

FAMILY DISAGREEMENTS AND THEIR IMPACT ON INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS: A LENS THROUGH FAMILY COMMUNICATION PATTERNS THEORY

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ABSTRACT

Background: During global crises and periods of heightened social uncertainty (such as pandemics), family institutions face unprecedented challenges that disrupt daily routines and necessitate the collective coordination of behaviors. This study examines the internal dynamics and communicative typologies of families under crisis conditions.

Methods: Utilizing a quantitative approach rooted in the *Family Communication Patterns Theory* (FCPT), this research analyzes data collected from a sample of young adults ($N = 342$, aged 18–28) regarding recent, severe family disagreements over daily behavioral restrictions, healthcare measures, and social distancing guidelines.

Results: Statistical and socio-psychological analyses indicate that a high level of **conversation orientation** (an open dialogue and listening culture) acts as a robust predictor of relational closeness and a high predicted outcome value (POV) for future interactions, effectively neutralizing relational harm. Conversely, a high level of **conformity orientation** (authoritarian or hierarchical structural demands) yields a significant positive correlation with perceived relational harm, triggering long-term emotional detachment.

Discussion: The empirical findings are critically discussed alongside international communication frameworks and traditional Eastern socio-philosophical paradigms (e.g., the historical heritages of Husayn Vaiz Kashifi and Abdurauf Fitrat). The study demonstrates that family resilience during crises depends fundamentally on mutual communicative adaptability rather than rigid disciplinary compliance.

Keywords: family institution, family communication patterns, structural conformity, conversation orientation, relational harm, crisis management, Eastern upbringing paradigms.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Formulation of the Problem

The family is universally recognized as the foundational unit of society and the primary sanctuary for the spiritual, moral, and emotional development of the individual. However, interpersonal dynamics within the family are rarely static; they fluctuate

under the pressure of external macro-environmental shocks. Global crises, socio-economic instability, and severe public health emergencies—such as the recent pandemic eras—subject the family institution to acute operational stress. During these periods, cohabiting family members are forced to rapidly negotiate and align their behaviors regarding protective measures, mobility restrictions, and healthcare protocols.

The process of behavioral coordination frequently converts the household into a crucible of ideological and interpersonal conflict. Disagreements regarding social distancing or compliance with state-mandated health directives became ubiquitous, highlighting structural fractures between the younger generation—who are generally more exposed to globalized information streams—and the older generation, who often adhere to traditional, risk-averse, or rigid behavioral frameworks. When handled poorly, these localized arguments escalate beyond transient domestic friction, leading to severe emotional alienation, long-term psychological distress, and, in severe cases, the dissolution of the family unit itself. Consequently, understanding the structural predictors that determine whether a domestic disagreement will fortify or fracture a relationship stands as a critical socio-psychological inquiry.

1.2. Theoretical Framework: Family Communication Patterns Theory (FCPT)

To systematically evaluate the structural mechanics of these interpersonal conflicts, this study employs the globally validated **Family Communication Patterns Theory (FCPT)** formulated by Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2002). FCPT conceptualizes the communicative climate of a household along two orthogonal, stable cognitive orientations that guide collective decision-making and cognitive alignment:

1. **Conversation Orientation:** The degree to which a family encourages an open, uninhibited, and frequent climate of m muloqot (interaction). In high conversation-oriented environments, all members—regardless of age or hierarchical status—are encouraged to express their thoughts, fears, and perspectives. Conflict is handled through collective deliberation rather than administrative fiat.

2. **Conformity Orientation:** The degree to which a family emphasizes uniformity of beliefs, structural hierarchy, and absolute obedience to parental authority. High conformity-oriented environments prioritize collective harmony or parental dominance over individual expression, viewing divergent viewpoints as an existential threat to familial cohesion or traditional values.

By examining the interplay between these two core axes under the stress of modern crises, this study aims to uncover the communicative variables that determine relational outcomes for young adults navigating domestic disputes.

2. METHODS

2.1. Sample and Participant Profile

This investigation utilized a cross-sectional quantitative survey design. The target population comprised young adults who cohabited with or maintained intensive, daily interaction with their immediate family members during peak periods of institutional and social restrictions. The final analytical sample consisted of **342 young adults** (\$18-28\$ years old; Mean Age = \$22.4\$, \$SD = 3.1\$). Within the demographic distribution, \$58\%\$ identified as female and \$42\%\$ as male.

2.2. Procedure and Data Collection

Data collection was executed through an anonymous, digital survey infrastructure. In the initial block, participants evaluated the baseline communicative climate of their current households using standardized measures. In the subsequent block, a retrospective behavioral recall technique was applied: respondents were instructed to recall and briefly describe the most recent, severe disagreement they experienced with a primary family member regarding protective public health restrictions (e.g., masking protocols, attending public gatherings, or limiting social contact). Finally, respondents evaluated the immediate post-conflict relational outcomes, emotional shifts, and perceived relational impacts using a standardized 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

2.3. Measures

- **Independent Variables (Predictors):** Baseline family communication patterns were quantified using the *Revised Family Communication Patterns (RFCP)* instrument. Items were aggregated to generate distinct continuous indexes for both *Conversation Orientation* and *Conformity Orientation*.
- **Dependent Variables (Outcomes):**
 1. *Change in Relational Closeness:* Quantified the post-disagreement trajectory of emotional proximity (i.e., whether the conflict brought the parties closer or drove them apart).
 2. *Predicted Outcome Value (POV):* Measured the subjective positivity, expectations, and desire regarding future interactions with the specific family member.
 3. *Perceived Relational Harm:* Assessed the level of psychological wounding, erosion of mutual trust, and lingering emotional damage inflicted by the argument.

Statistical processing, including descriptive statistics, multi-variable correlation, and ordinary least squares (OLS) linear regression models, was performed using SPSS.

3. RESULTS

The inferential statistical analyses yielded highly significant results, validating the primary structural hypotheses of the study. The structural impacts of distinct family communication environments on post-conflict outcomes are delineated across three primary empirical findings:

3.1. The Buffering Effect of Conversation-Oriented Environments

In households characterized by high conversation orientation, domestic arguments over crisis measures did not result in systemic relational deterioration. Rather, the empirical data revealed:

- **Proximity Enhancement:** High conversation orientation emerged as a powerful positive predictor of post-conflict relational closeness (standardized regression coefficient: $\beta = 0.38$, $p < 0.01$). Allowing all parties to voice their anxieties and assertions allows the disagreement to function as a tool for relational deepening.

- **Positive Future Expectations:** Open communication environments strongly predicted higher Predicted Outcome Values ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.01$), indicating that young adults retained a strong willingness and positive outlook regarding future family interactions.
- **Harm Mitigation:** Crucially, conversation orientation demonstrated a significant negative relationship with perceived relational harm ($\beta = -0.21, p < 0.05$), meaning that open dialogue actively buffers and neutralizes the toxic emotional residue typically left by serious arguments.

3.2. The Destructive Impact of Conformity-Oriented Environments

Conversely, in families where structural hierarchy and unyielding obedience dominate the communicative landscape, the data painted a radically different picture:

- **Elevated Relational Trauma:** Conformity orientation manifested a severe, direct positive correlation with perceived relational harm ($\beta = 0.47, p < 0.01$). In these authoritarian settings, when parents or elder members attempt to forcefully impose compliance or completely dismiss the young adult's perspectives, the relationship suffers catastrophic emotional wounding. Even if the young adult complies behaviorally due to fear or cultural pressure, their psychological trust is severely fractured.

3.3. The Interaction Effect: Balanced Environments (The Golden Mean)

The statistical models also tested the **multiplicative interaction effect** (Conversation \times Conformity). The interaction emerged as a significant positive predictor for relational closeness ($\beta = 0.24, p < 0.05$) and future POV ($\beta = 0.29, p < 0.05$). This indicates that households which maintain certain behavioral standards and respect for structure (moderate conformity) can successfully navigate complex global crises *only if* they simultaneously provide an open channel for expressive dialogue (high conversation).

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Communicative Adaptability as a Determinant of Family Resilience

The empirical insights generated by this research demonstrate that family resilience during macro-level crises is not a function of economic capital or rigid disciplinary enforcement; rather, it is a product of **communicative flexibility**. When faced with unprecedented socio-behavioral disruptions, families operating within a high-conversation framework possess the linguistic and emotional tools to transform an external threat into a collaborative problem-solving narrative. Conversely, rigid, highly conforming systems interpret any cognitive variance as insubordination, thus compounding the external crisis with an internal relational trauma.

4.2. Convergence with Traditional Eastern Philosophies and National Paradigms

These empirical findings align profoundly with classical Eastern socio-philosophical treatises on pedagogy and domestic administration. In Central Asian sociology, the traditional maxim, *"A bird replicates what it observes within its nest,"* underscores the structural impact of parental modeling. If the parental model relies purely on coercion, the offspring adopts either avoidant or aggressive behavioral coping mechanisms.

In his seminal text *"Futuvvatnamai sultoniy"* (The Sultan's Code of Virtue), the Renaissance scholar Husayn Vaiz Kashifi writes regarding mentorship and paternal authority:

"The mentor must stringently adhere to the tenets of grace, gentleness, and etiquette when delivering counsel... public reprimands must be avoided; instead, one must speak to the child in privacy and with utter softness."

Kashifi's philosophical defense of "grace and gentleness" serves as a historical precursor to the contemporary construct of *Conversation Orientation*.

Furthermore, as noted in the broader social literature, the current escalating rate of divorces and household fractures among young families often correlates with poor systemic communication. When young adults enter marriage lacking the collaborative communicative skills required to navigate socio-economic or public health pressures, their families break under strain.

Abdurauf Fitrat, in his foundational 1915 monograph *"Oila"* (The Family), argued: *"Where domestic relations are anchored in strong discipline and order, the nation and state will be correspondingly powerful and orderly."* However, our empirical data refines Fitrat's premise: this "discipline" must not be misconstrued as blind, authoritarian compliance (unbalanced conformity). True systemic stability occurs at the interaction intersection—where structural order is coupled with the democratization of dialogue, allowing the younger generation to be actively heard.

5. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the empirical findings and theoretical synthesis, this study advances the following conclusions and practical recommendations:

1. **Redefining Familial Stability:** Global and national policymakers must recognize that family preservation requires more than financial subsidies; it demands a cultural shift toward adaptive communication. The structural strength of a family facing crisis is dictated by its capacity for open dialogue.
2. **Pedagogical Integration:** State-sponsored pre-marital training initiatives, local community councils (*mahallas*), and socio-educational forums should integrate structured modules on communication theory. Couples must be trained not merely in domestic mechanics, but in conflict management strategies and soft-skills communication.
3. **Future Research Trajectories:** Future studies should implement longitudinal tracking to observe how the long-term relational harm generated by high-conformity domestic arguments impacts future marriage durability and mental health outcomes among young adults.

Ultimately, the architecture of a stable home is constructed from a balanced matrix of mutual respect, structural boundaries, and active listening. Individual and national well-being are intrinsically tied to the domestic sphere: only those who find validation and an open voice within their own households can contribute to a resilient, stable, and spiritually progressive society.

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