

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Both interaction and communication involve intentional behavior. To transmit a message or information to another person is the aim of communication. In the case of interaction, the objective may be more ambiguous, but the intention to interact with another person or entity is still present (T. Scott-Phillips, 2022). Interaction and communication frequently include an exchange of back-and-forth between people. This exchange may involve verbal or nonverbal clues during conversation, while actions or gestures may be used during interaction (Philos Trans R Soc Lond B Biol Sci, 2022). Interacting with other people to communicate information such as ideas and thoughts in order to understand each other is what communication entails. Human communication begins with communication among families (Wahyudi & Kurniadi, 2022). Communication is necessary in a family to ensure that each member feels a sense of mutual dependency. Because family is the core group in a community, such communication is essential for society's well-being. Family communication is an important factor in child's life. Family communication is supposed to influence a child's academic performance (Latar, 2021). Families provide the most extensive and meaningful relationship, particularly when it comes to raising and nurturing children. A nuclear family consists of a father, a mother, and one or more children (Berger & Carlson, 2020).

Family is the first place where a child can learn and develop basic skills in everyday life. In the family, parents and children will also spend time together. If families succeed in imparting proper education to their children through successful interactions, children will be able to communicate responsibly and correctly when they are on the outside. Otherwise, if the family does not teach effective communication, what is learned will be passed down to the greater community (Rahman et al., 2020).

As children get older, their communication styles change (Paujiah et al., 2022). Some choose to leave their hometown in order to better their education, which is a common reason for young adults who go to attend a favourite university or experience independent life (Al Qadri, 2020). As a result, many children are physically separated from their parents and live far away. However, because of the rapid development of information technology, which has resulted in improved communication, this separation is no longer a major concern in today's world. Parents and children can still communicate with each other via social media, especially with the growth of social media on the internet (Najmudin et al., 2023).

During the Industry 4.0 transformation, the communication paradigm inside families underwent rapid and significant changes. Even when children and parents are not in the same room, they can easily converse (Saleh et al., 2020). Today, social media has a significant impact on society. It serves as a means of communication, facilitating interaction among people. Humans are social beings that communicate through various means of interaction, and media plays an important role in this process (Faisal, 2020). The advancement of information technology, particularly social media, has transformed face-to-face interactions into online interactions. Through virtual interactions, people now have more efficient and alternative ways to communicate (Zis et al., 2021).

People can readily contact others through social media and online interaction. Individuals or groups can communicate more easily through social media. To facilitate these contacts, several social media programs such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and Line are available (St. Syahrah et al., 2020). According to an academic survey Dewi et al., (2022), WhatsApp is the most preferred instant messaging social media app among parents for interacting with their children who are studying away from home.

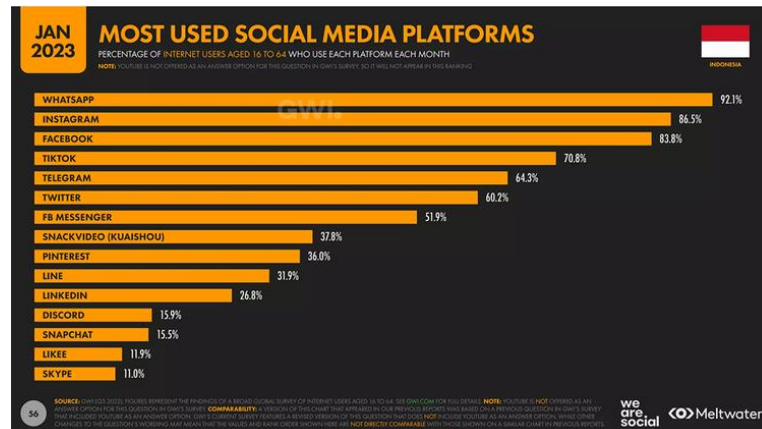


Figure 1. 1 Bar Chart of Social Media users in Indonesia
 Source: tekno.compas.com

According to a survey of PPM RJ Bandung students, the majority of students use social media platforms like WhatsApp to solve distance-related problems. Tekno.com also presents data from We Are Social in January 2023, which shows that the 'Most Used Social Media Platforms' reach more than 92% of people via the WhatsApp platform. This proves that they communicate via WhatsApp.

Furthermore, selecting WhatsApp as the research focus was not only about who uses the application but also about describing how Roudhotul Jannah Islamic boarding school students use WhatsApp to communicate with their families in distant locations. As a result, the researcher chose PPM RJ Bandung as a study sample because it is uncommon for Islamic boarding schools to provide students with a 24-hour communication tool (Warto, 2017), so this is an interesting topic to research, particularly in the context of the description of how PPM RJ Bandung communicate with their families, particularly their parents.

As a result, on May 11, 2023, the researcher conducted a presurvey activity at PPM RJ Bandung on 104 people (the total population is 104 students), and the 104 individuals reported that they all use WhatsApp as a communication tool to connect with their families, particularly their parents. According to the results of the questionnaire survey,

PPM RJ Bandung students primarily communicated via WhatsApp as their main communication medium.



Figure 1. 2 Pre-Survey Report
"a Descriptive Long Distance Family Communication by WhatsApp at PPM RJ Bandung"
Source: Processed by author

Several studies, however, have found that communication problems within families separated by distance, such as between parents and college students living away from home, often encounter problems (Faradian, 2019). For example, a study by Sari and Fitri (2018) found that even when faced with constraints that impede family communication, college students who are separated from their parents by distance still communicate remotely. There are always obstacles that college students living away from home and their parents confront during communication, such as unstable signals, distance, hectic schedules, and differing opinions (Anggraeni, 2021). Furthermore, college students who live away from home run into changes in their communication behaviour with their parents. This is owing to their increasingly active college and organizational activities, which make communication with their parents difficult and infrequent (Uci, 2023). All subjects experience changes in communication, such as in intensity, style, and topics, with their parents. These changes can lead to conflicts in the relationship between college students and their parents.

There are barriers or obstacles in online mediated communication, such as WhatsApp. Some of these barriers are (Ahmad, 2021; E. Gutiérrez-Santiuste, M.J. Gallego-Arrufat, 2016):

1. Lack of nonverbal cues: Text-based computer-mediated communication, such as WhatsApp, lacks nonverbal cues, which can make it difficult to convey emotions or interpret the emotions of others.
2. Technical issues: such as poor internet connection or malfunctioning devices, can disrupt online communication.
3. Delayed Feedback: In asynchronous computer-mediated communication, there may be a delay in receiving feedback, which can slow down the communication process.
4. Focus distraction: In text-based communication, it is easy to become distracted by other notifications or messages, which can disrupt the communication process.

Because of the prevalence of that matter, family communication has become an important topic to study, particularly among students who study abroad and use social media as a communication tool. It may be stated that communication problems in families with children who live far away bring benefits in the area of communication science, particularly in family communication in the digital era anytime and everywhere (Haleem et al., 2022). Parents and children who live far apart can communicate whenever they want, especially with the media, which not only produces sound but also video. Students who live far away are no longer required to return home on a regular basis. Video calls allow students and their parents to communicate directly (Tarigan, 2018). This phenomenon is an engaging part to be studied, particularly in terms of family communication between parents and students living far away through the use of social media. The above explanation of the tendency of the impact of social media (disadvantages) on family connections has been researched. As a result, the description of **"Long-Distance Family Interaction of Roudhotul Jannah Islamic Boarding School Students through WhatsApp"** (an Islamic Boarding School for College Students) will be discussed in this study. The researcher intends to present an overview of college students' communication experiences with their parents via the WhatsApp application. In

2023, the data will be obtained from the questionnaire responses of PPM RJ Bandung students.

1.2 Research Focus

In order to be more focused in conducting this research, the focus of this study is as follows:

1. This study exclusively involves participants who are students of PPM RJ Bandung in the academic year 2023.
2. The author has selectively opted to investigate the variable of long-distance family communication via WhatsApp by using a descriptive perspective.
3. The research object is long-distance family communication using the WhatsApp platform.

1.3 Research Problems

Several issues can be recognised based on the problem outlined above:

1. How do PPM RJ Bandung students communicate with their parents through WhatsApp, especially in long-distance situations?
2. What are the obstacles that arise in the communication between PPM RJ Bandung students and their parents when using WhatsApp?

1.4 Research Objective

The goal of this study is to discover:

1. How PPM RJ Bandung students and parents communicate via WhatsApp.
2. The obstacles that arise in their communication.

1.5 Research Usefulness

It is intended that this research will be valuable both conceptually and practically, in accordance with the research objectives to be reached, as follows:

a) Theoretical Advantages

It has applications in communication research, especially in family communication in the digital era.

b) Practical Advantages

It teaches parents and college students about the importance of family communication in connecting, even when distance and time are obstacles.

1.6 Location and Timeframe of Research

1.5.1. Location of Research

This study will be carried out at PPM RJ Bandung, which is located at Jl. Sukabirus No. A1a RT 01 RW 13, Citereup village, Dayeuhkolot district, Bandung regency. The rationale for choosing this location is that most of the students at PPM RJ Bandung (Islamic Boarding House for College Students) are away from their families and must rent a place to stay in Bandung.

1.5.2. Research Timeframe

The research activities conducted by the researcher will last for 3 months, from March 2023 - May 2023. Details of the research activities can be seen in the following table 1.2:

TABLE 1.1 RESEARCH TIMELINE

No.	Activity	Month					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Preliminary research	■					
2.	Title Seminar	■					
3.	Preparation Evaluation	■					
4.	Desk Evaluation		■				
5.	Data Collection		■	■			
6.	Data processing and analysis		■	■	■	■	
7.	Thesis defence/examination						■

Source: Processed by author

1.7 Summary of Report Systematics

To better understand, the material listed in this thesis is grouped into several sub-chapters with the following presentation systematics:

The systematic summary of the internship report is as follows:

- CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION
 - a. Background
 - b. Problem Identification
 - c. Research Objective
 - d. Research Usefulness
 - e. Location and Timeframe of Research
 - f. Summary of Report Systematics
- CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW
 - a. Theoretical Perspective
 - b. Previous Research
 - c. Research Framework
- CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODS
 - a. Research Type
 - b. Operationalization of Variable and Measurement Scale
 - c. Population and Sample
 - d. Data Collection Techniques
 - e. Validity and Reliability Testing
 - f. Data Analysis Techniques
- CHAPTER IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
 - a. Characteristics of Respondents
 - b. Research Results
 - c. Research Discussion
- CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
 - a. Conclusion
 - b. Suggestions