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**THE ROLE OF FAMILY COMMUNICATION IN OVERCOMING
TOXIC PARENTING FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD'S MENTAL HEALTH**

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Abstract

Toxic parenting behavior has more negative impacts than positive ones, because the lack of children's confidence is caused by parents who are too restrictive and limit every children's activity. The role of family communication in overcoming toxic parenting is very important for the future development of children. Parents often do not realize this, including being too controlling, yelling at children, committing verbal violence, blaming and criticizing children and comparing one child to another so that the children cannot develop according to their abilities but because of the wishes of parents which causes children often feel depressed. The obstacles faced in overcoming Toxic parenting for early childhood's mental health are parents who are busy working so there is a lack of communication between parents and children which makes children limited in expressing their wishes. Uncontrolled parental emotions also have a bad effect on children's mental health. Controlling emotions is not easy. No matter how angry parents are with their children's behavior, they must realize that children and parents are learning together.

Keywords: *Family Communication, Toxic Parenting, Mental Health, Early Childhood*

Introduction

In everyday life, mental is an important thing that must be developed and cared for in order to stay in a good direction. The term mental is what is meant by the soul, feelings, and ways of thinking. How does a person have the ability to restrain himself, behave, show attitudes and maintain feelings towards others. This mentality is also related to the minds and dispositions of others. Someone who has a healthy mentality is a spiritual person and in his heart feels calm, safe and serene (Jalaludin, 2015). Not only adults, but children also need assistance so that their mental health can grow and develop properly.

In forming and developing mental health in children, the role of the family in the household is needed. A child's right on both parents is a responsibility that must be lived by providing education, caring for children, and guiding children so that children at an early age have a good mentality in accordance with religious and legal guidelines in the society. It is needed for communication between parents and children in the family so that there is harmony in the family, which aims to keep children in stable conditions with good mental health. Thus, the role of the family, especially parents, becomes very important for the formation of children's character, especially in the formation of children's character which starts at an early age.

Family communication is a communication that occurs within a family, which is a way for a

family member to interact with other members, as well as the way for forming and developing the values needed as a guide to life. So that children can live their lives when they live in a community environment, what happens if a pattern of family communication and the behavior of toxic parents are used in a family will certainly affect the child's development and even the child's mental health.

Literature Review

With communication, this relates to various types of parenting. The way parents communicate with children varies, such as democratic, authoritarian, or permissive parenting. However, in reality many parents out there forget that not all children can be treated equally and can accept the parenting style they provide. Keep in mind that the wrong type of parenting can poison children, both physically and psychologically. Many parents are wrong in parenting, they think that by parenting their children feel protected, but this even makes the protective attitude too excessive. In addition, with parenting patterns that tend to ignore children it causes the lack of love that children get. If this parenting pattern is done in the wrong way and continuously, it will have an impact on the children's life. This unhealthy and undirected parenting pattern can be referred to toxic parenting.

Toxic parents are parental behaviors that can poison children, have a negative impact on the children's life in the next phase. Not infrequently there are parents who easily commit physical or psychological violence on the grounds that the child is disciplined. However, this has a big impact on the mental and psychological health of children. So in this case, don't let this parenting pattern repeat itself when we already have children. It is hoped that the next generation will adopt the best parenting pattern, to avoid having a bad impact in the future.

Research Methods

This study used a qualitative approach to obtain in-depth and comprehensive information regarding the role of family communication in overcoming toxic parenting for early childhood mental health. In addition, with a qualitative approach it is hoped that the situation and problems encountered in increasing the role of family communication in overcoming toxic parenting for early childhood's mental health can be disclosed.

Findings

Children have the right to be born in a harmonious and happy family with parents who love their children completely. However, in reality, many children grow up in families with abusive parents and poison their children psychologically. In psychological terms, parents like this are referred to as Toxic Parents ('poisonous' parents). This term will make many parents immediately become defensive, parents who find it difficult to admit their mistakes as a form of self-defense.

Toxic parents don't only emphasize physical punishment to children when they make mistakes. There are parental actions that can also poison a child's mental health, either by uttering harsh words or sayings that can slowly kill a child's enthusiasm for living their life. In this case, the parents' actions are even more dangerous because they don't show any marks and pain.

The characteristics of Toxic Parents that need to be known include controlling children too much, yelling at children, committing verbal violence, blaming and criticizing children and being selfish. In addition, there are also several other characteristics, including giving excessive physical punishment for disciplinary reasons, getting children involved in parental problems, so that children will feel guilty if they want something, stressing children emotionally and psychologically, luring children with something reward for complying with the wishes of parents even though these wishes are not in accordance with the wishes of the child (Forward et al, 2002).

From the characteristics of Toxic Parents, there are habits that are done by the parents and this has an impact on children. Therefore, as parents, they have to understand more about what parents should and should not do with their children. These include:

1. Have excessive expectations of children. This has an impact on children when children have dreams, sometimes there are parents who thwart these dreams with excessive expectations for children.
2. Parents who have selfish traits and lack empathy for children. Parents who are always selfish without knowing what things and desires their children need. Parents like this usually always measure everything by their will without thinking about the children's feelings. It could be the words of parents who say empathy for themselves actually make children feel burdened. With the intention of wanting to teach empathy towards children, what happens is that the children will feel that he is not helping enough in any case.
3. Parents who like to arrange everything. Parents who like to arrange all children's activities from start to end without asking the children if they like it, this will hinder the children's desire and will destroy his heart and psychology.
4. Parents who indulge in the badness of their children, either closed or open. Like adults, children also have feelings. This feeling of self-esteem must be maintained both in crowded and quiet places, because this will hurt his feelings and will make the child less confident.
5. Parents who always blame their children. If this is happened, it will result in the child becoming less confident.
6. Parents who do not appreciate the efforts of their children. Parents must always appreciate and give appreciation to their children in every effort that their children make (Ade, 2020).

Toxic Parents have a negative impact that will greatly affect the growth and development of early childhood's mental health. This can cause a lack of self-confidence in children and result in children always blaming themselves for everything that happens. Children will grow up to be individuals who feel worthless, have no friends, are stressed, and have poor mental health.

By overcoming and avoiding toxic parenting, a good family will be born and children will get their rights. This can be avoided by doing the intensity of good family communication. The things that can be done include, namely:

1. Treat children as friends and give attention and affection when children want to tell stories about their daily lives. Give feedback if the children need it.
2. Give praise and appreciation to the children for the successes that have been obtained by children. That way children feel valued by being able to make their parents and family proud.
3. Appreciate every action, both small and big things that they does. This will create self-confidence in children and will have an impact on the way children live their daily lives.
4. Use polite and easy language for children to understand, simple words will be easily captured by children and children will not feel pressured.
5. Express everything with actions, so that communication in the family can be created with a touch that is received by children. This is so that children feel cared for and loved.
6. Giving confidence to children, that they can be relied upon, but this is not only limited to words but can be shown by actions. By providing guidance, praise, and encouragement from parents (Andrianto, 2011).

Communicating with early childhood kids has different ways of communicating with teenagers or adults. The thoughts possessed by children tend to be simpler, full of imagination, concrete (real), creative and active, and continue to grow. Therefore, parents must be able to adjust the way they communicate with early childhood kids. In other words, the parents can implement democratic communication or respectful communication.

The characteristics of Toxic Parenting are physical punishment excessively for reasons of discipline, makes children involved in parental problems, so that children tend to feel guilty if they want something, suppress children psychologically and emotionally, and bribe children in exchange for money. Even with reasons for the good of the child, parents do this. But in reality, this toxic parent's behavior has more negative impacts than positive impacts on children. Children can experience mental disorders such as depression, stress, lack of confidence, insecure, closed due to toxic parenting of their parents. Not infrequently children will hate their parents and will imitate similar things to vent it.

This can be caused by having a traumatic past like the cycle below:



Figure 1. Repeated Cycle

The above cycle illustrates that parents do not give children the freedom to choose according to their children's abilities. The cycle above explains that many parents do things they have experienced first. So that makes them do the same with children. If it is negative, it will affect the children's mental health. It is hoped that the parents will be able to improve communication patterns in relationships so that positive communication patterns are built within children.

As parents, of course they don't want to do Toxic Parenting on children, because the impact is very extraordinary and will even continue into adulthood. The selfish attitude of parents who always pressure, criticize, order, limit children is the reason that toxic parents often do. For example, parents tell their children to study so they can register for their favorite school so that their future will be better. That is the ego of Toxic Parenting so they feel proud of their social environment. Even though children also need to socialize with their friends so that they can develop physically and spiritually. In addition, for the sake of making parents happy, children must do what their parents tell them to do, without thinking about the psychology of the child, whether the child is happy or not, and Toxic Parenting tends to make children responsible for repaying their parents, so it will seem dishonest in raising their child. child. This shows that communication will be effective when parents are in a stable condition and can accept the child's situation as it is without forcing the child.

Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn from the discussion above is that parents often do not realize that they too control, accidentally commit verbal violence, yell, blame, and act selfishly towards children who forget that children also have their own desires. This makes the child a person who cannot control himself, and this incident will damage the children's mental health.

As parents, they must be able to control your emotions, don't let the inability to control these emotions become toxic in raising children at home, and parents must also realize that children will also continue to learn to choose all their activities according to their abilities. Parents should often approach the children without issuing words that will hurt the children's feelings, it is necessary for parents to participate in parenting activities so that they can better understand how parents should educate the children.

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