

# Life experience of children living with extended family



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## Background Information

All of us, despite what social status we are, whether we are poor or rich or young or old, we still belong to a family. Our family can come from either immediate or extended family. Immediate family means we belong in a unit where parents and siblings are living together, therefore, in contrary extended family means living together in the same roof with other family members like grandparents, uncles and aunties, in laws, cousins and sometimes stepsiblings. According to Roberts (2010), families with many members in the house make an inconsistent return with about 25% in the 40's, however decreases to 12% in the 80's but then shows increasing of 16% in the 90's. The main reason of why extended families still exists these days is compassion at heart. When elderly relative tentatively become old or young relatives are jobless or family that could not find any babysitter, family members tend to take up the role as a caregiver, just like a line from Robert Frost ' Home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in' (Roediger, 2014; Lathem 2006) and take care of the family's wellbeing. A house that filled with many relatives represent love and happiness, despite any reasons, there will always be some issues upfront for example conflict between family members and in-laws or the competition between both families in aspect such as financial and education as seen in Goodwin's research. Goodwin (2012) states that past studies back in the 30s had found that conflict between parents greatly affect children especially in their emotional state.

The question of ' why children are acting such ways' has been lingering in the mind of everyone especially the parents. They do not know or

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understand the reason of why their children are acting in that way, for example during family gathering, children sometimes seen to be quite for the whole gathering or they rather skipped the gathering than attending. Sometimes, children are put under pressure by their parents to be the same level or a level higher than their cousin in order to 'save faces' for their parents. However, Goodwin (2012) also said that conflict is part of our life, not many people realised how much children are affected by it and also not realising that children have feelings of their own. The reason of why this topic are chosen is because family plays a role in child's development (Waites, 2012; Sexton & Schuster, 2008), but however not all parents understand the behind reason of children's emotion.

This research is supported by Bowen's work where he did an in-depth research that he highlights multigenerational approach shows relationship that connects many family members across generations in terms of emotions, thoughts and belief (Dattilio, 2006 as cited in Kerr & Bowen, 1988, Miller, Anderson & Keala 2004). Furthermore, in order for the multigenerational to keep living, it has linked to long term relationships with family members and also coping the action of others by means one family taking care of elderly, another family members follow suits and thus it continues (Dattilio, 2006 as cited in Kerr & Bowen, 1988). But however, according to Dattilio (2006), Bowen later found that there are no mere exposure with individual and family to link with multigenerational transmission as the original findings were inconsistent, only to happen at emotional category. Other than that, the reason why extended family still exists these day is because they provides beneficiate towards success in

education through attribution from first cousins and immediate siblings (Jaeger, 2012). Hence the aim of this research is to find out the experiences of children living in extended house. Although most past studies have done towards different race and also in bigger country with bigger population like California (Figueroa & Williams, 2012) and South Africa (Waites, 2009), this research is focusing in our country, Malaysia where all five participants with different race from small island which is Penang to be representative.

### Theoretical Framework

The research will focus on the life experience children faced when living in an extended family. With this, in order to be more in-depth, emotion theory modified by Schachter-Singer, a two factor emotion based theory that implies human feels arousal first, then make reasoning to why people arouse and identify it as an emotion are used. Nevertheless, children are human and human shows emotion no matter what situation they are facing. Parents that bring warmth to their children actually influences social life of the children and also their development in emotional aspect (Aunola, Tolvanen, Viljaranta & Nurmi, 2013 as cited in Hart, Newell & Olsen, 2003). Adding to that, another aspect the research are looking into is the parenting styles where they have three different approaches, affective also known as emotional control, behavioural control and psychological approach (Aunola et al, 2013), depending on which styles the parents living in an extended family used that could influence and affect the emotion of the child.

### Research Question

The research focus mainly on the experiences of children living in extended family. With that, the research question for the research will be ' what is the experience of children living in extended family?'

### Significant of the Study

The important of this study is to learn about the life experience of child living in a house with many generations of members as children is in their growing stage, it is wise to learn about their personal experience as their experience will be different from adults. Besides, nowadays many members of family are staying together with other family member as to save living cost and family bonding. Also, parents will have a better understanding of children's emotion through the study and would be able to find appropriate educating approach to their children for a better lifestyle.

The limitation of this research is the number of participants being interviewed due to limitation of time. This research will only focus on a total of five participants which will be relatively small to represent for children living in an extended family. Other than that, this research will only focus in Penang and the analysis of data might shows different results as compared to bigger country with more population. Also, some participants might be hiding some of their feelings or might fake their experiences when interview is in progress as they might feel shy or inappropriate to share.

### Research Paradigm

The paradigm proposed in this research is post-positivism. Each participant has their own perspective and different thoughts on their feelings, which is

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why this research uses post-positivism as it does not only focus on single reality. Additionally, to understand how an individual feels and behave, post-positivism brings the first hand life experience of children to the research for better understanding of why they behave and how they feel living in a house with many family members.

## Methods

### Approach

The research mainly focus on the experience of children living in extended family. As this research is more about experiences of children, consequently the design of the research is a qualitative type as supported in Figueroa & Williams (2012). With that, the research focuses into a phenomenological study where the data collected will be using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Phenomenological study provides us with a real life experience on a concept, as for this study, the aim for the study of experience of children living in extended family will be investigated for further understanding on the matter. The experiences and personal view of the children are examine through description and analysis of the data collected from the interview. Through phenomenological research, investigator will gain access to participant's experience on their life world and meaningful moments of thoughts, sensation and emotion when they live in the same roof with many relatives.

### Data Collection

In this research, researcher will be using individual interview in order to find out about the participant's experience when living in extended family. Semi-structured questions regarding extended family as attached will be presented to the participants and they are to share their experiences. When doing individual interview, participants might be able to share more information as they can speak freely. Besides that, investigator will have the opportunity to observe participant's facial expression and body language as they answer questions given to them which in turn, investigator will get a clearer indication of their feelings and thus making a strong judgement on the matter. Furthermore, in individual interview, investigator could follow up with participants at that particular session if they have any doubts or are unsure about what the participants say during the interview session. As the research will be a one on one interview, it would take up approximately 30 minutes of participant's time. Before the interview begins, participant will be briefed about the purpose of the research and also be informed once again that there will be audio recording during the session even though they have already signed the informed consent form. Audio recording will be used for further transcribing. After transcribing, the transcript will be emailed to the participants to be confirmed on the validity of the transcript. The recordings however will be kept private and confidential, only the investigator and the supervisor will have access to it.

## Participants

A total of five participants will be recruited in the study through purposive and snowball method. The reason why only five participants are being recruited in the study is because the minimal requirement for individual

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interview is five candidates. In the research, the first participant will be randomly selected with the fulfilment of the 'living in extended family' purpose and then followed by the second participant through snowball and the process goes on till the fifth participant. Participants will be asked for permission for their participation in the research and if they agree to be involved, investigator will then make appointment for suitable venue and time to start the interview session. Participants aged 18-21 will be used for the study. This is because participant aged 18 and above are considered as an adult and they are mature enough to give rational thought and answer. Any gender or ethnicity are selected for the study. There will be no specific ethnic selection involved. In the study, no compensation will not be provided for the participants.

#### Data Analysis and Data Modification

During the individual session, investigator will carry out interpretative analysis when they proposed the questions to the participants as they try to make sense of what participant are conveying. With them, there will be a reflective diary where the investigator will be using throughout the whole process to make a simple analysis or key notes of what participant saying and making some relevant themes out of it. As the process continues, the researcher will be able to maintain the flow of interview. After the interview session is finished, each and every recordings will be transcribed before the data being analysed. However before that, the transcript will be emailed to the participants to check on the validity of the contents. After the contents are checked, the data will be analysed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The transcripts will be break down in to several small session <https://assignbuster.com/life-experience-of-children-living-with-extended-family/>



without changing the exact sentence or word said by participants. From the break down, themes will be formed according to the descriptive summaries of what participants said and also the initial interpretative of the issues. Furthermore, the themes will then compile into a smaller chunk depending on which theme fits in with another theme. Central concept of the data interpretation will be much clearer when the themes are divided into sub theme. IPA is used for exploration of lived experience of participant which in this research is to find out about experiences living in extended family. Subsequently, thematic analysis will be used after the interview ends when investigator listened to the audio recorder and repeatedly reading the transcripts over and over to highlight the significance of the findings and also the similarities and differences of the data. The validity of the findings are checked when all the interpretation consistent with the sub theme.