



English Corner

Talking with you is challenging

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Anger and resentment grew with him. What Sasuke knew was his older brother was the traitor; he murdered the whole clan and left Sasuke alone. To make it worse, Itachi, Sasuke's older brother, joined the criminal group called Akatsuki. Not until Sasuke was an adult, he learnt that Itachi did that because he wanted to stop the family from doing the coup d'état against Konoha's leadership. It was a difficult choice for Itachi since he was the Anbu member, the special force under Konoha leader. Itachi did not kill Sasuke who was still a child since he wanted Sasuke to grow strong and at the end Sasuke would kill Itachi and be the village hero. By then, Itachi watched over Sasuke from afar since Itachi was considered a murderer and traitor and he did not want to tarnish Sasuke's childhood.

When Sasuke learnt the truth and he killed Itachi, he changed his belief. He finally knew that Itachi was not a bad person; instead, he was the hero for the Uchiha family and the village since Itachi protected the village and Sasuke in shadow. Not many people knew this truth; and for this very reason, Sasuke spent much time and traveled along the way to find Itachi and to ask him directly about what happened to them and Uchiha clan. Upon knowing the truth, Sasuke could finally forgive Itachi although it was somewhat too late because Sasuke learnt the truth just before Itachi's death in his hand.



illustrated by AI

Imagine we are in Sasuke's place. We have to do anything in order to know the truth and satisfy our needs to know what happened. We must commit a crime just because it is the only way we know to get what we want. If only the village elders and Itachi explained to Sasuke about what happened, Sasuke would not have felt like being in the dark. They could have built good communication so that all those Sasuke's wrongdoings could be avoided.

Just a matter of communication in which the elder generations think that not knowing is better for the younger generation since the elders think it is the best for the younger ones.

In Naruto, the withholding of information by adult authority figures can be analyzed through the framework of power distance, a concept developed by Geert Hofstede. Hofstede (2001) argues that in high power-distance cultures, authority figures maintain control over information and decision-making, while subordinates are expected to comply without questioning. Within the narrative, village elders and mentors restrict access to critical knowledge, reinforcing hierarchical structures that limit participatory dialogue and transparency.

This communicative asymmetry also reflects paternalistic communication practices, in which authority figures justify secrecy as protective. Research on protective buffering suggests that withholding information to shield others from distress may unintentionally create relational strain and mistrust (Afifi & Afifi, 2009). In the context of Konoha Village, which being governed by the military force, the power gap becomes wide. The village is in constant fear of the attack from other ninja villages or criminal groups such as Akatsuki. To keep the village safe and to maintain order, the leader of the village often keeps sensitive or high-secretive information from the "unnecessary" party; this decision is the sole authority of the elders. That is why Sasuke found it difficult to access information about his family massacre.

Furthermore, the narrative aligns with Uncertainty Reduction Theory, introduced by Charles Berger and Richard Calabrese. Berger and Calabrese (1975) proposed that individuals are motivated to seek information to reduce uncertainty about their social environment. When institutional authority in Naruto fails to provide transparency, younger characters such as Naruto and Sasuke actively pursue alternative means of obtaining truth. This quest for clarity frequently manifests as resistance or rebellion, demonstrating how communicative opacity may intensify intergenerational conflict rather than preserve social order.

Several things that need to be taken into account to bridge communication among generations are the communication style, two-way learning, communication channel, and stereotyping. Those things are sometimes becoming the factors challenging communication among generations, especially between generation Z and older generations.

The core difference between Gen Z and other generations is the communication style. Gen-Z pursues fast, informal, and authentic style while older generations prefer structured, formal, and face-to-face communication. That is why older generations think Gen Z is less respectful while it is just the way they want to communicate. Thus, by understanding this difference, the challenge can be overcome.

Understanding must be mutual. While the older generations are trying to adapt with the way Gen Z communicates through social media, Gen Z needs to adjust older generations' communication style for example by trying to adjust the language or expression that can be understood by them. Both generations need to balance the quality of communication through social media and face-to-face communication. By doing so, both generations can learn the art of technology-based communication and face-to-face one.

Stereotyping is a classic enemy of communication. It builds barriers since one is reluctant to start communication due to stereotypes; for example, older generations have the stereotype that the younger generation is disrespectful and need to be taught how to be respectful. This affects the way older generations build communication with younger generations. The village elders did not openly explain to Sasuke about what happened to his family because they thought Sasuke was not mature and understanding enough about Itachi's actions. Sasuke thought that the elders just being too strict because they saw Sasuke as a naïve young child who was not ready to know the truth.

We will not be young forever, the same as the old one will not live forever. As one grows up, one will have one's turn to be one then the old one. For the young ones now, your time has yet to come to experience how difficult it is to adjust with other generations. So, for now, what we need to do is have understanding and building ability to learn and adapt; so, we will not face the challenge with other generations.

Reference

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