The Level of Family Harmony in Working Students in The Perspective of Guidance and Counseling

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ABSTRACT
Family harmony is key in ensuring family resilience from both social and psychological perspectives. It is a highly influential concept in shaping a child's character and facilitating the positive development of their personality. This research aims to determine the level of family harmony among working students. The research utilized a survey with a quantitative approach involving 85 working students. Data collection was done using the family harmony scale developed by Kavikondala et al. (2016), which identifies five dimensions of family harmony: communication, conflict resolution, patience, family identity, and quality time. This research indicates that working students have a moderate level of family harmony. This study serves as a basis for enhancing family harmony within the scope of Guidance and Counseling.

Keyword: Family harmony; working students; guidance and counselling

ABSTRAK

Kata kunci: Keharmonisan keluarga; mahasiswa pekerja; bimbingan dan konseling
INTRODUCTION

Family is the initial environment in which a child grows and develops, from birth through the future physical and emotional development processes. In order to achieve healthy development, children need love, attention, and a sense of security provided by parents as a protective space. A sense of security is formed through family harmony. Family harmony can be described as harmony between husband and wife, with mutual respect, acceptance, appreciation, trust, and love between the partners. Family or parents connect to children’s psychological resilience (Liu et al., 2020). According to Pahlevi & Utomo (2022), the family, as the smallest social unit, plays a central role as the first and primary environment for education. This indicates that the family is primarily responsible for shaping its children's education.

Harmony in the family does not occur automatically but requires effort to create. Ibnu et al. (2020) state that parents must monitor the behavior and activities of children, especially during adolescence, to prevent deviant behavior and help them cope with various pressures or stressors, respecting each other, spending sufficient time together as a family, and building interaction among family members (Pangaribuan, 2016). Disharmony in the family can lead to divorce, although most divorces occur in couples who marry at a young age due to a lack of marriage preparation. Family harmony emphasizes closeness, compatibility, cooperation, and mutual benefit, considered the most valuable qualities in family relationships.

Individuals facing life, especially interacting with others, rely on family support as a crucial element. Family support is a process that occurs between family members and the social environment, where the family provides assistance and support to each other. According to Hayward et al. (2020) and Wong et al. (2019), unpleasant psychological experiences in the family environment during childhood can lead to depression, low self-esteem, and unhealthy coping mechanisms in adolescents. In Wheatley's view (2014), lack of interaction in the family can lead to disharmony in family life.

There is an increasing phenomenon of family disharmony frequently occurring in Indonesian society. This is evident from the rising divorce rates over the years. Statistics Indonesia data states there were 291,677 divorce cases in 2020, increasing to 447,743 cases in 2021 and 516,334 cases in 2022 (Rizaltly, 2023). This indicates a three-year consecutive increase in divorce rates. The high and increasing divorce rate year after year indicates a
lack of harmony in marriages, which, in turn, affects the inability to meet the emotional and psychological needs of children, especially.

Pusnita (2021) states that adolescents raised in non-harmonious family environments have a higher risk of experiencing mental disorders, antisocial behavior, and emotional problems. Several studies have shown that instability in the family has negative impacts on the social, emotional, and behavioral development of children. Guo et al. (2018) concluded that parental disharmony, family dysfunction, and parent-child relationship conflicts are significant stress triggers affecting adolescent psychological development. Therefore, readiness for marriage should include the ability to handle conflicts, communicate effectively, and have economic and mental preparedness, which are crucial for any couple intending to marry.

The consequences of parental divorce can cause family members to experience traumatic events. It should be noted that divorce has negative consequences on the development of children and family dynamics, causing stress and affecting the self-esteem of adolescents (Asilah & Hastuti, 2013; Muhammad et al., 2019). Family harmony has significant importance in influencing mental health and personal well-being, according to research by Kavikondala et al. (2016). This aligns with Ghani et al. (2014), asserting that the psychological problems faced by adolescents from single-parent households (such as broken homes) tend to occur due to a lack of attention and affection. Additional factors such as busy parents, low socioeconomic status, aggressive behavior, and negative stigma from the environment also contribute to worsening adolescent psychological issues. Therefore, positive support from parents is needed to reduce adolescents' psychological pressure (Joyce & Liamputtong, 2017).

A study of 60 families experiencing divorce in California found that pre-school-age children tended to have difficulty adapting to new situations. At the same time, teenagers were more likely to experience deep trauma due to the divorce (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1976). Divorce also impacts the lack of attention given by parents to children, which can lead to neglect, nutritional problems, exposure to violence, injustice, exploitation in earning a living, and receiving unfair treatment. According to research by Shi et al. (2017) and Wang et al. (2020), teenagers from non-harmonious families often have poor communication skills, frequently feel blamed, and are prone to loneliness.
Attachment between parents and children can foster confidence and the child's desire to express their activities, facilitating monitoring (Rusyidi & Nuriyah, 2020). This is a strong foundation for maintaining family life. The family harmony experienced by a student impacts their socialization skills in the surrounding environment. If there is no harmony in the family, students may be more closed in peer interactions. Students show reserved attitudes, difficulty communicating in the environment, and may exhibit selfish and stubborn behavior. This can cause difficulties for students when interacting with professors and make them feel less confident, thinking that peers will not accept them.

In the effort of each individual to create harmony in forming a family, it is essential to be aware of each role and function and accept the situation and presence of family members. Individual socialization skills in the family can be enhanced with family harmony. This interaction process often faces family issues such as arguments, jealousy, infidelity, income differences, differences in life principles, and even actions leading to marriage termination or divorce. It is important to promptly seek solutions to maintain family harmony in addressing these issues. According to Duarte et al. (2020), family disharmony can trigger high-stress levels due to situations that do not meet expectations, especially when combined with school duties, teacher pressure, and peer pressure.

Students are part of the academic community prepared to be skilled individuals in various fields and considered capable of meeting the demands of the global market with high-quality standards. As students develop their careers, they are in an exploratory phase where they are expected to understand the need to make career-related decisions, understand their interests and talents, recognize their abilities, and identify areas of work that match their interests and abilities. In addition, they are expected to actively participate in additional education or workshops to prepare themselves for entering the workforce (Malik, 2015).

Students who study while working are expected to be able to fulfill their responsibilities effectively. This includes the ability to manage time well, maintain discipline in academic and work matters, and pay attention to physical health due to the necessity of balancing roles as students and employees. Facing the challenges of studying while working is a complex matter. The phenomenon of students studying while working is also evident at Open University, including among students from the Faculty of Education. There is a possibility that some students take part-time jobs while studying. Some studies reveal that family harmony positively influences thought, emotion, and behavior control in
counseling processes. One study focused on students working in the field of family counseling will explore how the level of family harmony among working students is viewed from the perspective of guidance and counseling.

METHODS

This research is a descriptive study with a quantitative approach, utilizing a survey design (Sugiyono, 2017). This survey aims to describe or provide an overview of family harmony among working students. The research subjects are working students from Open University. The sampling method is a random sampling technique, resulting in a sample size of 85 working students. Data for the research is obtained using a measurement tool like a Family Harmony Scale. This instrument was developed based on the theoretical framework proposed by Kavikondala et al. (2016), which identifies five dimensions of family harmony: communication, conflict resolution, patience, family identity, and quality time. The scale has been tested for validity and reliability, producing alpha coefficients of 0.939 for communication, 0.922 for conflict resolution, 0.857 for patience, 0.871 for family identity, and 0.949 for quality time. These five aspects consist of 24 statements. The assessment method employs a Likert scale with five response options: strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree, and strongly agree, with scores ranging from 1 to 5. The classification of family harmony can be seen in Table 1. Data analysis using descriptive analysis is conducted using SPSS 24 software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The survey results related to family harmony can be seen in Table 2. Based on table 2 explains that family harmony in working students is relatively high. Many aspects of family identity are described as aspects that have an essential effect on family harmony, including in the high category. Communication, conflict resolution, patience, and quality time are in the moderately high category. Family identity, which includes roles, values, and beliefs in the family environment, has a significant impact.
### Table 1. Classification of Family Harmony Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Conflict Resolution</th>
<th>Patience</th>
<th>Family Identity</th>
<th>Quality Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>23.4 – 26.8</td>
<td>19.5 – 19.5</td>
<td>11.6 – 11.6</td>
<td>11.6 – 11.6</td>
<td>27 – 30.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somewhat High</td>
<td>19.9 – 23.3</td>
<td>16.6 – 19.4</td>
<td>9.9 – 11.5</td>
<td>9.9 – 11.5</td>
<td>23 – 26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>16.4 – 19.8</td>
<td>13.7 – 16.5</td>
<td>8.2 – 9.8</td>
<td>8.2 – 9.8</td>
<td>19 – 22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Low</td>
<td>12.9 – 16.3</td>
<td>10.8 – 13.6</td>
<td>6.5 – 8.1</td>
<td>6.5 – 8.1</td>
<td>15 – 18.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>9.5 – 12.8</td>
<td>7.9 – 10.7</td>
<td>4.8 – 6.4</td>
<td>4.8 – 6.4</td>
<td>11 – 14.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>6 – 9.4</td>
<td>5 – 7.8</td>
<td>3 – 4.7</td>
<td>3 – 4.7</td>
<td>7 – 10.9</td>
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</table>

### Table 2. Descriptive Analysis Results of Family Harmony Indicators

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
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<th>SD</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>Somewhat High</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Very Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>Somewhat High</td>
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<td>Very Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>Somewhat High</td>
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<td>Very Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Identity</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>Very High</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Very Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality Time</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>Somewhat High</td>
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The survey results related to family harmony can be seen in Table 2. The findings of this study align with the research conducted by Lombardi (2021), indicating the crucial role of quality in family relationships. This includes the importance of quality time spent together as a family in shaping a solid parent-child relationship and the mother's parenting process. Quality time plays a crucial role in creating warm bonds among family members. More importantly, it is not just the quantity of time spent together but the prioritization of the quality of that time. Other studies state a significant positive relationship between the level of family harmony and the level of emotional intelligence in teachers (Handayani & Fauziah, 2016). According to Sainul (2018), a harmonious family is a happy family characterized by reduced tension, disappointment, and satisfaction in all aspects of its existence, including physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects.

Rafieq (2021) identifies the family as the smallest social unit consisting of a father, mother, and children. One essential function of the family is to provide optimal education, encompassing the development of children's potential, as stated by Fathoni (2018). This comprehensive educational approach will develop the child's personality quality and the overall realization of the child's potential, in line with the views of Sulaiman and Neviyarni (2021). Putro et al. (2020) assert that communication between parents and children plays a central role in forming emotional bonds between them. This interaction includes various aspects such as guidance, support, direction, affection, advice, criticism, firm guidance, and more. The inability of parents to communicate effectively with their children can lead to relationship distortion or conflict. Conversely, parents who can accept their children with love encourage constructive growth and development. This allows children to learn to problem-solve, develop psychologically healthier, be more productive and creative, and self-actualize their potential, as Fatmawati (2020) explained.

Nasution (2019) explains that parents play a primary role as educators in a child's life. Thus, parents' attitudes and behaviors serve as examples observed by the child, consciously or unconsciously, shaping essential experiences for the child and impacting their further education. Many explanations reveal that communication has a significant impact on family harmony. This is in line with findings from the research of Asoodeh et al. (2011); Bakar and Aftanorhan (2015); Soltani et al. (2013). Communication influences the mental well-being of family members, including children and parents. Additionally, communication is also one of the factors contributing to the formation of a child's identity.
In its context, marital harmony holds significant meaning in setting marital relationship goals that overcome obstacles that may disrupt individual growth, especially during marriage.

The family is the initial environment where a child grows and develops, from birth through the future physical and emotional development processes. To achieve positive development, children require love, attention, and a sense of security obtained from their parents as a protective haven. According to Zarnghash and Zarnaghash (2012), communication plays a crucial role in influencing the mental well-being of children and parents within the family environment. Furthermore, communication is also one of the contributing factors in the process of forming a child's identity. According to the findings of Aeni (2021), having positive self-confidence can maintain harmony within the family, even in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. This impacts the family's ability to endure, educate children, and perform tasks to maintain harmony in the household.

A supportive climate within the family, such as togetherness and affection in the family environment, is one of the factors that will shape the personality of each family member, especially in forming daily attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, having a harmonious family is crucial for the personal development of family members, especially adolescents. A harmonious or well-functioning family has fulfilled its roles by providing a sense of belonging, security, and love and building good relationships among family members. Success in marital life has a significant impact on happiness in marital relationships, avoiding disappointment, and reducing confusion. Widayani & Mardyawati (2021) outline that according to Dlori, a harmonious family is the result of a relationship filled with love and care because both factors serve as the foundation that maintains the harmony of that relationship.

Family identity holds significant importance in family life. Findings from several studies show that the roles, values, and beliefs within the family environment can impact family identity, which in turn influences thought patterns, child-rearing methods, communication styles, and even the mental health of the family (Sharif et al., 2015; Soltani et al., 2013; Wilson & Tonner, 2020). According to Gunarsa & Gunarsa (2004), family harmony is a situation where the family is whole and complete with happiness, containing familial bonds that provide each member a sense of security and tranquility. In a harmonious family, all family members have a good relationship, including the relationship between
parents (father and mother) and their children. The family plays a crucial role as a change agent and is a meaningful place for each member. Emotionally, family support becomes a basic need for every individual since the family is where one finds comfort, love, and emotional support.

Shahreza and Lindiawatie (2021) explain that family economic resilience refers to the family's ability to remain stable when facing various risks, difficulties, and disruptions, both internal and external, directly or indirectly, during economic problems within the family. With the help of family counseling, various problems within the family environment can be resolved, forming family resilience. Evaluating the problems and obstacles that arise within the family due to low economic and social resilience certainly has a significant impact on the implementation of family counseling. Thus, when family counseling is conducted effectively, it can help the family improve its economic resilience.

Higher education institutions create individuals skilled in various fields of study, deemed capable of meeting the demands of the job market with high-quality standards. As students develop their careers, they are in an exploration phase where they are expected to clearly understand the need to make career-related decisions, understand their own interests and talents, recognize their abilities, and identify fields of work that suit their interests and abilities. Moreover, they are expected to actively participate in additional education or workshops to prepare for entering the workforce (Malik, 2015). Career Counseling Programs in Higher Education have a broader focus on (1) enhancing career progress, (2) providing treatment, and (3) assisting in placement. The delivery of career counseling in educational institutions is dominated by the goals and perspectives of the educational institution on one side. At the same time, individual growth is aligned with developmental tasks on the other side. Through the educational process, each gains knowledge, insight, and skills and adopts attitudes and values that align with the vision of the educational institution (Yusuf, 2002). Career guidance aims to help students mature in managing their careers (Fadhilah et al., 2015).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and analysis of this research, the level of family harmony among working students is moderate. However, this study has some limitations. One of them is the limited number of participants, and there is no differentiation among respondents
from different ethnic or cultural backgrounds, which could result in a more detailed and in-depth understanding of both general and specific aspects of family harmony conditions. Guidance and counseling aim to identify the sources of issues experienced by the family and find suitable solutions to overcome them. Additionally, the goals of family counseling also include efforts to enhance each family member's skills in creating a harmonious relationship at home.

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