

## Marital quality: Analysis on Couples Who Have Long-Distance Marriages

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### Abstract

Couples who undergo a long-distance marriage face more challenges than those who undergo an ordinary marriage so that they will be more prone to conflicts resulting in low quality of marriage relationships, low quality of marital relationships that can lead to divorce. This research method uses a quantitative approach with a comparative descriptive method. The subjects in this study were couples who were undergoing a long-distance marriage in Padang City. The research subjects were taken using a purposive technique so that the number of research subjects was 120 consisting of 60 male partners and 60 female partners. The research instrument for the quality of the marriage relationship used a Likert scale model adapted from the PBSC measuring instrument from Ducat & Zimmer-Gembeck (2010) with reliability of 0.923. The findings of the study show that: (1) On average, the marital quality of couples who are undergoing a long-distance marriage for men is in the medium category and women is in the medium category. (2) There is no significant difference in marital quality in terms of gender (3) There is no significant difference in marital quality in terms of the type of work.

**Keywords:** marital quality, long-distance marriage

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## Introduction

High marital quality indicates the high satisfaction of marriage and the happiness of marriage, thus forming a harmonious family. Digital quality is often considered by many researchers as a subjective study of phenomena. The quality of a romantic relationship is an individual's perception of the extent to which the relationship that is in progress provides or does not provide benefits through experience and interaction (W. A. Collins, 2003). During the process of achieving high marital quality, problems often arise such as differences of opinion, differences in thought patterns, bad habits of each partner and so on, which triggers emotional tension in each partner. These problems have the potential to interfere with the quality of the marriage. If this problem cannot be resolved by the husband and wife, it can cause disputes, quarrels, or tensions in the household. When a husband and wife are no longer able to find solutions to problems that can satisfy both parties, it can lead to divorce (Hurlock, 1980).

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Marital quality can be said to be a determining factor in a household relationship that is carried out by a husband and wife to run well, if the quality of the marriage relationship is disturbed, the risk of divorce is caused. Based on data from the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (BPS) the number of divorces in Indonesia is increasing every year in 2015 there were 353,834 divorce cases, in 2016 there were 365,654 divorce cases, in 2017 there were 374,516 divorce cases and in 2018 there were 408,202 divorce cases. From this data, we can see that there is an increase in the divorce rate every year, especially the highest in 2018, the divorce rate in Indonesia reached 408,202 cases, an increase compared to the previous year. The biggest cause of divorce in 2018 according to Indonesia's Central Statistics Agency (BPS) was constant disputes and bickering. Disputes and fights continuously show the inability of the couple to achieve the goal of marriage, namely to form a harmonious family, indicating that there are still many low levels of marital quality in Indonesia.

The latest data obtained from the Religious Court of Padang City, in 2018 there were 1507 divorce cases and in 2019 there were 2,063 divorce cases, this shows that the divorce rate in Padang City is increasing every year, this is evidenced from 2018 to 2019. an increase of 504 divorce cases. The rise of cases in the Padang City Religious Court Office is caused by a series of problems plaguing households. This was stated by the Judge of PA in Padang City, Milfanetti when interviewed by *Tribunpadang.com*, Monday, April 22, 2019. One reason for the divorce was due to the lack of harmony in the domestic relationship (Faradianti, 2019).

Based on the explanation above, shows that there is an increase in the divorce rate in the city of Padang, one of the reasons is the lack of harmony in the relationship in the household, this indicates that there are still married couples who have a low-quality marriage relationship, resulting in various problems that arise resulting in an unharmonious marriage culminating in divorce.

One of the challenges in marriage is the long-distance marriage, which is a condition where a husband and wife live in different locations during the workday for a long time for the sake of the spouse's career (McBride & Bergen, 2014). Couples who undergo a long-distance marriage face more challenges than those who undergo an ordinary marriage (Prameswara & Sakti, 2017). Rachmawati & Mastuti (2013) stated that couples who are undergoing a long-distance marriage experience many household problems. Scott (2002) states that long-distance marriage is a type that tends to be unstable, unsuccessful, and even tends to divorce (Suwartini & Casmini, 2019). Certain problems experienced by couples who are undergoing a long-distance marriage are caused by not meeting their common needs (Fatimah, 2018). Based on the existing problems, the authors are interested in analyzing the quality of the marriage relationship for couples undergoing a long-distance marriage.

## Method

This research is research that uses a quantitative approach with a comparative descriptive method. The subject of this research is a couple who is undergoing a long-distance marriage, which is obtained from information from the people of Padang City. The sample has been married for 1 year to 10 years and has undergone a long-distance marriage with a meeting time of once a week, once a month, and more than 120 married couples who have undergone a long-distance marriage who come from various professions including lecturers, teachers, military / Police, Entrepreneurs, Housewives, and others. The instrument in this study is a research instrument of marital quality adapted from the Partners Behavior Social Context measurement tool from Ducat & Zimmer-Gembeck (2010) with reliability of

0.923, the dimensions measured include warmth, autonomy support, and structure. ), rejection (rejection), coercion (coercion), and chaos (chaos). The marital quality instrument uses a Likert scale model which has five alternative answers, namely very suitable (VS), appropriate (S), unsuitable (NS), and very unsuitable (VN) with scoring for positive answers from research subjects between 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, while the scoring for negative answers from research subjects was between 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. The data analysis technique used interval data with the instrument scale category classification ranging from very high (VH), high (H), moderate (M), low (L), and very low (VL). Analysis of the data in this study using descriptive analysis of the percentage formula, the analysis T-test based on the results of the normality test can be seen that the sig value is  $0.200 > 0.005$  this shows that the data is normally distributed and can use the t-test and One Way ANOVA analysis to find out the differences in the quality of the relationship. Sexual marriage and occupation based on the results of the normality test, the significance value of each type of work  $>$  than 0.05, shows that the data is normally distributed, this shows that one of the requirements of the one way ANOVA test has been fulfilled, followed by the homogeneity of variances test, a significance value of  $0.095 >$  was obtained. 0.05, it can be concluded that the variants of the five groups of work being compared are the same or homogeneous in this case so that the homogeneity assumption in the one way ANOVA test is fulfilled.

## Results and Discussion

Based on the data processing that has been carried out, the data from the research results are presented and analyzed by the previously proposed research objectives, namely to describe the quality of the relationship between couples who are undergoing a long-distance marriage. The whole is obtained from a sample (respondents) of 120 people consisting of 60 people men and 60 women. The results of data collection and processing through the instrument of the quality of the marriage relationship from the total sample (respondents) totaling 120 people consisting of 60 male partners and 60 female partners, can be seen in Table 01.

**Table 1. Categories and percentages of marital quality for long-distance marriage**

Gender	Category	Interval	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Man</b>	Very High	131-155	5	8,3
	High	107-130	15	25
	Moderate	81-106	26	43,3
	Low	56-79	11	18,3
	Very Low	$\leq 55$	3	5,0
<b>Women</b>	Very High	131-155	3	5,0
	High	107-130	20	33,3
	Moderate	81-106	30	50
	Low	56-79	5	8,3
	Very Low	$\leq 55$	2	3,3
<b>Total</b>			<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 01 above, shows the overall sample of the study as many as 120 people consisting of 60 male partners and 60 female partners. The majority of male partners have the quality of a

marriage relationship in the medium category even though the public perception of husbands and wives who undergo long-distance marriages is that these relationships tend to be unstable, unsuccessful, and tend to lead to divorce (Scott, 2009). Having a high-quality marriage relationship is also not impossible. It is evident from the results of a study of 60 male partners, 5 people are in the very high category and 15 people are in the high category, and for women, out of 60 people, 3 people are in the very category. 20 people are in the high category, this shows that to achieve a high-quality marriage relationship for couples who are undergoing a long-distance marriage is something that can be achieved. This is also by research conducted by Rachmawati and Mastuti (2013) who found that long-distance marriages do not always cause unhappiness in marital relationships.

**Table 2. Descriptions of the Quality of Marriage Relationships based on aspects**

No	Aspect	Gender	Max	Min	Mean	SD	Percentage	Category
1	<i>Warmth</i>	Man	23	7	15,6	4,3	62,3%	S
		Women	22	8	16,7	3,6	66,8%	S
2	<i>Autonomy support</i>	Man	23	6	15	4,2	59,8%	S
		Women	22	7	15,5	3,3	62,1%	S
3	<i>Structure</i>	Man	19	4	12,9	3,4	64,3%	S
		Women	20	6	12,8	3,0	64,2%	S
4	<i>Rejection</i>	Man	23	7	15,2	4,1	60,6%	S
		Women	23	7	16,1	3,7	64,5%	S
5	<i>Coercion</i>	Man	28	7	18	5,6	60,1%	S
		Women	27	8	19,5	4,2	65,0%	S
6	<i>Chaos</i>	Man	30	9	19,4	4,9	64,5	S
		Women	28	8	19,7	4,1	65,8	S

Keterangan:

Max	= Maximum Score	VH	= Very High
Min	= Minimum Score	H	= High
SD	= Standar Deviation	M	= Moderate
%	= Percentage Mean	L	= Low
Kategori	= Category Mean	VL	= Very Low

Based on the achievement of each of the indicators above, overall each indicator is in the medium category, although the overall quality of the relationship between male and female partners is in the moderate category, the percentage of female partners is higher, this shows that the quality of the marriage relationship between female partners This is higher than men, this is by the research of Bramana & Afdal (2020) regarding the analysis of the satisfaction of a couple who is undergoing a long-distance marriage based on the results obtained in general that the satisfaction of the wife who is undergoing a long-distance marriage is higher than the percentage of marriage satisfaction. husband. To see the significance of differences in the quality of the marital relationship between husband and wife, the following t-test was used.

**Table 3. Results of Group Statistics T test and Independent Samples Test**

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Marital Quality	Man	60	95.9000	22.75269	2.93736
	Woman	60	100.4167	18.57307	2.39777

  

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Marital Quality	Equal variances assumed	3.231	.075	-1.191	118	.236	-4.5167	3.7918	-12.0254	2.9920
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.191	113.45	.236	-4.5167	3.7918	-12.0285	2.9952

Based on the statistical group table, it is known that the average value of the quality of the marriage relationship between female partners is 100.4167 and for men, the average is 95.9000, this shows that women have a higher average value of the quality level of marital relations than men. Furthermore, from the results of the independent sample t-test, it can be seen that the sig value is  $0.236 > 0.05$ , this shows that there is no significant difference between men and women. This means that even though the average value of women is higher in the quality level of their marriage relationship, the difference is not too far or significant between men and women. The difference in the quality of the marriage relationship between couples who are undergoing a long-distance marriage when viewed from the type of work, namely lecturers, teachers, military/police, entrepreneurs, and housewives can be seen from the results of the one way ANOVA test as follows.

**Table 4. Uji One Way Anova**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	352.023	4	88.006	.221	.926
Within Groups	25853.463	65	397.746		
Total	26205.486	69			

Based on the ANOVA test output above, it is known that the sig value is  $0.926 > 0.05$  so that it can be concluded that the average quality of the marriage relationship between

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couples who are undergoing a long-distance marriage from each group of work together. that is, there is no difference in the quality level of the couple's marriage relationship in terms of the type of work. This shows that work does not guarantee the quality of the marriage relationship for a couple who is undergoing a long-distance marriage because an important factor that can improve the quality of the marriage relationship for a couple who is undergoing a long-distance marriage depends on the individual himself regardless of his / her job.

Several abilities are important to improve the quality of the marriage relationship, including the ability to deal with the conflict between couples who have long-distance relationships who have less time to be together so that the ability to solve problems is an important factor (Handayani, 2016). the ability to resolve conflicts is supported by the ability to maintain communication and mutual trust. maintaining trust in your partner while undergoing a long-distance marriage can strengthen communication with your partner (Ramadhini & Hendriani, 2015). Good communication will make couples more open to each other so that it is easier to resolve conflicts.

Furthermore, a strong commitment is needed because commitment also affects the quality of the marriage relationship between a couple who is undergoing a long-distance marriage, with a commitment made by a couple who is undergoing a long-distance marriage, which can be a foundation in the relationship of each partner. With commitment, partners can build trust in a relationship. As stated by Cooper and Makin (Wulandari, 2009) commitment is an inner state to maintain a relationship which includes dependence and trust that a person will not leave a relationship that has been built previously. So that with the commitment that is formed in their relationship, making the subject and their partner survive no matter what. The results of Handayani's research (2016) from the four research subjects often experience conflict when they are far from their partner. The subjects proved that even though they often experienced conflicts or problems, the quality of their relationships was maintained properly, they were able to solve problems that occurred in their way, this was also helped by the commitment that was formed in their relationship.

## Conclusion

This research shows that the marital quality of the couple who are undergoing a long-distance marriage to the male partner is in the medium category and also the female partner is in the moderate category, meaning that the majority of couples still need to improve the marital quality of each partner. Marital quality, the couple who are undergoing a long-distance marriage in terms of gender, there is no significant difference. The quality of the marriage relationship between the couple who are undergoing a long-distance marriage, in terms of the type of work, also does not have a significant difference.

Based on the findings and discussion of the research results, there are several important abilities to improve the quality of the marriage relationship, including the ability to deal with conflict which is supported by the ability to maintain communication and mutual trust. There is also a need for a strong commitment so that the committee formed by a couple who is undergoing a long-distance marriage can become a foundation in the relationship of each partner in facing the challenges of long-distance marriage and increasing marital quality.

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