

THE UNTOLD STORY OF HAVING A FAMILY MEMBER AS TERROR CONVICT: STUDY OF FAMILY HARDINESS & FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Families with members charged for terrorism face immense challenges. This study aims to understand family hardiness and family perspective of families who have family members as terrorists convict. Using a phenomenological approach, we explore family perspectives and family hardiness in three informants (father, mother, older sister of a terror convict). The results of this study reveal that family develops family hardiness through the stages of shock and early adaptation, surrender and believe in God during the hard times, confidence in dealing with difficult circumstances, identifying challenges and formulating constructive attitudes, and working together as a unit to control difficult situations. We also found how one family and its internal communication can possibly become the fuel to form a positive perspective, and to strengthen the belief to move forward. These results imply family hardiness is formed as a whole by the process of how a family accepts the effects of difficult situations and works together as a unit to overcome it. We call for more attention to strengthening support for families, at both social and policy levels, because these actions and initiatives can help families with difficult situations, e.g. a family who has a member as a terrorist convict to cope and adapt successfully, preventing them from experiencing severe psychological burdens and depression as they possibly received stigma and social exclusion.

Keywords: family hardiness; family perspective; terrorism; terror convict; terror suspect

INTRODUCTION

Having a family member who has been charged as a terrorist convict is certainly not a common experience for most families. However, in social life in Indonesia, along with the emergence of terrorism cases, there are consequences that arise for some families whose family members have been legally proven to be a terrorist or to be part of a terrorist organization. Indonesia has a long history of terrorism cases. Fitriani et al. (2018) have described that since early 1942 Indonesia has faced terrorism, from the emergence of the Islamic extremist movement Darul Islam (DI) to cases of terrorism that occurred in the early 2000s onwards. Rivett-Carnag (2016) further detailed the major bomb cases in Indonesia that was confirmed as terrorism cases namely 2002 Bali bombings, 2003 Marriott Hotel bombing, 2004 Australian Embassy bombing in Jakarta, 2005 Bali bombings, 2009 JW Marriott and Ritz-Carlton hotels bombing in Jakarta, and 2011 Cirebon bombing. Despite

the efforts and commitment made by Indonesian government to eradicate terrorism, new cases continue to emerge as a result of new recruitment, regrouping, and resurgence of extremist groups (Fitriani et al., 2018).

In the context of terrorism, majority of social studies initially only focused on studying the perpetrators and victims, the counter terrorism strategy as well as the terrorist network groups development; Fenton (2014) on terrorist ideology and strategies, Zakiyah (2016) on chronicle terrorism and Islamic militancy, Hendriana (2016) on legal protection on victims, Windiani (2017) on counter terrorism strategy, Fitriani et al. (2018) on terrorism network group, Kusuma et al. (2019) on perception of terrorism threat, Ackerman and Burnham (2019) on terrorist ideology, Andalas et al. (2022) on Bali bombing victim trauma, Umam and Arifin (2022) on protection for victims and witnesses. There was just little exploration related to the families of terrorists who certainly received

social impacts ranging from stigma, discrimination and psychological burdens as a result of terrorism events involving their family members. However, over time, several studies have finally begun to explore the families of terrorists through psychology and sociology perspective. Ulfiyatun (2015) explored the meaning of being a 'terrorist' family for the families of terrorism suspects Amrozi and Ali Ghufron. The study concluded the terrorist family has redefined their identity as different among other family in their neighborhood. Another study done by Mujahid (2020) focused to explore family role on terrorist disengagement and rehabilitation. Sujoko and Mukti (2018) described the striving for superiority on terrorist family through their study. The study explored how family members face social stigma by accepting the stigma itself, being patient, being open and maintaining interaction with surrounding. Hidayat and Husna (2021) also found the psychological state of the family of terror convict was affected by how much social support the family received from neighborhood and society in general. Study from Adina and Lestari (2018) also described how family support helped the ex-terrorists who follow de-radicalization process in building their self-confidence.

The families of terrorists face a different way of life. Several previous studies have explored how families of terrorists face quite a number of consequences, ranging from stigma, prejudice, discrimination to psychological burdens. Previous study by Aisyah et al. (2014) described stigma and social discrimination toward former terrorist convicts and their family appeared in the form of isolation and reserve discrimination. Furthermore, they also explained the effect of discrimination and prejudice includes the deterioration of self-worth, self-esteem and well-being as well. Ariefuzzaman (2016) explained that negative stigma experienced by family of terror convicts particularly children result in social exclusion. Hidayat and Husna (2021) described how stigma gave severe psychological distress (shame, self-isolation,

anxiety, fear) on family who has family member as terror convicts. Case study by Arimbi (2016) also explored about how stigma affected children of terrorist defendants because the stigma itself was not only associated with the terrorist defendants but also associated with their wives, and children. Rufaedah and Putra (2018) further explained the stigma and social exclusion experienced by the wives of terrorist defendants and its psychological distress effect. Their study concluded that the wives of terror convicts received verbal abuse and even physical violence threats. In result, they possessed deep sense of shame and trauma.

It is important to explore stories that have been forgotten, the untold story from the family (father, mother, sister, wife, or children) itself regarding their family members who have become terror convicts and how they develop hardiness as a family with given background. Why is this important? A family is basically made up of each family member. Family is the smallest and most basic social unit for each individual to grow and develop both physically and mentally. Each member's existence and their current situation will give impact for the others (Enrique et al. 2007). Therefore, it is crucial to explore and understand how their family hardiness is developed. As noted, when stressor or life changing episode occurs, a family needs to cope and adapt. Family hardiness becomes a source to overcome the stressful event. Previous studies have explored how family hardiness becomes an important aspect to understand the strength and function of family particularly in challenging and difficult situations. The majority of previous studies on family hardiness mostly focused on families with disability members (having psychological illness or physical illness), such as parents with autistic children (Weiss et al., 2013), caregivers for disabled older adults (Clark, 2002), family caregivers for cancer patients (Jeong et al., 2015), families of children with asthma (Donnelly, 1994), family with heart failure patients (Peng et al., 2021), family with

PTSD patients (Jovanovic et al., 2011), parents of children with developmental disorders (Gugliandolo et al., 2023), family caregivers for people with schizophrenia (Hsiao & Tsai, 2014), and parents of children with Duchenne muscular dystrophy (Chen & Clark, 2010). However, there is no previous research that focuses on exploring family hardiness in the families of terror convicts who actually face difficult situations.

Maddi (2002) described hardiness as an individual resilience attribute that refers to one's capacity to efficiently cope the hard situations. Hardiness has been further explained by Bartone (2007) as a personality form that gives the basis for the development of resilient reaction to difficult life events. On the context of family hardiness, McCubbin et al. (1986) conceptualized family hardiness as a family's set of internal potencies that allow them to take an active role in handling stressful circumstances and is demonstrated by the family's sense of control over the consequences of difficult situations and the capability to regard change as a growth-promoting chance.

Raisanen (2013) also elaborated the difference between individual hardiness and family hardiness lies in how situations and external causes that occur affect the family as a unitary unit, not per family member and how the whole family response and cope with the given situations. Several previous studies highlighted the crucial role of family hardiness as well on the successful adaptation when family face stressful situations (Greeff et al., 2006; Greeff & Walt, 2010; Greeff & Wentworth, 2009). Moreover, family hardiness is believed to affect the process of how one family builds their resilience when the family encounters stressful circumstances (McCubbin & McCubbin, 1996).

In a deeper context, McCubbin and Thompson (1987) explained that basically family hardiness consists of several interrelated aspects. The first aspect is co-oriented commitment which is manifested in

commitment when working together as a family unit when overcoming difficult situations or conditions. Moreover, the second aspect is confidence, the family as a unity has a sense of confidence to overcome problems, find solutions and survive in difficulties or stressful conditions. They also explained the third aspect of family hardiness, namely challenge. In this aspect, the family's point of view sees the difficult situation being faced as a challenge. In this case the perspective that is owned by the family is positive and belongs to the family in one unit. And lastly, the fourth aspect is control. Control in this context refers to how families have control over what they are facing, particularly stressful and difficult circumstances. Instead of being victimized and passive, the family has action and decisions in dealing with given situations.

This study will shed the light of family hardiness from the family of terror convict point of view. It will provide a new explanation in the context of family hardiness that exists in the families of terrorist convicts. Is the pattern in it the same as family hardiness in other families or not? The family characteristics of a terrorist convict are certainly different from those of families who have children or family members who have physical illnesses, which they are the type of family that has been researched under the theme of family hardiness. Hence, we want to explore whether there is a difference or not.

Aside from family hardiness, it is crucial as well to explore and understand perspective from family members of terrorist convict, particularly how they have shared and unshared perspective. Their current perspectives basically influence how they cope with the situation. As noted, when stressor or life changing episode occurs, a family needs to cope and adapt with given background. Therefore, exploring family perspective can also help understand how family hardiness is formed. We view that exploration of these two domains will provide a better understanding regarding how the family of a terrorist convict can have a

collective understanding and collective efforts to continue to survive in difficult times.

On the contextual of family perspective, perspective is a term that combines several aspects like cognition, emotion, values, culture, and worldview to give a broader and more informed meaning to people's perceptions. It refers to the perspective that one chooses while making decisions or judgments, which is influenced by their interpretive lens. This lens is formed by actively filtering and framing sensory impressions after they are received. A person's point of view is unique and is shaped by their life experiences, social identities, belief systems, and circumstances which have an equal impact as their inherent traits (Baker, 2024).

Moreover, Jager et al. (2012) explained there are two kinds of perspectives, shared perspective and individual perspective. They described shared perspectives as the part of one perspective that generalizes over, or is shared by, multiple family members. Meanwhile, the individual perspective is owned personally which can be overlapping or not among family members' perspectives. When the individual perspectives of each family member overlap, a family perspective emerges in which there is an understanding of something that is felt and seen as the same by all family members. Although there will be a portion of personal perspectives (unique perspective) that do not overlap and become different individual views and are not included as part of the shared perspective.

More specifically, it is described that there are two dimensions of family perspective. The first dimension is family interaction, related to how family can perform effective communication among their members, can develop and implement effective problem solving when facing certain circumstances and also have affective responses to each other. The second dimension is family structure. It refers to family persistence as a unit and how each family member has their roles to support each other, gives affective

involvement and possess behavior control which support building dependability as family (Jager et al., 2012).

In terms of this family perspective, we also consider that this study will provide a new understanding on the perspective of families who have a family member who is a terrorist convict. Thus, understanding the perspective of family members as well as the hardiness of the family of terrorist convict is urgently needed, in order to obtain an overview on how the family goes through life after an unusual and difficult situation occurred.

Previous studies are limited in exploring family hardiness and perspective on family of terror convict. This study wanted to explore in deeper context in it. We propose research questions as follows; 1) How does a family of a terror convict develop family hardiness in their difficult situation? 2) How is their perspective facing the situation as family of a terror convict?

METHOD

We use a qualitative method in this study, particularly implementing phenomenological approach. Our participant characteristics is a family who have a member as terror convict. The number of informants are three (father, mother, elder sister) in a family who have one of its members that has been arrested as terror convict. The determination of informants in this study used purposive sampling, in which we approached a family (X family) whose family member (X) had been arrested by the Special Detachment 88 Anti-Terrorism Unit of the Indonesian National Police. We received our initial information about this family from our research colleagues who happen to live in the same region and know about this case and how this family is dealing with their current circumstance. Our study was approved by the boards of the Institute of Research and Community in our university, with approval ethical clearance number B-1583.1/Un.02/L3/TU.03/05/2021.

We conducted a preliminary study by tracing the news documentation related to the

terrorism case involving X, as well as by conducting a brief interview with one informant who is a significant other who knows X's background. According to informant M (the neighbor), suspect X has a wife, three siblings, a father and a mother, where they live in a regency in Indonesia. From this neighbor, we then approached the X family and executed in depth interviews with three members of X family. For the main data we used semi-structured interviews to collect data on three informants. Key themes for the interview were co-oriented commitment, confidence to overcome problems, viewing difficult situations as challenges, and family control for family hardiness (McCubbin & Thompson, 1987). Meanwhile the key themes for the family perspective were family interaction and family structure (Jager et al., 2012).

Interviews with X's family were carried out 6 months after X's arrest by the Special

Detachment 88 Anti-Terrorism Unit of the Indonesian National Police. The arrest was carried out in March, and we interviewed X's father, mother and older sister in August (in the same year). Interviews were conducted at family X's house with two interviews. The duration of the first interview was 3 hours, while the duration of the second interview was 3.5 hours. We conducted the interview process for the three informants simultaneously (Father, Mother, Older Sister), not separately one by one because it is based on the research objective of exploring family hardiness and family perspective from the intact family unit. All interviews with 3 informants were recorded and transcribed into verbatim by asking the informants for consent (informed consent). We also maintain the confidentiality of informants by using anonymity and initials. Data of informants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.
Informants and their Status

Category	Informant I	Informant II	Informant III
Status in Family ^a	Father	Mother	Older sister
Sex	Male	Female	Female
Age	70 years old	59 years old	37 years old

Note.

^aRelation with X terrorist convict.

Our data was analyzed using the analysis of significant statements, the generation of meaning units, and the development of what Moustakas (1994) called an essence description. The steps are interactive in practice, with various stages that are interrelated and not always in hierarchical manner. The steps included transcribing interview, coding, generating description, representing themes, interpretation, and conclusion (Creswell, 2014). We carry out verbatim coding in the data analysis process, where we use open coding. We reviewed the data, broke down the data obtained from the interviews by finding themes and patterns, then labeled them and put them in each category according to the themes that were

obtained. The validity and credibility of our data is obtained from the verification stage, namely member checking. Specifically, we checked the data obtained from the informants. The aim of this stage is to justify whether the data we obtain is in accordance with the data provided by the informants. We carried out this member checking after the data collection was completed.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study is to shed the light on how family hardiness and family perspective are developed in a family with certain condition having a member who was arrested as terrorist. Reflecting that family

hardiness and shared perspective within a family are two elements that form the basis of how a family can go through difficult times, we try to explore further how these two elements are then manifested through several aspects in it. Study in this context is still quite limited, thus we try to dissect the journey of a family that has particular challenges, becoming the family of a suspected terrorist where they face negative stigma and more unpredictable consequences in their daily life. Facing the reality that one of their family members was suspected of being a terrorist certainly requires mental strength and hardiness in living a life after the incident occurred. We focused on the exploration in several areas, namely, shock and early adaptation through mutual commitment, surrender, and believe in God during the hard times, confidence in dealing with difficult circumstance, identifying challenges, and formulating constructive attitudes, and working together as a unit to control difficult situation.

Exploration on the interview material using the concept of family hardiness and its four main components, allows us to reflect and identify how a family can really survive in difficult conditions that are full of stigma. Being the family of a suspected terrorist is certainly more likely to accept stigma, prejudice, and even discrimination. Several previous studies have also described that the families of terrorist convict received and experienced stigma, prejudice and discrimination, and were prone to experiencing psychological distress and depression (Aisyah et al., 2014; Ariefuzzaman, 2016; Arimbi, 2016; Hidayat & Husna, 2021; Rufaedah & Putra, 2018). On the context of family X, three family members who became informants for this study explained the journey of being family who has one of its members as terror convict. By understanding the foundation that nurtures family hardiness (McCubbin & Thompson, 1987) and family perspective (Jager et al., 2012), our exploration reveals how a family labeled as a terrorist family can develop the

strength to survive and become strong together, relying on each other as a unitary unit. The whole perspective and hardiness of this family keeps them from falling into despair. We found that the process of developing family hardiness in family X, particularly those represented by three family members, namely father, mother, and older sister, had gone through a process that was not easy. Below, we present a description of how developing an active attitude to deal with and control difficult situations requires cooperation and mutual understanding within the family unit.

Shock and early adaptation through mutual commitment

An important element in the process of dealing with difficult situations is early adaptation. The early adaptation includes their initial emotional response and how their mutual commitment was developed to cope with the given difficult circumstance. In the presentation of three informants regarding their initial response to the fact that his/her son or her brother was caught as a terrorist, the emotional shock was clearly illustrated.

The formation of family hardiness in this family started from the phase when they decided together to accept the fact, as well as when they make agreements and joint steps to be taken in dealing with the situation. They did not shut down themselves and did not remain in despair, but they decided to continue their normal activities and mingle with society. Their interpretation of the difficult phase as a process of forging patience and becoming stronger than before, is also a crucial aspect of how this family's hardiness develops well. Huang (1995) described both individual and family hardiness become crucial resource to overcome stress and difficult situations. Moreover, hardiness also promotes family adaptation and adjustment when facing difficult episodes. When an individual or family has hardiness, they will perceive life changes or difficult situations as challenges that need to be faced positively.

For the father of suspected terrorist X, the initial response to the fact that his son was caught as a terrorist was a state of shock and confusion. As a result of the shock, he physiologically experienced an increased blood pressure. As the father explained:

“...it was reported that my son was caught on Friday, so I was confused, surprised, my blood pressure went up.” (Father)

He expressed regret and sadness that for as long as he could remember he had advised his son. But in the end, his son was arrested by the police because he was indicated joining a terrorist network group.

“I as a parent felt confused and disappointed, why my son is difficult to accept my advice. In the end he was arrested by the police because he was proved of joining a terrorist group network. I feel sad and guilty as well, why my son became a member of a terrorist group network, because after all... I as a parent could not help him.” (Father)

In general, the other family members also felt tremendous shock. The mother felt anxious, embarrassed and could not do her usual activities. She blames herself as a mother who can't educate her son. Meanwhile, the older sister described how as a family unit they felt sad and shocked and cried together when they faced the fact that her brother was arrested as a terrorist, even though the family had sensed the indication that his younger brother had joined a terrorist group before the arrest day. McCubbin and Thompson (2014) described when families face sudden life changes or sudden tragedy, they will undergo two stages namely the adjustment stage and the adaptation stage. The factors that determine how well the families adjust and adapt to the circumstance are their interaction with the stressor, their rate of vulnerability, their typology, their resource to resist, their problem solving and their coping. In this case, most members of X family firstly experienced the adjustment and following that, the adaptation phase. In the adjustment stage,

there was a sudden change in their daily routines, but there were no family function changes that occurred. Further ahead, in the adaptation stage, there was a major shift, namely the development of mutual commitment to respond to the crisis they faced.

“The day after the arrest of my son, I couldn't go to work, couldn't eat. I have mixed feelings, shame, and restlessness. I feel that I can't educate my son, I can't make my son behave in a right way.” (Mother)

“...we cried when we heard the news that my younger brother was arrested as a terrorist. We shocked but we previously guessed that my younger brother did join a terrorist group.” (Elder sister)

Following the shock response in the early days of facing reality, the family then held a discussion to make a family agreement regarding what to do next to deal with this difficult situation. They built a mutual commitment to accept what happened and try to continue with their daily activities as usual, even though it feels heavy in the early days. As McCubbin and Thompson (1987) explained that one of family hardiness aspects is co-oriented commitment. This aspect appears in how a family develops their commitment to work together as a family unit when overcoming difficult circumstances. As a family, the father, the mother, and the elder sister revealed that they and other members of the nuclear family held deliberations in the early days of facing X's arrest. In the deliberation they agreed that they as a family accepted the fact that X had been arrested as a terrorist. They agreed to accept what happened and they realized together that there was nothing they could do about the arrest, but they had the option to continue with their daily lives and activities.

“We discussed together; we talked about the facts that my son was arrested. What can we do? ..nothing. Like it or not, we have to accept it.” (Father)

“I joined the discussion with my father, my mother and my eldest brother. I suggested that we need to accept this destiny, even though it is very difficult. On the early days after the arrest occurred, to be honest I did lock myself up, didn’t leave the house and do activities. I was afraid that neighbors or people would ask about my younger brother’s arrest. But of course, we can’t behave like that and hide forever. If I dissolve and fall, people will think I’m joining my brother’s forbidden sect.” (Elder sister)

“...in the end we must face all these things, we decided to move on. I can’t keep shutting myself away and I need to work.” (Mother)

In this context, they decided to accept the arrest of one of their family member gracefully, although it still required a process. They also decided on a mutual commitment to continue this life by carrying out daily activities. This is certainly the basis for the formation of family hardiness in this difficult phase. Commitments stimulate individuals’ behavior can be predicted in the face of fluctuations in their purposes and interests, hence facilitating how individuals plan and coordinate their joint actions (Michael & Pacherie, 2014).

Surrender and believe in God during the hard times

During the time and after they found out that their family member had been arrested as a terror convict and was being detained, the X family started to develop confidence in the foundation of their religiosity. The father reflected his belief during the hard time because of surrendering himself to God.

“... I prayed and drew closer to God, and it convinced me. I can deal with this difficult situation. I pray for my son too. I surrender to God, so I believe that we are capable.” (Father)

The mother also described how she felt receiving strength from God, thus she felt she

can face the situation. She believes the strength from God fosters confidence that everything that happens, there must be a way out.

“I feel that whatever the problem, no matter how hard it is, there must be a way out. And God gave us strength. We have to face it. We pray.” (Mother)

Confidence in dealing with difficult circumstance

In the context of accepting the reality that one of their family members is a terrorist, the X family tries to build their strength and confidence that as a unit they believe they can get through it. As confidence is also a crucial element to build family hardiness, McCubbin and Thompson (1987) defined confidence in family hardiness concept as how confident a family is in their own capacity to endure difficult circumstances and find solutions together. The mother described how she and all family members could not help but have to deal with it. Meanwhile, the elder sister also felt confident that she and her family members were able to face all of this.

“We have to face it.” (Mother)

“As time goes on, I believe that we will be able to face all of this, including this fateful predicament.” (Elder sister)

When families believe they can face the situation particularly the difficult and complex one and willing to endure the hardship they may face in daily life situation, they will form strength and resistance source and finally will encounter the stressful circumstance as a unit (McCubbin and Thompson, 1987). Previous study also described when families or individuals develop hardiness within their selves, they will change their perception in viewing difficult situations as less stressful event and change the term of stressful into more positive way (Crowley et al, 2003).

Identifying challenges and formulating constructive attitudes

In viewing the difficult situation that occurred due to the arrest of one of the family members as a terrorist, this family has formed positive view and attitude during their turbulence time. Of course, this positive and constructive attitude does not appear suddenly and easily. The process of viewing everything that happens as something that brings wisdom, takes time.

We particularly found that the arrest of one of the family members as a suspected terrorist has a difficult impact on the family as a unit, and how the response of the family as a unit is indeed more visible as the strength of this family.

These results imply that family hardiness is formed as a whole from the process of how a family accepts the effects of a situation and works together as a unit to overcome it. This is in line with what has been described by Raisanen (2013) that family hardiness is different from individual hardiness. The difference lies in how external situations and conditions affect the family as a unit, not per individual family member, as well as how the family responds collectively to difficult situations that occur and seeks solutions. The three informants in this study emphasized in their answers that their family has the strength to face difficult situations together because there has been a collective agreement as a unit to accept the situation, strengthen each other, and move forward whatever happens. The elder sister described how she and other family members from time to time tried to find meaning and lessons from this difficult situation. They tried to see the arrest of her younger brother as a phase to cultivate patience. This challenge certainly requires the right attitude to face it.

“...We learned to find the meaning behind all these things that happened, what lessons we can take. My eldest brother also always advises us to be patient. Yah... maybe... this incident is indeed a time where our patience is finally being nurtured.” (Elder sister)

The elder sister used the word “being nurtured” to described how their patience as a unit going through a gradual development process. She also linked the phase of finding meaning and lesson with the situation. She then further highlighted how in the early phase, she and all family members identify the things that may appear as challenges and need to be handled with a positive attitude.

“In the beginning, we tried to think about what unpleasant things we would receive after the arrest day. Yes, I even had locked myself up for fear of being asked by many neighbors in early days. But after that we realized we all had to face it. I try to continue activities and interactions with people. I think I still need to socialize, I join social gatherings, and religious activities with people.” (Elder sister)

She further explained how at the beginning she and other family members were trapped in the realm of fear about unpleasant things that might happen and had to be faced, hence at that time she even isolated herself. But over time, she realized that she needed to face all the risks and continue her existing activities. In particular, the elder sister decided to continue her social interaction and activities with other people in her neighborhood. Further ahead, the mother further described how she and her family tried to see this ordeal as a process to grow together. She underlined that all family members shared support to each other in terms of how to strengthen their effort in handling burdens, disappointment, and sadness. And as a result, she felt all family members became closer than before.

“We give each other advice and support, we also pray. This is indeed a trial that we all have to go through together, maybe it will make us stronger than before. Yes...disappointed, sadness, and burden... we have it all these times. But we try to deal with it together. In the end, because of this incident, we all became closer too.” (Mother)

However, they only received support and reinforcement from nuclear family members.

Meanwhile, their extended family tends to be perceived as not providing support. The mother and elder sister concluded that their extended family members may be confused about how to provide support, even though they hoped to receive support from their extended family.

“No one came, from our big family, so... only me, my parents and my eldest brother who supported each other. Maybe they are confused about how to act, even though we actually need support from them. If they come, it will be even better.” (Elder sister)

Working together as a unit to control difficult situation

When a family experiences a difficult situation, they may need to work together as a unit. It is important that the family has a sense of being in control so that they won't be trapped just as passive victims of the given circumstance. The mother described that they tried to socialize and carry out activities as usual, they did not avoid their neighbors, so as not to fall into a situation that actually made them sad and restless. In strengthening themselves, they advise each other, support each other by giving motivational words so that no one feels alone in this family.

“We continue to socialize, we don't avoid our neighbors, we don't hide, we face it, because if we keep ourselves away from society, we'll be sadder in this situation.” (Mother)

“... When it comes to strengthening ourselves, yes, we feel as one unit, we must strengthen each other. Giving advice and motivation, that's what we do, so that we can get through this ordeal.” (Mother)

The elder sister also described how she as part of the family felt grateful and lucky that she received reinforcement from other family members. Likewise, she tried to give reinforcement to other family members. Her

family, in essence, can respond to this situation proportionally, not falling into despair. Her family kept quiet trying to understand the situation, but also did not necessarily close themselves off from the outside world. Her family is not annoyed with everything that happened and they must deal with it, because in the end they feel they belong to each other.

“Yes, I am lucky and grateful, I have my older brother who always encourages us to be patient and optimistic during this hard situation, He shared advice and motivation, also my parents gave advice that we need to be patient and live with this situation. My family didn't fall, we were able to respond appropriately. We were silent for a while to identify the things we must deal with, but we were not irritated or shut off ourselves from our neighbors. Ya... the point is we strengthen each other, remind each other, and have each other.” (Elder sister)

In facing the consequences of the arrest of their family members as terrorists, this family also tried to develop constructive attitudes and decisions together. The father explained that he was trying to find valid information regarding his son who was arrested back in the early days. He tried to carry out his duty as a parent to take care of the problems caused by his son. He and all family members decided to keep looking forward and put his hope that his son one day would realize his mistake. In addition, the mother also described that the joint decision to keep going that had been implemented, ultimately made the neighbors show their support. This is certainly an additional reinforcement for her and other family members to keep going.

“I was looking for info when my son was arrested, because that's my job as a father. At that time... I received a lot of confusing information. I also tried to search for further information about my son's schedule on attending the trial and how long the prison sentence will be. As a

father, yes, I hope that later... my son will realize his mistake that he has joined a forbidden group. I hope he will come to his senses and repent.” (Father)

“They were nice to us. Some... even though not all of them, even strengthened me, gave words of encouragement, other neighbors also gave advice to strengthen our faith and draw closer to God, so that we can get through all of this.” (Mother)

Communication within family

When experiencing certain circumstances, particularly the difficult one, a family will have its perspective regarding the situation. This perspective can appear in the form of a shared perspective developed by family as a unit, as well as an individual perspective belongs to each family member. Jager et al. (2012) described individual perspective can be overlapping or not among family members' perspectives. When the individual perspectives of each family member overlap, a family perspective emerges in which there is an understanding of something that is felt and seen as the same by all family members.

Three members of family X, father, mother, and elder sister described their shared perspectives regarding the conditions they faced. Being a family that may be considered as a terrorist family is certainly not easy. Broadly speaking, the three of them explained that there was a common view in which they view difficult situations as a way to forge themselves, be patient, and become stronger than before. They also shared that as a family they have a hope that in the future, the situation will improve over time, and the family member who has been caught as terrorist can realize his mistakes.

“Behind everything that happened... there is a lesson, making us more patient, stronger.” (Elder sister)

“... right, we became closer after this incident, strengthening each other.” (Father)

“We hope that my son, who has now been arrested by the police, can come to his senses, repent, obey state regulations and return to the right path.” (Mother)

In the form of family interaction which has been an important dimension in family perspective, they also expressed solid interaction regarding the difficult situation they need to go through.

“We communicated intensely with each other, discussed, and talked about what we should do because of this incident.” (Elder sister)

“In the nuclear family, we strengthen each other and keep in touch. Even though there was no support from my extended family, I needed it but only one person came at that time. Yes, it's okay, the important thing is that the nuclear family strengthens each other.” (Mother)

The mother highlighted that it is important to support and strengthen each other by always keeping in touch among all family members. Although she described that there is a difference in communication and support between the extended family and the nuclear family. After all, intense communication and support within the nuclear family was seen as the most important thing for the process of strengthening all family members so that they can carry out daily activities in difficult situations.

Jager et al. (2012) also explained family interaction also includes how a family has affective responses to each other among its family members, and how they can develop and implement effective problem solving when facing certain circumstances. The elder sister explained that she and other family members communicated positively. In particular, she felt that her older brother always gave her encouragement and comforting words. Likewise, she tries to give positive affirmations as well every time she discusses and communicates with her brother and parent. In terms of developing problem

solving, the father described their process in having mutual agreement on how they should respond to the situation. They agree to cope with the situation by continuing their activities and supporting each other in daily life so that each family member does not feel alone in dealing with the situation.

“We always talk from heart to heart, encouraging each other even though we still feel sad and restless. Our communication is good, especially with my older brother, I received many words of encouragement. He calmed me down with his advice. So yeah... I also tried to do the same thing for my mom and my dad. I tried to calm them down and offer them words of encouragement.” (Elder sister)

“Yeah... the way we deal with our current situation is by making our mutual agreement, we have to live our daily lives, do routines again, socialize again. We also have to support each other, if anyone in this family feels sad because of this situation, the rest of family members need to give support. So yeah, supporting each other. That’s how we handle the situation.” (Father)

Specific roles within family

On the second dimension of family perspective namely family structure, one family is described has a good structure when family members in it have their roles to support each other, gives affective involvement and possess behavior control which support building dependability as family (Jager et al., 2012). The elder sister described how each family member has expressed her/his comforting word and attitude to one another in order to strengthen the family itself during the hard time after the arrest of her younger brother. This type of caring attitude may indicate the development of affectionate involvement from one family member to another in this family.

“We strengthen each other through advice, words that can comfort each other. I feel

like this ordeal, even though it’s hard, can actually make us express and give care and love to each other.” (Elder sister)

The father also explained how he and other family members build strength together because they feel that this difficult circumstance must be faced together. Each other’s participation in strengthening all family members convinced him that this family can get through this difficult time. Furthermore, the mother described that she felt that this family could be relied on in overcoming this uncomfortable situation. Each family member strengthens each other and can show support and affection.

“We went through this together, so we became strong together, and that makes me believe we can face it until the end. We are all involved in strengthening one another.” (Father)

“I feel this family can be relied on. Each member of my family can be counted on so we can deal with this difficult situation. Yes... because each of us supports each other and shows concern and compassion.” (Mother)

In a practical context, the elder sister explained that his father always acted as an update of information and news related to his younger brother’s case from the police or court. His father was fully committed to informing the entire family and providing advice on dealing with all eventualities.

“My father always brought the latest information regarding my younger brother, from the police or the court. My father also strengthened us to be ready for all eventualities. That’s what finally made us not dissolve into despair. We have control over this situation by holding hands together.” (Elder sister)

Previous studies showed the function of family communication and interaction on how families can strengthen their positive perspective and overcome difficult situations

and stress in adaptation process (Afifi & Nussbaum, 2006; Herrero et al., 2020). McCubbin and Patterson (1983) explained how certain balance and fit when adaptation occurred in given situation makes families can function effectively. More specifically, families need to maintain a portion of their capacity and resources to face the challenge they have; thus, family units and individual members can finally achieve successful adaptation. Afifi and Nussbaum (2006) further explained when family members have supported each other, they form communal coping which was believed to become an effective form to cope with difficult situations together, particularly when families face severe stressors. Communal coping will increase the chance to foster collective resolve and hardiness as well as resilience. This is in line with what we found in the X family where each member described how they shaped the strength to cope with the current situation based on support and empathetic communication within the family. In this study we also found new aspect which may shape the family hardiness, namely surrender and believe in God during the hard times. This religious foundation strengthens the way the X family develops communication and hardiness as a unit. Therefore, we conclude that strengthening family communication among family members can be the key point to fostering successful adaptation and in dealing with difficult situations and severe stressors. In result, more positive family perspective can be developed, and family hardiness can be achieved as well.

Limitations

Several limitations should be acknowledged in this study. First, the present study only explored one family so that in understanding family hardiness and perspective, it relies on the experience of X family. Second, this study also did not involve extracting data through daily observations of the informants so that the data obtained only relied on the results of interviews

Additionally, a number of factors could be taken into account in future studies. It may be

important to explore using observation technique to complete the in-depth interview, as well as it may be important to use a mixed method approach, so that in addition to qualitative exploration through in-depth interviews, quantitative measurements are also carried out with the family hardiness scale and family perspective scale. Furthermore, it is also necessary to increase the variety of families involved where researchers need to involve families whose family members have been sentenced to death as terrorism suspects, so that patterns of family hardiness and perspectives may be revealed with different dynamics.

CONCLUSION

This study has found the process of developing family hardiness of X family through 5 phases; shock and early adaptation through mutual commitment, surrender and believe in God during the hard times, confidence in dealing with difficult circumstance, identifying challenges and formulating constructive attitudes, and working together as a unit to control difficult situation. Their capacity to grow together in the midst of difficult situations also occurred through a gradual process. We found that this family has a great extent of successful process in developing their strength to face difficult situations. It is not something impossible to have for a family with a difficult situation, although it takes time to grow and maintain that strength. Our study also provides one new element within family hardiness which may shape better the family hardiness, namely surrender and believe in God during the hard times. This religious foundation strengthens the way the X family develops communication and hardiness as a unit. This study also concludes in the realm of their perspective as a family in viewing their own condition was built on how they communicated and cooperated with each other and strengthening each other according to their respective roles in the family. With specific focus on family hardiness and family perspective, our findings lead us to call for more attention to strengthening support for

families, at both social and policy levels. Because these actions and initiations can help families with difficult situation e.g. a family who has a member as terrorist convict to cope and adapt successfully and develop family hardiness gracefully. It also prevents them from experiencing anxiety, psychological burdens and depression as they possibly receive stigma, prejudice, and social exclusion. To sum up, the results we obtained also provide a more comprehensive understanding of the process of family hardiness development and how positive family perspective was shaped through supportive communication among family members.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to thank all informants for generously sharing their thoughts about family hardiness and their perspective as family unit, and also to our colleague Ahmad Zuhri who patiently accompanying us collecting the data.

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This study is funded by Research, Development and Training Agency, Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia.

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