



My Religion Keeps Me in Long Distance Marriage (LDM)

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Abstract

In today's modern era, it is not uncommon to find married couples who do not live together and are geographically separated. This kind of marriage is usually called a Long Distance Marriage (LDM) or Commuter Marriage. Many factors are the reasons why undergoing a long-distance marriage such as improving family life in terms of economy, potentially higher income outside the city, maintaining a career, and better opportunities for career advancement. The condition of commuter marriage is not easy to live if we have strong beliefs such as good religiosity in maintaining marital satisfaction. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship of religiosity to marital satisfaction in wives who run a commuter marriage. The research subjects were 50 wives who were undergoing long-distance marriages. There are 2 questionnaires used, namely: 1) The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS) questionnaire by Stefan Huber and Odilo W. Huber (2012) and developed by Purnomo & Suryadi (2017) with a reliability value of 0.940. 2) The marital satisfaction questionnaire uses the ENRICH marital satisfaction measuring instrument compiled by Fowers & Olson (1993) and developed by Hermaleni (2018) with a reliability value of 0.973. Analysis of research data using the use of Pearson products. Based on the results of the Pearson product moment analysis, the value that has no reference is 0.454 with $p = 0.000$; $p < 0.01$, which indicates a significant positive between religiosity and marriage satisfaction of wife who has commuter marriage. This means that the higher the value of the wife's religiosity, the higher her marital satisfaction and vice versa, the lower the value of the wife.

Keywords: Religiosity, marriage satisfaction, commuter marriage

1. Introduction

This Generally, married couples want to be able to live together in one house, but there are conditions where families cannot live together. Some married couples have to live separately because their partners work in other cities, are far from home, rarely come home or go out very often (Lee, 2018). Stafford (in Reis & Sprecher, 2009) says that long-distance relationships occur in individuals who have hope for the continuation of close relationships and limited communication opportunities, because they are geographically separated. This type of marriage is often referred to as Long Distance Marriage (LDM) or Commuter Marriage.

Commuter marriage automatically implies different living situations, which significantly impacts the daily life experiences of couples as individuals and as part of a couple or family (Gerstel & Gross, 1984; Green et al., 1999; Van der Klis & Mulder, 2008). According to Dr. Robiah K Hamzah (Metro, 2019), some couples in long-distance marriages experience negative consequences which eventually lead to problems in the household. Commuter marriages have negative impacts such as weaker marital relations, the emergence of a sense of loneliness, suspicion from friends and relatives, tenuous family ties, loss of opportunity to have children, frequent conflicts, and even divorce (Borelli, 2015).

Ferk (Li et al., 2015) states that the cause of long-distance marriage is the work factor with considerations to improve family life, maintain career, potentially higher income and better opportunities for career advancement. The decision to work away from home is usually made for several reasons and requires the support of a partner (Stoilkovska et al., 2018).

When an individual decides to marry, it means that the individual must be ready to face the risks and shortcomings of a partner (Jannah, 2008). Rini (2008) revealed that in undergoing a long-distance marriage, the key to maintaining a harmonious household like other families, namely intense communication and having words that compliments each other, build strong trust, couples who give in to each other if there is a fight and have quality time with family and partner when they meet. However, when undergoing a long-distance marriage, it can also bring up its own problems or problems, such as problems in parenting, communication and division of roles (Tejada, 2013). Differences of

opinion occur naturally in all marriages. However, conflict is one of the most challenging obstacles to avoid because it is often accompanied by accusations, misunderstandings, and quarrels (Hafizah et al., 2017; Maula, 2023).

Such conditions will affect the satisfaction of their marriage. Marital satisfaction is needed for marriage to survive and family life to be happy. According to Brockwood (2007), marital satisfaction is a general evaluation of a person's current state of marriage. This evaluation is a reflection of how happy the individual is in his or her marriage or a combination of satisfaction from certain aspects of the marriage relationship. The components proposed by Fowers and Olson (1993) also reveal that there are components that can affect marital satisfaction, including personality, communication, conflict resolution, financial management, leisure activities, sexual relationships, children and caregivers, friends and family, role equality, and religious orientation.

Monjezi et al. (2012) in their research showed that religiosity increases the marital satisfaction of effective couples. Dudley et al. (1990) showed that a couple's similar religious status, praying and going to church were the most predictive factors for marital satisfaction. Jane (Mokoginta, 2019) states that religious belief has a very large influence on long-term marital satisfaction. Glock and Stark argue that religiosity is a belief in certain religious teachings and the impact of those religious teachings in everyday life (Sudarsono, 2023). According to Huber and Huber (2012), a person's religiosity can be measured from the intensity of carrying out obligations and religious values that are most prominent in a person.

Based on previous research, it was explained that the importance of religiosity to maintain marital satisfaction, especially in long-distance marriage relationships. This study aims to see the relationship between religiosity and marriage satisfaction in wives who run long-distance marriage relationships?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Understanding Marriage Satisfaction

Marital satisfaction is a subjective evaluation of a husband or wife on their married life based on satisfied, happy and pleasant experiences they have done together (Fowers & Olson, 1993). Marital satisfaction according to Mackey & O'Brien (1999) is an individual's experience in the most meaningful relationship in his life. Bradbury, Fincham, and Beach (2000) define marital satisfaction as a reflection of the positive feelings experienced by married couples in undergoing a relationship that allows a marriage to be maintained.

2.2 Religiosity

Huber (2012) defines religiosity as the thoughts and beliefs that a person has to view the world so that it affects their experiences and behavior in everyday life. Huber called the thoughts and beliefs that a person has to view the world as a personal construct system. Huber and Huber (2012) argue that a person's religiosity can be measured by the intensity of carrying out religious obligations and values that are most prominent in a person. Glock and Stark also explained religiosity as a belief in certain religious teachings and the impact of those religious teachings on everyday life (Sudarsono, 2023). Dister (Sudarsono, 2023) defines religiosity as the internalization of religion within a person, so that they feel an unconditional obligation towards substances that are believed to be sources of goodness.

3. Methods

This study uses a quantitative approach with correlational research methods which aims to see the relationship or correlation between religiosity and marriage satisfaction of wives who run long-distance marriage relationships. The quantitative approach emphasizes analysis on numerical data (numbers) which are processed by statistical methods (Schwartz, 1983).

The questionnaire used in this study was marriage satisfaction using the ENRICH marital satisfaction measuring instrument compiled by Fowers & Olson (1993) and developed by Hermaleni (2018). Of the 43 items that exist, there are 2 items that fall. The validity value moves between 0.310 – 0.906 and the reliability value is 0.973 (See Table 1). While the religiosity questionnaire in this study used The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS) by Stefan Huber and Odilo W. Huber (2012) and developed by Purnomo & Suryadi (2017) which consisted of 33 items and there were 5 items dropped. The validity value moves between 0.256 – 0.772 and the reliability value is 0.940 (See Table 2).

Table 1: Reliability Value Marriage Satisfaction Measuring Tool

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.973	0.975	41

Table 2: Reliability Value Religiosity Measuring Tool

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.940	0.951	28

Table 3: Demographic Data of Respondents

Category	Frequency	%	
Age	<30 years old	12	24%
	30-40 years old	36	72%
	>40 years old	2	4%
Education	Senior High School	6	12%
	Diploma (D1/D2/D3)	9	18%
	Bachelor degree (S1)	26	52%
	Master (S2)	9	18%
Domicile	West Java	26	52%
	Central Java	1	2%
	Jakarta	4	8%
	Yogyakarta	13	26%
	Sumatra	2	4%
	Sulawesi	3	6%
	Kalimantan	1	2%
Length of Marriage	< 5 years	14	28%
	5-10 years	18	36%
	>10 years	18	36%
Number of children	Don't have kids yet	8	16%
	1-2 kids	33	66%
	3-4 kids	8	16%
	>5 kids	1	2%
Job status	Working	26	52%
	Doesn't work	24	48%

3.1. Research Sample

The sample of this study was 50 wives who underwent long distance marriage (LDM). Seen in Table 3 demographic data. The age category of respondents who filled the most was the age range of 30-40 years by 72% or 36 respondents. At the education level, the respondents who filled out the most were Bachelors (S1) by 52% or 26 respondents. Many of the respondents who filled out were also domiciled in the province of West Java.

While the respondents who filled most of the marriage age between 5-10 years and above 10 years were 36% or 18 respondents. When viewed from the number of children, the most filling is respondents who have children 1-2 children as many as 33 respondents or 66%. In addition, when viewed from the job, it is divided into 2, namely working by 52% and not working 48% (See Table 1). Of those who fill work, with various professions such as Civil Servants (PNS), trainers, pharmacist assistants, teachers, lecturers, bank employees, entrepreneurs, and health workers. Commuter marriage is also a situation where professionals who have multiple incomes live separately because of the demands of their work (Lindemann, 2018).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Result

Based on the results of the Pearson product moment analysis, the correlation coefficient r_{xy} is 0.454 with $p = 0.000$; $p < 0.01$ (See Table 4), which shows a significant positive correlation between religiosity and marital satisfaction, the research hypothesis is accepted. There is a relationship between religiosity and marriage satisfaction in wives who have long distance relationships. This means that the more higher the value of religiosity, the more higher the marriage satisfaction and so does it.

Table 4: Correlation Score between Religiosity and Marriage Satisfaction

		Total Religiosity	Total Marriage Satisfaction
Total Religiosity	Pearson Correlation	1	0.454**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.001
	N	50	50
Total Marriage Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.454**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	
	N	50	50

Information:

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5: Considerations for Long Distance Marriage (LDM) Relationship seen from Wife's Perfection

Considerations for Long Distance Marriage (LDM) Relationship seen from Wife's Perfection	Total	%
1. Employment (Job demands of husband who moves or work rotation)	32	64%
2. Children Education	8	16%
3. Economy (both work together)	8	16%
	2	4%
5. Option and Commitment from the beginning (Already pleasurable with each other's domicile or initial agreement)		
Total	50	100%

The respondent also complete the questions about their reasons for Long-Distance Marriage (LDM) from the wife's perspective (See Table 5). From the data obtained so many are doing long-distance marriages because of the job demands from husband who's change work location, job rotation and husband's work which does require being far away from family. Furthermore, there are another reasons, such as because of their children's education, they choose to live in long-distance marriage because in their domicile city which is easier to access education for their children. Then, because both of them have their own job, it's not possible for the wife to follow her husband and from the beginning they were committed to having a long-distance marriage.

Based on Table 6, data obtained from 80% of respondents or as many as 40 wives meet their husband for less than one month to every three months. As much as 10 % or 5 respondents have time to meet every 3-6 months, 4 wives or 8 % have their time to meet every 6 months to once a year and only one person or only 2 % that do not have a regular schedule to meet their husbands.

Table 6: Length of Time Meet Husband

Length of Time	Total	%
1. Less than a month	20	40%
2. 1-3 months	20	40%
3. 3-6 months	5	10%
4. 6 months – 1 year	4	8%
5. Uncertain	1	2%
Total	50	100%

The following based on the collected questionnaires, the mean and standard deviation data for two variables studied were obtained:

Table 7: Calculation of Mean, and Standard Deviation of Religiosity and Marriage Satisfaction

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Total Religiosity	42.6600	9.66924	50
Total Marriage Satisfaction	69.2200	21.56177	50

Mean from the data on the marriage satisfaction questionnaire obtained 69.22 (Table 7). The high ranking of Marriage satisfaction said if $X > \text{mean}$, whereas mean from the data on the marriage satisfaction questionnaire obtained 69.22 (Table 7). The high ranking of Marriage satisfaction said if $X > \text{mean}$, whereas the low marriage satisfaction said if $X < \text{mean}$. The mean score of religiosity questionnaire was 43.66 (Table 7). The high ranking of Marriage satisfaction said if $X > \text{mean}$, whereas the low of marriage satisfaction said if $X < \text{mean}$.

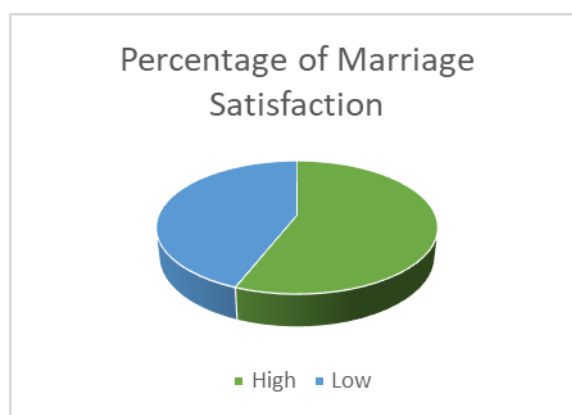


Figure 1: Marriage Satisfaction Category

From that figure 1 can be seen that wives who did LDM have high marriage satisfaction ranking amount of 56 % or as many as 23 respondents. Meanwhile wives who did LDM have low marriage satisfaction ranking amount of 44 % or as many as 22 respondents. Such as the research by Pramestri and Fardana (2020, which conducted on 134 women who did commuter marriage resulted that 70,1 % of the subjects had high ranking marriage satisfaction. Subject with high ranking marriage satisfaction didn't have low romantic self-efficacy, but from 29,9 % subject with high ranking marriage satisfaction have average romantic self-efficacy.

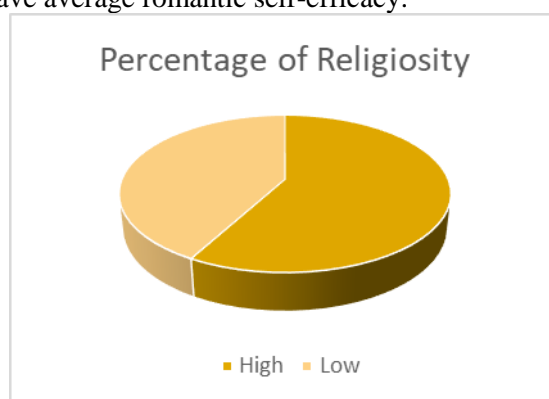


Figure 2: Religiosity Category

From that figure 2 can be seen that wives who did LDM have a high religiosity ranking amount 58 % or as many as 29 respondents. Meanwhile, wives who did LDM have low religiosity ranking amount 42 % or as many as 21 respondents.

4.2 Discussions

Every marriage is not easy to live, couples experience various obstacles or problems that arise both economic problems, children, work, health or from one of their own partners (Sa'diah, 2021). In order to fulfill the needs of their families, many couples decided to work out of town, so they cannot live with their family or we can say Long Distance Marriage (LDM) or Commuter Marriage.

Lot of considerations have taken when deciding to do LDM as seen in Table 5. The United Nations for Funds for Population Activities (UNFPA) in Indonesia (2015) estimates the increase of - dual earner marriages is in line with the increase in the number of working. These increase perhaps due to an increase of the number of women with higher education and the cost living, (Lamanna, & Riedmann, 2009). According to Bunker et al. (1992), there are several possibilities in the setting of commuter marriage couples that can simplify life or perception by staying with each other's work and live in family life balance.

Based on the results of this study regarding religiosity and marriage satisfaction, data obtained that there is a positive and significant relationship between religiosity and marriage satisfaction. The religiosity of the respondents in this study is high classify, as well as marriage satisfaction which is also high classify. This indicates that religion is importance in their lives, and their belief affect on how they can managing their conflict in marriage (Mohd et al., 2022). Lot of previous research have found an important relationship between the religious component and well-being also preservation of a married couple's relationship (Mahoney, 2010).

According to Gross (In Steedly, 2013), the commuter marriage is divided into two types, those are the adjustment type and the established type. The type of adjustment is a long distance marriage relationship which carried out by married couples that considered new age, which is 0-5 years (Ho, 2012). There's also for the established ones, this

type which carried out by married couples who have been married for a long time which is > 5 years (Impett & Peplau, 2003). On the first year of marriage, love and sexual desire are at the peak of climax (Heiman, 2011).

In addition if its reviewed based on the intensity of meeting the respondents with their husbands, data shows amount of 80 % or as many as 40 respondents have time to meet less than 1 month – 3 months. This is the same of Handayani's opinion (Rohmah, 2020) that the intensity of togetherness in long distance marriage couples can affect the perceived of marriage satisfaction. If the intensity of togetherness is lessen, it can make the couples difficult to build the intimacy and certainty be able to cause the conflicts and the consequence is unfinished the shared of needs. On the other side, if togetherness is still intens together, it will strengthen intimacy and the need for togetherness will be finished and minimize the appearance of conflict. This is also same with the commuter marriage statement and marriage satisfaction which significantly influenced by people from aspects such as the amount of children, differences in distance, and length of meeting (Chrishiannie et al., 2022). Stinnett (1991) also explained that the level of marital satisfaction influenced by several elements, which is the way of communication. Tavakolizadeh et al. (in Mohd et al., 2022) found that improving communication skills can reduce severe marriage conflict.

6. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion in this research, it can be concluded that there is a positive relationship between religiosity and marriage satisfaction in wives who did long-distance marriage relationship. This shows that the higher level of religiosity of a wife, it will be accompanied by higher level of marriage satisfaction.

In addition to, also found from this research, the level of religiosity and marriage satisfaction in wives who did long-distance marriage relationships is quite high amount of 58 % for the religiosity level and amount of 56 % for the marriage satisfaction level. The result in this research are related to length of marriage age and also the intensity of time for meet with a couple. Where the most respondents are in > 5 years age of marriage and the intensity of meeting their couple is once time in < 1 months – 3 months.

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