

The Effect of Interpersonal Communication Intensity on Long Distance Relationship Success

Alya Amalia Rahayu^{1*}, Fadillah Sandy², Annis Azhar Suryaningtyas³

^{1,2,3} Communication Science, University of Muhammadiyah Magelang, 56126, Indonesia

*Corresponding author's email: rahayualya33@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Keywords

Interpersonal Communication
Long Distance Relationship
Relational Maintenance

The development of perspectives on how to communicate goes hand in hand with the development of technology that helps and becomes a channel that facilitates communication. In a Longdistance Relationship (LDR), the ease of communication becomes a way that becomes a factor in the success of the relationship. This study aims to determine the effect of interpersonal communication intensity on the success of LDR with quantitative methods using simple linear regression. The results of this study indicate that the intensity of interpersonal communication has a positive influence on the success of LDR by 32.1%.

1. Introduction

In life as a young adult, romantic relationships with the opposite sex (dating) are common. Based on the 2017 Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey, 81% of young women and 84% of young men with an average age range of 10 to 17 years have dated (Al Ansori, 2020). The existence of a romantic relationship can produce support, help, and comfort so that the relationship becomes something valuable to someone (Bergsma, Poot, & Liefbroer, 2008) in (Febrieta et al., 2016). From a communication point of view, dating is a relationship between individuals (interpersonal) who have romantic feelings for each other (Gayle & Nugraheni, 2013). Dating relationships can not only be done when two people are in one place. According to Guldner, there is a change in understanding of the concept of relationship that a person can have a relationship with a partner even though they are not physically close, namely a long distance relationship (LDR) (Oktariani, 2018). People who live in LDR relationships have more time apart (Jacobs Bao & Lyubomirsky, 2013). LDR is a relationship between couples who are separated by distance and time, and cannot have physical contact for a certain period of time (Carin et al., 2018). LDR relationships are also not new anymore. A survey conducted by tirtoid showed that 63.4% of 183 respondents were in an LDR relationship (Wibisono, 2016). The LDR phenomenon is an interesting thing to discuss because although we can learn about the LDR phenomenon from studies decades ago or in the early 2000s, there is a possibility that the findings are no longer relevant to current conditions (Petersen, 2020).

Previous research conducted by Decyana Ristiani, Hedi Pudjosantosa and Agus Narsoyo suggests that long-distance couples have more problems than close-distance couples. This is because the farther the distance, the more challenges and faces that will be faced such as misunderstanding the message or misinterpreting the message conveyed through intermediary media (Decyana Ristiani, Hedi Pudjosntosa, n.d.). Quoting from (Wijayanti, 2018), it is stated that distance is also an obstacle for long-distance couples. However, there is research that proves that 60% of LDR relationships can survive (Petersen, 2020).

LDR relationships are also said to have advantages. Close relationships require less time and effort to meet so there is no investment (about feelings) between each other which can result in decreased commitment in the relationship (Pistole, Roberts, and Mosko (2010) in (Peterson, 2014). Whereas in long-distance couples, more time apart makes couples always think about the positive things that

happen in the relationship, focus on regulating emotions (feelings), improve the quality of emotions (feelings) and relationship quality (Jacobs Bao & Lyubomirsky, 2013).

The success rate of LDR is influenced by many factors, one of which is the intensity of interpersonal communication. According to Kathleen S. Verderber, interpersonal communication is the process of two people creating and managing their relationships, carrying out responsibilities reciprocally in creating meaning (Afriyadi, 2015). Interpersonal communication requires the full involvement of the parties involved (Watie, 2016). Interpersonal communication is an interaction that requires personal contact where the sender and receiver of the message can exchange messages and respond directly. The existence of interpersonal communication such as telephone calls, video calls, and exchanging messages in LDR relationships can maintain relationship harmony (Adinda, 2021). In this article, the author examines the effect of interpersonal communication intensity on the success of Long Distance Relationship that occurs in young adults 18-25 years old to find out how much influence it has and what factors can affect its success.

One theory that discusses maintaining relationship harmony is Laura Stafford's Relationship Maintenance Theory. This theory teaches that relationships can be maintained through efforts such as emotional support, good conflict resolution, and doing activities together (Stafford, 2010).

Laura Stafford's relational maintenance theory also identifies 5 behaviors that characterize relationship maintenance, namely positivity (feeling good about the relationship, limits in criticizing and supporting each other), openness (freely sharing feelings, exchanging opinions or discussions), reassurance (the existence of words and / or actions that show affection), division of tasks (similarity of responsibilities carried out and not burdensome for one party) and the existence of a social network (the existence of friends known to both parties and reliable) (Littlejohn et al., 2017). This theory is focused by Stafford into the scope of romantic relationships (Stafford, 2019) so that it supports this research in discussing LDR long-distance romantic relationships.

2. Method

This research is a descriptive quantitative study that aims to explain the effect of interpersonal communication intensity on the success of LongDistance Relationship. The approach used in this study is a survey using a questionnaire to a number of young adults with a long LDR relationship of more than 4 months. According to Arnett (2013), young adulthood is defined by the age range of 18-25 years (Syahputri & Khoirunnisa, 2021).

The questionnaire was distributed by distributing Google form links through Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter media. Sampling was carried out using a non-probability technique, namely purposive sampling. The number of samples used in this study was 193. The sample was selected according to predetermined criteria, namely being 18-25 years old and undergoing an LDR relationship for 4 months or more.

The variables in this study are interpersonal communication (X) and LDR success (Y). The data collection technique in this study uses a scale that is arranged with closed statements and uses a Likert scale of 1-5. The validity test to determine the correlation coefficient of the statement items using the Pearson product moment correlation formula which if the value of $r_{count} > r_{table}$, then the questionnaire item is declared valid. Conversely, if $r_{count} < r_{table}$, then the questionnaire item is declared invalid. Then to determine the effect of X on Y, researchers used the simple linear regression method. While making decisions on regression tests using the probability formula in the book (Duwi Priyatno, 2013) that if the probability or significance > 0.05 then the hypothesis is accepted. However, if the significance ≤ 0.05 then the hypothesis is rejected. To calculate the reliability of the instrument is done using the Alpha Cronbarch statistical technique, which if it shows more than 0.60 then the question is considered reliable or consistent in its measurement. The analysis used to determine how much influence X has on Y is the coefficient of determination analysis.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Results

1. Validity Test

Table 1. The results of the validity test with product momen pearson

No. Item	r xy	r table	Description
X1	0,599	0,1413	VALID
X2	0,63	0,1413	VALID
X3	0,622	0,1413	VALID
X4	0,651	0,1413	VALID
X5	0,651	0,1413	VALID
X6	0,633	0,1413	VALID
X7	0,616	0,1413	VALID
X8	0,55	0,1413	VALID
X9	0,553	0,1413	VALID
X10	0,588	0,1413	VALID
X11	0,644	0,1413	VALID
X12	0,621	0,1413	VALID
X13	0,618	0,1413	VALID
X14	0,566	0,1413	VALID
X15	0,495	0,1413	VALID
X16	0,561	0,1413	VALID
X17	0,59	0,1413	VALID
X18	0,621	0,1413	VALID
X19	0,582	0,1413	VALID
X20	0,492	0,1413	VALID
X21	0,494	0,1413	VALID
X22	0,606	0,1413	VALID
X23	0,659	0,1413	VALID
X24	0,596	0,1413	VALID
X25	0,575	0,1413	VALID
X26	0,48	0,1413	VALID
X27	0,559	0,1413	VALID
X28	0,653	0,1413	VALID
X29	0,513	0,1413	VALID
X30	0,503	0,1413	VALID
Y1	0,435	0,1413	VALID
Y2	0,541	0,1413	VALID
Y3	0,482	0,1413	VALID
Y4	0,579	0,1413	VALID
Y5	0,705	0,1413	VALID
Y6	0,712	0,1413	VALID
Y7	0,689	0,1413	VALID
Y8	0,739	0,1413	VALID
Y9	0,684	0,1413	VALID
Y10	0,741	0,1413	VALID
Y11	0,535	0,1413	VALID
Y12	0,585	0,1413	VALID

Y13	0,531	0,1413	VALID
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Researchers determine the validity of statement items using the Pearson product moment formula. In this formula, it says that the statement item is said to be valid if $r_{count} > r_{table}$ (Dewi, 2018). R count is the correlation coefficient between X and Y which in this study was obtained with the help of the IBM SPSS Statistic 26 application. Meanwhile, r table is the Pearson moment table with a significance of 5%. There are 30 statement items on variable X and 13 statement items on variable Y. In table 1, the results show that each statement item in both variables X and Y has an r count higher than r table, so the statement items are declared valid.

2. Reliability Test

Table 2. Reliability test results using SPSS 26

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.937	43

The reliability test determines the consistency of the instrument which, if the instrument is reliable or consistent, can be used for repeated measurements (Dewi, 2018). The reliability test in this study uses the Cronbach Alpha technique, which if the value is more than 0.60, the statement is considered reliable. Table 2 shows the Alpha Cronbach value of 0.937. So, it is stated that the instruments in this study are reliable.

3. Simple Linear Regression Test

Table 3. Regression test results using SPSS 26

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	10.182	3.644		2.794	.006
	intensitas KIP	.305	.032	.567	9.504	.000

a. Dependent Variable: keberhasilan LDR

Based on the regression test results using SPSS 26 listed in table 3, the following results were obtained: (1) Obtained a simple linear regression equation, namely $Y = 10.182 + 0.305X$. (2) Significance shows the number 0.000. Because the number is ≤ 0.05 , the hypothesis is rejected. It can be concluded that the intensity of interpersonal communication has an influence on the success of LDR. (3) The regression coefficient has a positive value. This means that there is a positive influence between the intensity of interpersonal communication and the success rate of LDR. The higher the intensity of interpersonal communication, the more the success of LDR increases. (4) The constant value is 10,182. This means that if there is no interpersonal communication intensity or $X = 0$, then the success of LDR is worth 10,182.

4. Determination Coefficient Test

Table 4. Results of the coefficient of determination test with SPSS 26

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate

1	.567 ^a	.321	.318	8.661
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a. Predictors: (Constant), intensitas KIP

In the table, the R-square value (coefficient of determination) shows 0.321. So it can be concluded that the level of influence of interpersonal communication intensity (X) on the success of LDR (Y) is 32.1%. While 67.9% of LDR success is influenced by variables that are not studied.

3.2 Discussion

According to Kathleen S. Verderber, interpersonal communication is the process of two people creating and managing their relationships, carrying out responsibilities reciprocally in creating meaning (Afriyadi, 2015). There is a change in understanding that interpersonal communication (in this case dating) according to Guldner can be lived without being physically close (Oktariani, 2018). So, even though they are separated by distance and time and cannot make physical contact within a certain period of time (Carin et al., 2018), LDR couples can still build interpersonal communication through intermediary media.

The things that are indicators of the success of LDR and found from the respondents of this study are people who undergo and maintain LDR relationships, are a sense of responsibility, reciprocity, meaning created even though they do not meet, and maintaining good communication so that the relationship is also well managed. The existence of meetings within a certain period of time and the establishment of physical contact during meetings also greatly supports the success of LDR. The factors found are in line with the theory of relationship maintenance expressed by Laura Stafford and Dan Canary. There are 5 behaviors that reflect relationship maintenance, namely positivity, openness, assurance, task sharing and social networking (Littlejohn et al., 2017).

Positivity. Positivity in Laura Stafford's relational maintenance theory is a behavior identified with a relationship that feels good, support for each other, and criticism that has limits so as not to hurt the feelings of the partner. Positivity is shown by helping each other when one is having difficulty, giving news in the middle of a busy day to give peace to the partner, and solving problems as soon as possible during LDR. Research by Barbara Fredrickson shows that people with a positive attitude can overcome difficulties faster and more resilient (Boas, 2022). Then when meeting, positivity is carried out by spending the day, doing romantic things, holding hands, sitting side by side, and filling the meeting by doing things that are liked.

Openness. Laura Stafford's relationship maintenance theory emphasizes the importance of openness in relationships. Openness in relationship maintenance theory is defined as a form of partner openness in sharing thoughts, sharing feelings and a sense of freedom to discuss the relationship being lived (Santosa & Kusumawardhani, 2020). The instruments of this study that represent openness are by giving each other news and telling daily activities, being honest about what is felt and being open to listening to each other's complaints. This openness can be a door to the success of LDR relationships because it can minimize miscommunication that occurs. Especially because LDR couples interact more with the media (Rohmitriasih, 2022).

Guarantee. Assurance in relationships is speech, attitude or behavior that shows affection. This is necessary so that couples feel a commitment in the relationship that makes them believe in the seriousness of the relationship (Tim CNN Indonesia, 2019). In this study, reassurance is described by apologizing and making things right if they make mistakes, expressing affection for each other, exchanging gifts or surprises, praising each other, and remembering important things about their partner. Showing reassurance in LDR relationships can also help minimize miscommunication that occurs and strengthen couples' trust in each other (Rohmitriasih, 2022).

Task sharing. The task sharing referred to in Laura Stafford and Dan Canary's relationship maintenance theory includes equal responsibility for tasks. In this study, task sharing is defined by jointly determining and agreeing on a meeting schedule, taking turns to travel both from party A to the city where B lives and vice versa. In addition, couples also keep promises that have been agreed upon with each other. This makes no party feel burdened in the relationship so that the relationship can be well maintained. Thus, dividing tasks with equal equity also increases the correlation between maintenance and satisfaction in relationships (Stafford, 2010).

4. Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that there is an influence of interpersonal communication intensity on the success of LDR (simple linear regression test = $0.000 \leq 0.05$). The effect is a positive influence seen from the regression coefficient which shows a positive value. Through the results of the coefficient of determination or R-square value, it is known that the amount of influence of interpersonal communication intensity (X) on the success of LDR (Y) is 32.1%. For further research, researchers suggest examining other variables to find out what other things can affect the success of LDR in the remaining 67.9% or the remaining R-square in this study.

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