Persuasive Communication Practices of Parents in Supporting School Dropout Children

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Abstract

School dropout remains a complex social problem influenced by economic constraints, low learning motivation, and unfavorable social environments. In this context, parents play a crucial role as primary communicators in encouraging children to re-engage with education through persuasive communication. This study aims to explore the forms and techniques of parental persuasive communication in guiding school dropout children. A qualitative research design with a case study approach was employed. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation involving parents of school dropout children, children who had returned to school, and local community leaders. The findings reveal that parents apply both verbal and nonverbal forms of persuasive communication. The dominant techniques include motivational encouragement, role modeling, emotional approaches, providing hope, and open dialogue. The effectiveness of parental guidance is strongly influenced by the consistency of communication and the emotional support provided to the children. Despite challenges related to economic limitations and unsupportive environments, persuasive communication practiced by parents significantly contributes to reshaping children's motivation to continue their education. This study highlights the importance of parental persuasive communication as an effective social intervention and provides insights for communities and policymakers in addressing school dropout issues through a communication-based approach.

INTRODUCTION

Persuasive communication is a type of communication that aims to influence the communicant's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors through messages delivered by the communicator (Sari et al., 2025). This form of communication creates an impact that encourages the communicant to act in accordance with what is requested by the communicator. School dropout is one of the educational problems that continues to be a serious concern in Indonesia. Children who leave school before completing their formal education face the risk of a low quality of life and limited future opportunities. Various factors contribute to school dropout, such as family conditions, economic factors, social environment, and a decline in learning

motivation (Widiasanti et al., 2023). In this context, the role of parents is very important as the primary guides within the family to motivate children to continue their education. Persuasive communication becomes an effective strategy that parents can use to guide and influence children's attitudes and behaviors so that they do not drop out of school and are motivated to return to education (Ridwan, 2019).

This article focuses on persuasive communication carried out by parents in guiding school dropout children, in which children who have dropped out of school are influenced to return to school. Persuasive communication is a communication process that aims to influence a person's attitudes and behaviors through messages that are systematically and effectively designed. The problem-solving plan in this study is to identify effective forms of parental persuasive communication in guiding school dropout children and the persuasive communication techniques used by parents in guiding school dropout children (Faozan et al., 2024). The method used in this study is qualitative with a descriptive approach (Prasanti, 2018). Data were collected through in-depth interviews with parents who have school dropout children as well as observations of communication interactions within the family. Data analysis was conducted thematically using the interactive data analysis model of Miles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification (Asipi et al., 2022).

The research problems in this study are how parents apply persuasive communication in guiding school dropout children and what persuasive communication techniques are used by parents in guiding school dropout children. The objectives of this study are to identify and analyze the forms of parental persuasive communication in guiding school dropout children and to identify the persuasive communication techniques that influence the success of persuasive communication (Az-Zahra et al., 2025). Based on the research findings, it is expected that parents can improve their ability to use effective persuasive communication with children, and that educational institutions and the government can provide support in the form of guidance and mentoring programs for school dropout children. In addition, there is a need to increase awareness among families and communities about the importance of education as an investment in children's future.

Furthermore, understanding parental persuasive communication in the context of school dropout is essential because communication within the family functions as a primary foundation for shaping children's values, attitudes, and decision-making processes. Effective persuasive communication allows parents to build trust, strengthen emotional bonds, and create a supportive environment that encourages children to reassess their educational choices. Through continuous interaction and meaningful dialogue, parents are able to address children's concerns, reduce resistance, and foster a sense of responsibility toward education. Therefore, examining parental persuasive communication not only provides insight into individual family dynamics but also contributes to broader discussions on preventive and rehabilitative strategies in addressing school dropout as a social and educational challenge.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research method with a case study approach to gain an in-depth understanding of parental persuasive communication in guiding school dropout children. A qualitative descriptive design was chosen to comprehensively explore social phenomena through words, actions, and observed behaviors rather than numerical data (Htay et al., 2025; Jaafar et al., 2025). This approach enables the researcher to capture the complexity of communication practices within the family context and to objectively and systematically portray the

social realities encountered in the field, in line with the characteristics of qualitative research (Hamilton & Finley, 2019).

The study was conducted in a community identified as having significant issues related to school dropout, based on preliminary observations indicating high dropout rates and limited parental supervision and guidance. The population consisted of parents whose children had previously dropped out of school and later returned to formal education. Purposive sampling was applied to select participants who were considered most relevant and information-rich for addressing the research questions. The primary participants were parents who actively engaged in persuasive communication with their children who had experienced school dropout. In addition, community leaders and educators were included as supplementary informants to enrich the data and enhance the credibility of the findings (Busral et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2023, 2024; Gergen, 2020).

Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain detailed verbal data regarding parents' experiences, perceptions, and persuasive communication techniques. Observations were carried out to directly examine communication interactions within the family and the child's social environment. Documentation, such as field notes, interview recordings, and relevant supporting documents, was also collected to support data analysis. Data validity was strengthened through data triangulation. The data were analyzed thematically using the interactive data analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification (Azungah, 2018). Through this analytical process, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of parental persuasive communication practices in guiding school dropout children.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study shows that family social and economic conditions significantly influence children's education. Some children drop out of school due to economic constraints, environmental influences, and low learning motivation. Observations and interviews revealed that children who had dropped out often displayed impolite communication behaviors, such as not respecting their interlocutors, frequently interrupting, and lacking focus during interactions. These behaviors drew parents' attention because they affected social relationships and the development of children's attitudes (Aisyah et al., 2024; Febriani et al., 2020; Putri et al., 2024; Rahawarin et al., 2023). In this context, parents play a crucial role as primary guides in correcting children's behavior and motivating them to return to school through persuasive communication, which is gentle, attentive, and tailored to the child's psychological condition.

The persuasive communication techniques applied by parents include engaging children in direct discussions, providing emotionally motivating encouragement, and logically explaining the benefits of education. This warm and empathetic approach helps children understand the importance of schooling and a better future while making them more receptive to parental advice. This aligns with persuasive communication theory, which asserts that messages combining rational arguments and emotional appeal are more effective in changing a person's attitude.

However, several obstacles hinder the implementation of persuasive communication. Limited economic resources prevent some families from fully supporting their children's education. In addition, negative peer influences, such as harmful behaviors or unsupportive friendships, can distract children from focusing on school (Faozan et al., 2024; Pradhananga & Elzomor, 2023). Therefore, the

effectiveness of parental persuasive communication must be supported by adequate social and economic conditions to genuinely motivate children to return to school.

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that parental persuasive communication plays a vital role in guiding school dropouts. Communication that is warm, attentive, and tailored to the child's condition can build motivation for returning to school. Parents need to continuously develop their persuasive communication skills, while support from the community and relevant institutions is also essential to create an environment that supports education and child development. Based on observations and interviews, this study further presents the forms and techniques of parental persuasive communication in guiding school dropouts from various perspectives (Humairoh & Agustina, 2021; Sentosa & Apriliani, 2020; Young, 2009).

The results of the study indicate that parental persuasive communication plays a crucial role in guiding children who have dropped out of school. This communication is applied in a dialogic, warm, and empathetic manner, enabling children to feel heard and understood. Parents do not merely convey messages unilaterally but establish an open and honest two-way interaction, providing understanding about the importance of education and the consequences of dropping out. Consistent communication conducted regularly also serves as an important factor in building trust and gradually influencing changes in the children's attitudes.

Forms of Persuasive Communication
Verbal Communication
Verbal communication is the primary form of interaction within the family. Parents use discussions, humor, and directives to engage with their children. Warm and open dialogues help children feel comfortable listening to and responding to parental messages (Rumata, 2017).

Nonverbal Communication
Nonverbal communication includes facial expressions, body movements, tone of voice, and gestures that convey information or emotions without words. This form of communication is particularly important because parental actions and expressions often carry more meaning for children than spoken words (Prasanti & Dewi, 2018).

Techniques of Persuasive Communication
Association Technique
Parents link messages or appeals to experiences or things that are already familiar and meaningful to the child. For example, they may connect the importance of education to the child's aspirations or to respected figures in the community who have succeeded through education. This technique is effective because it makes the message relevant and easily accepted, thereby increasing the motivation to return to school (Salim, 2022).

Integration Technique
` This technique emphasizes building mutual understanding and alignment of perspectives between parents and children. Parents involve children in discussions, listen to their complaints, and collaboratively seek solutions. This integrative approach differs from authoritarian communication, as children feel part of the decision-making process, which enhances responsibility and motivation (Bang, 2018).

Reward Technique
The reward technique uses recognition or appreciation to motivate children, such as praise, small gifts, or acknowledgment of their efforts and progress in learning. This functions as positive reinforcement that strengthens desired behavior, in line with behaviorist theory (Maisarah, 2024). This technique effectively increases children's enthusiasm for learning.

Structuring Technique

The structuring technique involves organizing messages systematically, clearly, and understandably. Parents present the reasons, benefits, and consequences of continuing education in a logical sequence. Well-structured messages reduce confusion and resistance to parental guidance (Mirawati, 2021; Yang et al., 2025).

Read Hearing Technique

This technique emphasizes active listening and appropriate response. Parents attentively listen to the child's complaints, reasons, and emotions, making the child feel valued. Read hearing strengthens the emotional bond, helps parents adjust their communication strategies, and reduces family conflicts (Gunawan et al., 2018; Martoredjo, 2014).

Overall, parental persuasive communication involves a combination of verbal and nonverbal forms, supported by techniques such as association, integration, reward, structuring, and read hearing. A warm, empathetic, and consistent approach can build motivation for children to return to school, improve their attitudes, and change their behavior. Parents who effectively apply these combined techniques not only exert short-term influence but also foster positive communication patterns that support the child's character development sustainably.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study on parental persuasive communication in guiding children who have dropped out of school, it can be concluded that parents implement persuasive communication through both verbal and nonverbal forms. Verbal communication is carried out by providing direct motivation through heartfelt words, rational explanations about the importance of education, and emotionally appealing invitations. Nonverbal communication, on the other hand, is manifested through attention, affectionate behavior, and emotional approaches that demonstrate support without many words. In addition, parents employ various persuasive communication techniques, such as association linking schooling to a better future; integration building emotional closeness; reward providing hope or incentives; emotional structuring appealing to the child's feelings; and red herring redirecting conversations from stressful topics to more positive ones. The application of these forms and techniques of communication has been proven to increase the children's enthusiasm and interest in returning to school, even when they initially face resistance.

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