

Interpersonal Communication in Long Distance Marriage in Couples in Makassar City

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the communication media of a husband and wife who undergo a long-distance marriage. In this study using a qualitative approach. The informant selection technique that will be used by researchers is purposive sampling with certain criteria, and ten married couples in Makassar City are taken as informants. Data were collected through interviews and observations. Furthermore, the data is analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and concluding/proof. Based on the results of this study, it show that communication that occurs in long-distance married couples has a relatively short meeting intensity by emphasizing an attitude of mutual trust, support, and openness to each other. The interpersonal interaction between husband and wife who live in a long-distance relationship is established through the use of telephone media, WhatsApp, Video Calls, Facetime, Telegram, and Zoom.

Keywords: *Interpersonal Communication, Long Distance Marriage, Husband, Wife.*

1. PRELIMINARY

All married couples certainly want harmony to obtain satisfaction and happiness in the relationship (Agustin, 2013). One's marital happiness is one's own assessment of the perceived marital situation according to the benchmarks of each partner. Happiness will be obtained if individuals have mutual understanding of their partners (Bonifasia, 2018). This mutual understanding can be achieved if the relationship between husband and wife is well established, where each individual is able to recognize the needs of the partner and can understand each other.

Families for the general public should live together under one roof (Devi, 2015). In traditional societies, newly formed families live in one house together with their children or reside with extended family in the same neighborhood. Along with the times, many married couples are forced to migrate semi-permanently due to certain factors, one of which is work problems. This phenomenon is called a long distance relationship (Devi, 2015). In undergoing a long distance marriage

relationship, many things are certainly a burdensome consideration, one of which is the need to communicate that may be neglected and the psychological needs that must be met (Devi, 2015). One of the cities in South Sulawesi, Makassar City, experiences an increase in the number of long distance relationships in married couples every year, one of the causes is due to improvements in economic factors. Similar to the theory expressed by experts, that long-distance marriage relationships do require more effort in maintaining a relationship.

In addition to the distance that causes couples to not be able to meet in person, communication can also be one of the obstacles in living a long-distance marriage relationship, triggering conflicts that become quarrels between husband and wife. However, this does depend on each person in managing a problem in a relationship (Primasari, 205). In Makassar City, many married couples are able to maintain the integrity of their households despite having to undergo a long distance marriage relationship for a long period of time.

However, it cannot be denied that every marriage will not avoid conflict. In this case, no matter how small

the problem being faced will not be able to be resolved if it is only left without problem solving. Solving the problem must involve joint efforts (husband and wife) in order to find a solution that is acceptable to both parties. Interpersonal communication can play a big role in the relationship between husband and wife so that a harmonious situation can continue to exist even though it is limited by distance. One solution in solving problems that occur in the household by conducting effective interpersonal communication. This is supported by several theories that suggest that communication is a factor that is quite important and influential on marital happiness (Primasari, 2015).

Conflicts often arise due to poor interpersonal communication between husband and wife, but communication can also solve problems if it runs smoothly. Effective communication can overcome confusion, misunderstanding, and differences of opinion between husband and wife. Good interpersonal communication is characterized by openness, empathy, support, positive attitudes, and similarity between the two parties (Devito, 1997). Therefore, if husband and wife try to create effective communication, the interpersonal relationship between them will be good so that they can realize a harmonious household.

According to Thompson, the quality of interpersonal communication is instrumental to a couple's marital commitment because marital commitment is made and created through communication with a partner. Marital commitment can increase and decrease over time (Aldilla, 2017). Communication is one of the factors that absolutely exists because married couples need to communicate to find out how the partner feels, the ability or condition of the partner, and create common desires and goals in commitment (Adelina, 2014). Based on this description, it is interesting for the author to examine how the interpersonal communication of married couples in Makassar City who undergo long-distance marriage to maintain their household harmony. Researchers are interested in studying this phenomenon in the form of a paper that focuses on discussing "How is the Communication Pattern Applied by Long-Distance Married Couples in Maintaining Their Relationship in Makassar City?".

2. METHOD

This research uses qualitative research because this research is presented in the form of descriptions containing quotations of research data (Moleong, 2017:

11). The objects of this research are married couples who have been married for at least 1 year and a maximum of 5 years and are undergoing long-distance relationships with distances between districts, provinces and between countries. This research will focus on collecting informants from wives who live in Makassar City and their spouses outside Makassar City. The data is then analyzed using interpersonal communication and Individual Differences Theory.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Result

According to Alo Liliweri, interpersonal communication can be said to be the most important main characteristic of life and the greatest human achievement, because it is through this process that humans demonstrate their ability to say, hear and change / process intentions, desires, ideas, feelings orally or in writing (Liliweri, 2015: 29).

In Makassar city, married couples who experience long distance marriage, mostly make communication an obligation to stay connected. However, they generally do not tell about activities and activities in detail. The communication they do is generally a form of trust and communication obligations as a married couple. Wives who are in Makassar City and have a considerable distance from their husbands consist of several characters. This is in line with Individual Differences Theory, which states that audiences who selectively pay attention to a communication message, especially if it is related to their interests, will be in accordance with their attitudes, beliefs and values. His response to the communication message will be changed by his psychological order (Effendy, 2007: 316).

Long-distance relationships are becoming increasingly common and the relationships mentioned here are couples who are in a long-distance marriage. The definition of a long distance relationship (LDR) is when a couple is separated by physical distance and cannot be close for a period of time, communication difficulties are due to limited tools and the location is not strategic for smooth communication. According to Bergen, long-distance marriages can be characterized by couples living

in different places for long periods of time due to their partner's career.

The interpersonal communication of married couples in Makassar City who experience long distance marriage has a different perspective in dealing with long distance relationships. Most consider that communication through social media every day is an obligation, but there are also those who think that this communication is a formality to keep in touch with each other in the midst of their busy schedules. Interpersonal communication between husband and wife requires a process to understand each other's feelings, especially knowledge, and the method of communication to be conveyed. The feedback that a married couple will receive can incorporate many important things in interpersonal communication, such as: Facial expressions, body language, intonation, word choice, and others. This can develop excellent and effective interpersonal communication skills, especially for couples who have long-distance relationships so that the resulting communication gets effective feedback. Married couples need to understand that marriage is not easy. Something that must be worked on so that it cannot be from one party for his efforts, listening, willing to accept feedback, being open, and utilizing technology to chat with a partner can build interpersonal communication for married couples.

Strengthening relationships with family is a must that is carried out by every family. Because by strengthening relationships or relationships with family, it gives an idea that a family is close. In the LDM family in Makassar City, it is said that the relationship with his family is getting closer due to the various forms of social relationships that exist in his family. This can have a positive impact. Because with the form of social relations that occur in families who undergo LDM, the family becomes closer, where this happens because in it there is communication and social contact with other individuals. So that by strengthening the relationship it becomes a positive thing because in establishing this there is cooperation from the family to keep doing this.

As for interpersonal communication between husband and wife in long distance marriage in Makassar City such as openness, it was found that wives in Makassar City contacted their husbands more often than husbands contacted their wives. This is considered commonplace because wives assume that their husbands'

busy schedules at work and rest time after work make them often forget to communicate so that wives often contact their husbands first. But on the other hand, it was found that because of this, the husband was not very open about his situation to his wife.

Interpersonal communication in terms of empathy more often occurs understanding from the wife to her husband. In contrast to support. Support is actually more obtained by the wife given from her husband. In this case in Makassar City, it was found that due to the considerable distance between husband and wife, the husband tended to provide more support to his wife to be patient in the process of why they had to experience long distance marriage. So that a positive attitude is generated from both parties because of mutual understanding of each other. Equality is created from a relationship of mutual understanding in long distance marriage couples. So that interpersonal communication that occurs is more effective with conditions of mutual understanding and equality. This means that there is a tacit recognition that both parties value, are useful and have something important to contribute. Equality asks us to give unconditional positive regard to other individuals (DeVito, 2015: 259).

Communication that occurs between husband and wife exchanges positions. Where wives and husbands are both communicators and communicants by utilizing social media communication channels Whatsapp, Video Call, Facetime, Telegram and Zoom and telephone. The messages sent are also connected to each other even though the intensity of the conversation starts more from the wife, the fact is that married couples with a marriage age of more than 5 years tend to understand each other and support the circumstances that require them to be in a long distance marriage condition so that even though the intensity of the conversation is less than 2 hours a day, the interpersonal communication they do can successfully create harmonious conditions.

Text messaging technology allows couples to communicate instantly. Voice messaging adds an extra dimension to communication with the ability to hear your partner's voice and express emotions in a more real way. Video calls allow couples to see each other's faces, hear their voices and share important moments in real-time. Through social media, couples can share photos, videos and updates of their lives, thus staying involved in each

other's lives. Online communication provides an opportunity for long-distance married couples to continue building intimacy, strengthening the emotional connection.

4. CONCLUSION

LDM relationships often leave couples unable to express feelings of longing. Along with the times, LDM couples are facilitated to be able to communicate with their partners, not only hearing their voices but also seeing their faces. Current communication media allows LDM couples to be able to communicate face-to-face, the difference is that we cannot physically touch, we can only see visually.

Interpersonal communication carried out by married couples who are in a long distance marriage situation in Makassar City has many processes in creating harmony. Based on the results of interviews with 10 informants, it was found that they communicate by utilizing social media Whatsapp, Video Call, Facetime, Telegram, Zoom and telephone. It is concluded that although there are many social media available today, interpersonal communication can only be effective if married couples both play a role and interact with each other. Interpersonal communication that occurs when husband and wife can be open to each other, empathize, provide support, positive attitudes and equality with each other.

By optimizing these aspects of interpersonal communication, married couples in long-distance relationships have a greater chance of achieving the coveted *sakinah* family. Good communication, high empathy, strong support, positive attitude and equality complement each other in building a mutually strengthening and happy relationship.

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