era

The findings of this systematic literature review demonstrate that interpersonal communication in multicultural families within the digital era is shaped by a complex interplay between technological transformation and culturally embedded communication norms. Rather than functioning merely as technical obstacles, the challenges identified in the reviewed studies represent structural tensions within family systems that must continuously negotiate digital change while preserving cultural identity (Khaeriyah Khaeriyah & Nurasia Natsir, 2025). The synthesis reveals three dominant dimensions of communication challenges: intergenerational technological asymmetry, cultural value negotiation, and semiotic complexity in digitally mediated interaction.

4.2 Intergenerational Technological Asymmetry

The first challenge concerns disparities in digital literacy between generations. The reviewed studies consistently indicate that younger family members generally adopt and master digital communication technologies more rapidly than older generations. Similar findings were reported by Quan-Haase et al., whose mixed-method study on intergenerational communication found that younger individuals function as “technology brokers” within families, facilitating digital communication

for older relatives while simultaneously shaping communication patterns. Methodologically, their research relied on survey data and in-depth interviews, whereas most studies included in this review used qualitative or literature synthesis approaches. Despite methodological differences, both bodies of research converge in identifying digital literacy asymmetry as a central structural factor in family communication.

From a theoretical perspective, this phenomenon can be interpreted through Media Richness Theory, which argues that communication effectiveness depends on the alignment between message complexity and the richness of the communication medium. When older family members lack familiarity with rich digital platforms such as video conferencing or collaborative media, communication may shift toward simpler channels that provide fewer contextual cues. Consequently, messages involving emotional nuance or culturally sensitive meanings may be inadequately conveyed.

However, the reviewed literature also challenges deterministic interpretations of technological asymmetry. Several studies highlight that digital skill gaps may foster collaborative learning processes within families. This observation aligns with findings from intergenerational learning research, which suggests that reciprocal teaching between younger and older family members can strengthen relational bonds and promote mutual respect. Therefore, technological asymmetry should not be interpreted solely as a communication barrier but also as a potential catalyst for intergenerational cooperation.

Family Systems Theory further explains that digital expertise can reshape traditional family hierarchies. In cultures where authority is traditionally associated with age, technological competence may redistribute communicative authority toward younger members. This shift creates a negotiation space between traditional cultural expectations and emerging digital practices. Similar observations were reported in studies of Asian multicultural families, where the integration of digital communication technologies gradually reconfigured patterns of respect and authority within family interaction.

4.3 Cultural Value Negotiation in Digital Communication

The second major challenge concerns the negotiation between cultural preservation and digital standardization. Digital communication platforms generally promote communication norms characterized by informality, brevity, and immediacy, which may contrast with culturally embedded communication traditions such as ritual greetings, hierarchical language structures, or storytelling practices (Nasution et al., 2024). From the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory, individuals select

communication media that efficiently satisfy specific communicative needs, including speed and convenience. In multicultural families, however, efficiency-driven media use may unintentionally marginalize culturally significant communication practices. Research on family language policy, for example, shows that minority languages and culturally specific forms of expression tend to decline in digital communication environments unless families actively reinforce them.

Comparative findings from research on diasporic communities support this conclusion. Studies examining immigrant families in North America and Europe indicate that dominant societal languages often dominate digital interaction spaces, leading to a gradual language shift across generations. Methodologically, these studies commonly employ ethnographic observation and discourse analysis, which provide rich insight into everyday language use patterns. Although the methodological approaches differ from systematic literature reviews, both lines of research converge in identifying digital communication as a critical site of cultural negotiation. Importantly, the literature does not support the assumption that digital communication inevitably erodes cultural identity. Instead, studies show that families who deliberately incorporate cultural elements into digital interaction, such as using heritage languages, sharing traditional narratives, or maintaining culturally specific greeting rituals, are more successful in sustaining cultural continuity. This finding suggests that digital environments function as adaptive cultural spaces, where cultural identity is continuously reconstructed through communicative practice.

4.4 Semiotic Complexity and Interpretive Ambiguity

The third challenge identified in the literature concerns semiotic complexity in digital communication. Emojis, memes, and abbreviated textual expressions function as symbolic resources whose meanings are often context-dependent and culturally variable. Within multicultural families, differences in interpretive frameworks may increase the likelihood of miscommunication. This phenomenon can be analyzed through the lens of Symbolic Interactionism, which emphasizes that meaning emerges through shared interpretive processes. In face-to-face communication, nonverbal cues such as tone, gesture, and facial expression provide important contextual signals that help participants interpret meaning. Digitally mediated communication, particularly text-based messaging, reduces the availability of such cues, increasing interpretive ambiguity.

Similar observations have been reported in studies of digital communication in multicultural work teams. These studies demonstrate that the absence of contextual cues often leads to misinterpretation, especially when participants possess different cultural communication

styles. Despite this potential for misunderstanding, research also indicates that repeated interaction and meta-communication can gradually establish shared symbolic repertoires. Through ongoing communication, family members learn to interpret each other's digital expressions more accurately. Thus, semiotic ambiguity should not be viewed solely as a communication deficit. Instead, it can function as a learning mechanism that promotes intercultural awareness and encourages explicit discussion of communicative intent.

4.5 Adaptive Communication Strategies in Multicultural Families

In response to these challenges, the literature identifies three categories of adaptive communication strategies: structural, functional, and relational strategies. These strategies reflect coordinated efforts by families to align technological practices with cultural and interpersonal needs. Structural strategies involve the deliberate establishment of communication frameworks that regulate interaction patterns. Drawing on Family Systems Theory, these frameworks act as boundary-setting mechanisms that reduce uncertainty and maintain relational stability. Previous studies on family communication management demonstrate that explicit communication rules regarding language choice, response expectations, and platform usage significantly reduce misunderstandings.

Functional strategies refer to the strategic selection of communication media according to interaction goals. Consistent with Media Richness Theory, families often allocate high-richness media such as video calls for emotionally significant conversations, while low-richness media such as text messaging are used for routine coordination. Research on hybrid communication systems similarly demonstrates that combining digital and face-to-face interaction enhances relational resilience by balancing efficiency with emotional depth. Relational strategies focus on maintaining emotional connection and intercultural sensitivity. According to Social Presence Theory, the perception of closeness in mediated communication depends on cues that signal attentiveness and empathy. Multicultural families often enhance social presence by establishing digital rituals such as regular video gatherings or shared storytelling practices. Empirical studies show that these rituals strengthen emotional bonds and reinforce collective family identity.

4.6 Factors Influencing the Success of Communication Adaptation

The success of adaptive communication strategies is influenced by the interaction of individual competencies, structural resources, and informational ecosystems. At the individual level, the convergence of digital literacy and intercultural competence plays a critical role. Digital literacy involves not only technical skills but also the ability to critically

evaluate digital information, while intercultural competence encompasses empathy, perspective-taking, and adaptive communication behavior.

Previous empirical studies using intercultural competence models confirm that individuals who possess both technological proficiency and cultural sensitivity are more effective in navigating complex communication environments. Structural factors also influence adaptation success. Access to reliable internet infrastructure and appropriate communication devices significantly affects the feasibility of digital interaction.

Beyond infrastructure, the broader informational ecosystem introduces additional challenges. Exposure to misinformation and excessive digital content can increase cognitive load and emotional stress. Cognitive load theory suggests that information overload may reduce individuals' capacity to process communication effectively. Families often mitigate these risks by establishing shared norms regarding media consumption and information verification. Another important enabling factor is the presence of digital and cultural mentorship dynamics. When family members assist each other in learning new technologies or understanding cultural differences, communication adaptation becomes a collaborative process rather than an individual burden. Research on intergenerational mentoring similarly demonstrates that knowledge exchange within families enhances resilience and strengthens relational cohesion.

4.7 Adaptive Interpersonal Communication Framework in Multicultural Digital Family Contexts

The findings of this study demonstrate that multicultural families negotiate cultural differences within digitally mediated communication environments through systematic and iterative processes of communicative adaptation. The reviewed literature consistently shows that families establish negotiated communication norms, including agreements on language use, politeness conventions, response time, and digital etiquette. These norms serve as adaptive mechanisms to reconcile disparities between culturally embedded communication practices, such as hierarchical language structures and ritualized expressions, and the informal, asynchronous nature of digital platforms. Furthermore, the presence of cultural mediation roles, typically assumed by specific family members, facilitates the interpretation of both cultural meanings and technological practices, thereby minimizing communicative friction.

Digital technologies exert a bidirectional influence on the maintenance of relational harmony and communication patterns in culturally diverse households. On the one hand, structural limitations such

as ambiguity in digitally mediated expression, driven by the absence of nonverbal cues, and platform management complexity, resulting from the simultaneous use of multiple communication channels, contribute to increased risks of misinterpretation and coordination challenges. On the other hand, digital media provide opportunities for interactional flexibility and sustained relational engagement, particularly through the establishment of relational maintenance rituals, such as routine video calls and family group messaging. The implementation of hybrid media practices, wherein communication modes are selected based on message complexity, further enhances communicative clarity and emotional connectedness.

The integration of interpersonal, intercultural, and digital communication theories is empirically substantiated through the identified adaptive strategies. Interpersonal communication dimensions are reflected in relational maintenance and emotional bonding practices; intercultural communication is evident in the negotiation of cultural norms and the development of intercultural competence; while digital communication is operationalized through digital literacy and the strategic management of communication platforms. This synthesis supports a multidimensional analytical framework, positioning communication adaptation as a dynamic interaction among relational, cultural, and technological variables.

Within the Indonesian socio-cultural context, characterized by collectivist orientations, high-context communication patterns, and deeply embedded politeness norms, the interaction between cultural diversity and technological mediation becomes particularly complex. These cultural attributes intensify the need for communicative sensitivity and adaptive negotiation, especially in maintaining respect-based interactions across generational and cultural boundaries. Simultaneously, the findings highlight the significance of internal mentoring dynamics, whereby digitally proficient family members support others in navigating both technological tools and intercultural communication challenges, thereby fostering collaborative adaptation within the family system.

Finally, the proposed Adaptive Interpersonal Communication Model (AICM) offers a coherent and theoretically grounded framework for understanding communication processes in multicultural families within digital environments. The model conceptualizes adaptation as a cyclical and recursive process comprising four interrelated phases: assessment, adaptation, application, and evaluation. This framework reflects observed empirical patterns in which families continuously diagnose communication conditions, adjust communicative strategies,

implement them across digital platforms, and evaluate their effectiveness over time. The study concludes that effective communication in multicultural families is contingent upon the integration of digital literacy, intercultural competence, and relational sensitivity, thereby providing a robust conceptual foundation for future research and a practical framework for enhancing communicative effectiveness and relational well-being in culturally diverse households.

4.8 Theoretical and Practical Implications

The MKAI model advances communication scholarship by integrating insights from Media Richness Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, Family Systems Theory, and Symbolic Interactionism into a unified framework for understanding multicultural family communication in the digital era. This integration highlights that digital technologies do not operate as external forces acting upon family systems; rather, communication practices emerge through continuous negotiation between technological affordances and cultural values. Practically, the model suggests several low-cost interventions for strengthening multicultural family communication, including structured communication audits, peer mentoring systems, and collaborative digital literacy training. These interventions leverage existing relational resources within families and emphasize reflective dialogue as a mechanism for continuous adaptation.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Because the MKAI framework is derived from literature synthesis, it inherits several limitations present in existing research. Many studies included in the review are geographically concentrated and rely heavily on qualitative methods, which may limit generalizability. Future research should therefore employ longitudinal and mixed-method designs to test the proposed model across diverse cultural contexts. In addition, future studies may explore how emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence-mediated communication, immersive digital environments, and algorithmic content curation influence communication dynamics in multicultural families.

5. Conclusion

The disruption of communication technology has created complexity in the dynamics of family interpersonal communication and multicultural communication, so that it requires an adaptive approach. The Adaptive Interpersonal Communication Model (IAC) was developed through an analysis of literature. This offers a framework that works systematically for helping families face multicultural challenges in the digital era, with four components integrated, namely: Assessment, Adaptation, Application, and Evaluation. Findings of the study show that family multiculturalism

faces challenges layered, starting from the gap in intergenerational digital literacy, preservation of cultural marks in digital communication, complexity of interpretation of meaning, and management of heterogeneity of communication media.

The MKAI model offers a contribution to the development of communication studies in families, highlighting integration between digital literacy and diversity culture to build effective interpersonal communication in the digital age. This model confirms that successful communication in a family multicultural environment is not only determined by mastery of technology, but also by the ability to adapt to cultural and relational sensitivity and reflection, sustainable towards the communication process. In general, practically, MKAI provides a framework for families to strengthen social cohesion, improve empathy between members, and utilize technology in an ethical and contextual way. Thus, this model can become a base development intervention, and study advances in the field of cross-border digital communication culture and family multiculturalism.

Study This recommends the implementation of MKAI in general, gradually, considering the unique characteristics of every family in a multicultural environment. Recommendations are practical, covering the development of a family - based digital literacy program, multicultural training, mediation, communication, intercultural, as well as the formation of a support system for the community and family multicultural. It is recommended to conduct research that continues through studies in the field using mixed methods for validation of the empirical model, exploration of the influence of specific digital platforms on dynamic communication within families, and development of an instrument for measuring the effectiveness of adaptive interpersonal communication in the context of ethnic uniqueness in multicultural families in Indonesia.

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