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How does the Long-Distance Marital Relationships (LDMRs) and Geographically Close Relationships (GCRs) affect Mental Well-being, Physical Health and Communication in Couples?

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effects of LDMRs on the mental and physical well-being of couples to examine how these couples deal with their communication gap, family problems, stress, anxiety, depression and any other physical or psychological outcomes. This study looks at and combines the current theoretical and empirical research on the subject at question. It begins by providing an outline of the consequences of LDMRs on the psychological and physical well-being of couples living apart from each other. Second, it determines the literature relies on the empirical as well as theoretical findings found in the literature that has already been published. This advances our knowledge of how LDMRs affect the health and well-being of couples. This study has a significant potential value as it can direct strategies for improving relationships and overall well-being among couples in LDMRs. In addition to healthcare professionals, this may have significant effects on people, families, and communities.

Keywords: Long-distance marriage relationships (LDMRs), Mental Health, Communication, Physical well-being.

Introduction

When a married couple is dedicated to maintaining their marriage yet lives apart for different reasons, this is known as a long-distance marriage. They remain married despite their separation by preserving marital contentment in spite of physical touch and distance restrictions (Bella Ayu & Salsabila, 2024). Communication also might be strained by distance, but it can also spark original ideas and unique moments of connection. Since cellphones are so common, amorous couples may communicate with each other at any time and from almost any location. Long-distance relationships (LDRs) may benefit more from remote communication than geographically close relationships (GCRs) (Susan & Kostadin, 2021). Couples must use flexible techniques to preserve intimacy and marital happiness in these relationships since they pose particular difficulties (Mojtaba & Fahimeh, 2024).



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

The dynamics of human relationships have evolved significantly in today's globally interconnected society, with long-distance relationships rising due to increased geographical mobility. Migration for job or educational opportunities has made this phenomenon more prevalent, resulting in temporary or lasting separations within families (Pankhuri & Aghamohammadian, 2024).

Like any other area of adjustment, marital adjustment is specific to each couple and is influenced by factors such as family structure, type, and early experiences (Shikha & Ritu, 2024). Physical distance has also been found to affect the quality of relationships; couples in LDMRs mention lower levels of commitment and fulfillment of relationship than couples in GCRs. Therefore, despite physical separation, partners frequently use certain behaviors and tactics to overcome these challenges in order to cultivate intimacy, closeness, and the general well-being of both parties (Belus et al., 2019).

For wives in long-distance relationships, understanding the state of the pair is crucial to achieving marital fulfillment. Character adjustment, conflict resolution, the meaning of marriage, and the meaning of long-distance marriage are some of the sub-themes that fall under this main issue. Financial demands are among the material needs that contribute to marital fulfillment. By planning their income and spending, participants may effectively manage their money (Muhamad, 2023). All things considered, LDRR can be costly, unpleasant, and can offer little opportunity for physical interaction (Alyssa, 2020).

The last difficulty LDRs encounter is experiencing a sense of loss following the conclusion of a reunion phase. These separation-reunion cycles produce emotional highs and lows as the joy and excitement of a couple's reunion are quickly followed by loneliness and grief at their departure. Qualitative research on LDR participants emphasizes how crucial it is to use technology to stay in touch. Additionally, Couple therapy may be helpful in raising awareness and fostering communication about concerns unique to long distance arrangements, given the possible difficulties of LDRs. Couple therapy hasn't always been feasible for LDRs due to geographic distance, but Internet-based psychotherapy can open up new avenues for LDR couples to get expert assistance (MCCOY et al., 2013).

This article explores the impact of long-distance relationships on couples' health and communication, comparing them with couples who live in close proximity. The aim is to understand the complex interplay between geographical distance, well-being, and the quality of communication in marriages.

Problem Statement

Now a day's people are moving abroad to have a good career and to provide their families a good living and better financial status to survive in this rapidly advancing world. Due to this especially male guardians are migrating to developed countries so as to fulfil the growing needs of their families. As a result, both the partners and their families have to suffer of separation, loneliness, emotional disturbances, communication gap, health issues etc.

In this article we are reviewing the comparative studies on How does the Long-Distance Marital Relationships (LDMRs) and Geographically Close Relationships (GCRs) effect on Mental Well-being, Physical Health and Communication in Couple.



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

Research Questions

The following research concerns are the focus of this project:

1. What are the effects of LDMRs on mental and also on physical health outcomes (e.g., stress, anxiety, depression, sleep quality, physical activity, chronic disease management) in couples?
2. How do couples in LDMRs experience and navigate the challenges of maintaining a healthy communicative relationship despite physical distance?

Objectives

- To explore impact of long distance marital relationships on psychological and physical well-being of couples.
- To investigate how the couples, face the challenges of nurturing a healthy communication while being physically distant.

Significance

Despite the growing prevalence of LDMRs, there is a significant gap in knowledge regarding their impact on the mental and physical well-being of couples. While some studies have explored the effects of LDMRs on relationship satisfaction and communication, few have examined their impact on psychological and physical health. The goal of this study is to furnish the information that is currently in short supply, by examining how LDMRs affect couples' mental, physical health and communication.

This will contribute to our understanding of the effects of LDMRs on couples' health and well-being. Because it may direct tactics for fostering enhanced intimacy and general happiness among individuals in LDMRs, the present research has a great deal of benefit. This might have significant consequences for families, communities, and individuals, and additionally for healthcare professionals and policymakers.

Literature Review

A long-distance marriage can be defined by two people who are married and living apart for many different reasons but sustaining their marriage unchanged. Despite the limitations of physical contact and separation, they maintain to preserve their relationship together by remaining to be happy in tandem. According to Tashkeh et al., (2024) couples may achieve marital delight by demonstrating family adaptability in negotiating marital issues while living separate from one another. Due to the particular challenges that long-distance romantic relationships provide, couples must use accommodating techniques to preserve proximity and marital contentment. Belus et al., (2019) explain that regardless of being physically apart, couples frequently engage in certain actions and strategies to tackle these challenges with the aim to cultivate intimacy, connection, and the overall well-being of both parties. The growth of family resilience in commuting married people can be credited with a number of secure characteristics, including devotion and good communication. Furthermore, included have being socialized, health, confidence, candor, good coping, mutual aid, collaborative dispute resolution, interpersonal interactions, and family support (Priastuty et al., 2024).

A key component of saving family harmony is communication amongst family members. In the scenario of a long distance relationship (LDR), when both



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

spouses have to sustain their marriage with psychological and physical restrictions because of proximity, this becomes even more challenging. In a LDR situation, it takes extra work to keep partners' trust and communication intact in order to meet the roles and responsibilities of partner and family. In a Muslim setup, effective communication is crucial for preserving relationships as well as making sure that the rights and duties outlined in Islamic legal code are appropriately upheld (Sumadi & Wardani, 2024).

Lack of direct physical interactions, communication issues, time differences that limit room for discussion, increased boredom, insufficient affection, and expenses are some of the effects of commuter marriage on couples (Anderson, 2008). Over time, conventional techniques for overcoming physical distance with loved ones have changed. Rather, geographical barriers have been eliminated by platforms like social media, messaging applications, and video conferencing, which enable people to create and preserve deep ties despite being physically separated. In spite of geographical limitations, long-distance relationships (LDRs) have become a symbol of the resilience of human love. The experiences of those who use social media to maintain LDRs show a wide range of feelings, challenges, and coping strategies (Murikkattu et al., 2024).

The health of a family institution depends on harmony in the home. Despite this, arguments are unavoidable but can negatively impact the family, particularly in households where long-distance marriage is prevalent (Zulkifli, 2022). One of the most popular methods in family studies is the Circumflex Model of Marital and Family Systems. Because it enables family members to change their degrees of adaptability and unity, this model makes the assumption that family communication is a crucial component of attaining healthy family functioning. Even though this theoretical method has been widely used and verified, there are still a lot of unanswered questions regarding the generalization of its assumptions. A strong connection between parents and teenagers, which is marked by support and open communication, is crucial to shaping the growth of adolescents going through the emotional and physical transformations of adolescence. (Sacks et al., 2014).

According to an array of studies, long-distance marriages contain a variety of hazards since partners are unable to meet up physically as well as communicate (Amana et al., 2020). These risks include issues with interaction, disagreements, and feelings of loneliness (Harsari, 2020). On the other hand, couples frequently resort to technology, such social media chats via video, to keep their long-distance marriage in tandem. Because individuals can watch their spouse's behaviors in real time, this function helps them develop a rapport that is trustworthy (Lani et al., 2022). However, only those who value online interactions will profit from this kind of communication (Sullivan et al., 2020).

Numerous research has shed light on the difficulties of a long-distance marriage and the requirement for different psychological factors to lessen conflict (Amana et al., 2020). Recent empirical research suggests that, because of certain relational and personal traits such as there may be lesser of a correlation between marital happiness and health in LDR than in proximal relations (Yoder & Bois, 2020).

The Covid-19 outbreak in Indonesia prompted the government to implement travel restrictions, health standards, and other measures to slow the virus's spread. Long distance marriage (LDM) couples are particularly affected by this.



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

LDM couples are made up of a husband and wife who live apart due to job obligations. Long-distance communication is accomplished through the media (Sunan Kalijaga et al., 2021).

Methodology

The literature was searched from October 2013 to May 2024 for the study's critical assessment. In order to find as many pertinent LDR papers as feasible, the researcher first carried out a thorough search by looking through the pertinent papers that were collected from (1) Google Scholar; (2) Scopus; (3) Sage Pub; (4) Journal of Couple & Relationship Therapy and published in the different journals.

Conclusion

The main takeaway drawn from the literature's critical evaluation is that, in contrast to geographically closed married couples, couples in long distance relationships had been suffering more. It is very important to see what steps would the couples in LDMRs take to maintain a congenial and healthy relationship and home environment. But there are still limited resources on how the people in LDMRs being affected mentally and physically. So, the impact of LDMRs on the couples psychological and physical well-being is still under discussion.

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Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

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