

# Long Distance Marriage Family Resilience: Case Study of Truck Driver Family in Manggungsari Village Weleri District

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## Abstract

*Family resilience is the ability of the family to manage problems based on the resources they have to meet the needs of their members. One of the things that can reduce the level of family resilience is that many families are forced to establish long-distance relationships, commonly called long-distance marriages. Husbands and wives with long-distance relationship patterns are very prone to disharmony and can even cause the non-survival of a relationship, namely the emergence of divorce. However, families that have strong resilience will be able to adapt to all conditions, including long-distance marriage. This study aims to describe and analyze the resilience of families of factory truck drivers who undergo long-distance marriage. This research is field research through an empirical, descriptive-analytical approach. The data collection process is by means of in-depth observation and interviewing of three factory truck driver wives, while the analysis method goes through three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and data verification using Max Weber's theory. Based on the results of the study, it was found from the three respondents that, before getting married, the wife already knew the consequences of her husband's work. Long-distance marriage (LDM) does not affect the rift between truck driver families in Manggungsari Village, Weleri District, due to intense communication and rationality between families to be responsible for husband and wife in meeting the basic needs of the family, namely related to the family economy, and thinking that long-distance marriage has become commonplace with trust between couples and leaving everything to Allah SWT.*

**Keywords:** Family Resilience, Long Distance Marriage.

## A. Introduction

Couples with long-distance marriage patterns, commonly referred to as "long-distance marriages," are very prone to disharmony, and there are not a few who cannot maintain their families. In the case of long-distance marriage couples (although it is temporary), a solid family resilience for family members is very necessary because the external influence of the family structure will be greater.

Family resilience itself is a tool to measure the achievements of the family in carrying out its roles, functions, and responsibilities in realizing the welfare of its members.<sup>1</sup> Sunarti<sup>2</sup> revealed that family resilience is the family's ability to

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<sup>1</sup> Laelatul Anisah, Cahya Milia Tirta Safitri, "Ketahanan Keluarga Di Masa Pandemi (Studi Kasus Pada Istri Yang Menjalani Long Distance Marriage) Di Kabupaten Kendal", *Jurnal Bimibingan Dan Konseling Ar-Rahman*, Vol 7 No 2 Thn 2021. 87. 86-90.

manage problems based on the resources they have to meet the needs of their family. The general indicators of family resilience are divided into three aspects, namely physical-economic resilience, psychological resilience, and social resilience.<sup>3</sup>

One of the things that can reduce the level of family resilience due to restrictions on community activities is that many families are forced to establish long-distance marriages. Sarwono<sup>4</sup> gives the understanding that long-distance marriage is a condition when married couples are separated by distance for a reason that makes it difficult and rare for couples to meet. Meanwhile, Hampton<sup>5</sup> added that the definition of long-distance marriage is where couples are separated by physical distance that does not allow for physical proximity for a certain period of time. Such conditions are certainly not optimal to be able to meet good family resilience indicators, where in carrying out long-distance marriage, couples lack an attitude of serving each other and the familiarity of husbands who are limited in distance and time. The background to the occurrence of long-distance marriage is mostly due to economic factors and job demands.

As is the case with couple long-distance marriage in Manggungsari village, Weleri district. There are some husbands who work as truck drivers who work outside the city more often than at home. Wives who have to live separately from their husbands tend to experience a heavier burden, especially in the early period of marriage because they are still in the adaptation stage. The source of conflict that is prone to be experienced by couples with long-distance marriage is limitations in communicating, which can lead to jealousy.

To achieve family resilience, it also requires a process of achievement from both. In this case, the researcher refers to Max Weber's theory of social action. Max Weber specifically classifies social actions that have these subjective meanings into four types on the basis of the rationality of social actions: traditional actions, affective actions, instrumental acts of rationality, and acts of value rationality.<sup>6</sup>

Families that lack resilience and harmony usually lead to divorce. Likewise for couples with long-distance marriage. The source of the dispute is mostly due to limited communication between the two. However, not all couples with long-distance marriage experience disharmony in the family; not a few of them can maintain their families.

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<sup>2</sup> Sunarti, *Modul Ringkasan Materi Pelatihan Diagnostik Ketahanan Keluarga*. (Bogor: Penggiat Keluarga Giga Indonesia), 2017. 11-14.

<sup>3</sup> Viena Rusmiati Hasanah, Dede Nurul Komaria, "Motekar (Motivator Ketahanan Keluarga) Dan Pemberdayaan Keluarga Rentan" *Paud Lectura: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, Vol 02, No 02, April 2019, 44.

<sup>4</sup> Sarwono, S.W. *Psikologi Remaja*. (Jakarta: Grafindo Persada 2001)

<sup>5</sup> Hampton, Jr. *The Effect Of Communication On Satisfaction In Long Distance And Proximal Relationships Of College Student*. (Psychology Loyola University N.O. 2001).

<sup>6</sup> Margaret Poloma, *Sosiologi Kontemporer* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2010), 20.

In line with Rosyadi's research (2022)<sup>7</sup> couples who choose to undergo a long-distance marriage (LDM) can still maintain a family by communicating continuously using communication media. Communication carried out includes verbal, nonverbal, individual, and group communications. Muchimah<sup>8</sup> (2020) shows that families needing migrants who undergo long-distance marriages (LDM) do not always end in divorce. Migrant workers' families who are able to maintain and strive to change their family economy by committing themselves to each other for the happiness of the family in the future.

Families who have strong resilience will be able to adapt to all conditions, including long-distance marriage. As well as the families of truck driver workers in Manggungsari village, Weleri district, which shows the phenomenon that couples with long-distance marriage are mostly able to maintain their families. It would then be interesting to study further why couples with long-distance marriage in Manggungsari village, Weleri district, can maintain their families. And how is the resilience of the couple's family with a long-distance marriage in Manggungsari village, Weleri district.

This research is qualitative and involves a type of field research, namely, research conducted directly in the field to obtain data whose object is Manggungsari Village, Weleri District. This research is descriptive-analytical with an empirical approach. Based on Max Weber's theory of social action, this article argues that married couples with long-distance marriage in Manggungsari village, Weleri district, are able to maintain families. The primary data collection uses observation methods and in-depth interviews, while secondary data is obtained through official documents and books as supporting data. Data analysis is carried out in three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. The number of participants involved in this study was 3 families with long-distance marriage in Manggungsari village, Weleri district.

## **B. Discussion**

### **1. Family resilience**

Family resilience is a condition of balance and life for resources and income in meeting all primary needs.<sup>9</sup> Sunarti<sup>10</sup> revealed that family resilience is the family's ability to manage problems based on the resources they have to meet the needs of their family.

According to Law Number 10 of 1992, family resilience is a condition of family dynamics that has tenacity and toughness and contains physical-material, psychic, and spiritual mental abilities to live independently and develop themselves and their families to live in harmony and improve physical and mental

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<sup>7</sup> Rosyadi. B.R, Sholahudin Amrullah, Suryad "Resolusi Konflik Pada Keluarga Long Distance Marriage (Studi Fenomenologi)", *Bulletin Of Counseling And Psychotherapy*, Vol 4, No 2 Thn 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Muchimah, "Ketahanan Keluarga Buruh Migran Di Karang Pakis, Nusawungu, Cilacap", *Al-Ahwal*, Vol 13 No 1 Thn 2020, 31-46.

<sup>9</sup> Widyatmike Gede Mulawarman Dan Alfian Rokhmansyah, *Ketahanan Keluarga: Studi Kasus Di Kelurahan Mesjid Kota Samarinda*, (Yogyakarta: Cv Istanan Agency, 2019), 395.

<sup>10</sup> Sunarti, *Modul Ringkasan Materi Pelatihan .....*, 11-14.

well-being.<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, in Law Number 52 of 2009 concerning Population Development and Family Development, Article 1 Paragraph 11 describes family resilience and welfare as a condition for families that have tenacity and resilience and contain material physical abilities to live independently and develop themselves and their families to live harmoniously by improving physical and mental well-being and happiness.<sup>12</sup>

Correspondingly, family resilience can be measured using a systems approach that includes input components (physical and non-physical resources), family management processes (family problems and their coping mechanisms), and outputs (meeting physical and psycho-social needs).<sup>13</sup>

Families with high family resilience, when they can meet several aspects, namely: (1) physical security, is the fulfillment of food, clothing, housing, education, and health needs; (2) social resilience, which is oriented towards religious values, effective communication, and high family commitment; and (3) psychological resilience, which includes the ability to overcome non-physical problems, control emotions positively, have a positive self-concept, and a husband's concern for his wife.<sup>14</sup>

Regulation of the Minister of PPPA Number 6 of 2013 concerning the implementation of family development states that the concept of family resilience and welfare includes: (1) the basis of legality and family needs; (2) physical resilience; (3) economic resilience; (4) socio-psychological resilience; and (5) socio-cultural resilience.<sup>15</sup>

## **2. Social Action Long-Distance Marriage Couple Truck Driver Husband**

The job of a truck driver may sound simple, but it is actually a job full of risks, one of which is having to live far away from family. By crossing cities, provinces, and even islands for a few days, weeks, and even months to provide a living for their families. Truck driver workers have a long-distance relationship with their wives and children, commonly referred to as "long-distance marriage". Sarwono<sup>16</sup> gives the understanding that long-distance marriage is a condition when married couples are separated by distance for a reason that makes it difficult and rare for couples to meet. Meanwhile, Hampton<sup>17</sup> added that the definition of long-distance marriage is where couples are separated by physical distance that does not allow for physical proximity for a certain period of time. For couples who choose to undergo a long-distance marriage, there are many challenges and sacrifices that must be made due to the lack of time together, like married couples who live in one house in general.

Max Weber said social interaction is a behavior that can be categorized as a social action. The classification of social actions according to Max Weber is

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<sup>11</sup> Badan Koordinasi Keluarga Berencana Nasional, Undang-undang Republik Indonesia No 10 Thn 1992 Tentang Perkembangan Kependudukan dan Pembangunan Keluarga Sejahtera.

<sup>12</sup> Widyatmike Gede Mulawarman Dan Alfian Rokhmansyah, *Ketahanan Keluarga.....*, 13.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 13.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 14.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 14.

<sup>16</sup> Sarwono, S.W. *Psikologi Remaja*. (Jakarta: Grafindo Persada 2001)

<sup>17</sup> Hampton, Jr. *The Effect Of Communication On Satisfaction In Long Distance And Proximal Relationships Of College Student*. (Psychology Loyola University N.O. 2001).

as follows: (1) Traditional Actions, (2) Affective Actions, (3) Instrumental Rationality, and (4) Value Rationality.<sup>18</sup>

The description of the four classifications of action types is as follows: *First*, traditional actions, that is, actions determined by habits that have been rooted for generations. *Second*, affective action, is an action determined by the conditions and emotional orientations of the actor. *Third*, instrumental rationality, is an action aimed at the achievement of those goals that are rationally taken into account and pursued by the actor himself or herself. *Fourth*, value rationality, means rational actions based on values that are carried out for reasons and objectives that are related to values that are personally believed without taking into account the prospects that have to do with the success or failure of the action.

Through the Verstehen Weber approach, the reality of the social actions of the family (as well as family members) that are not understood in meaning can also be understood against the background of these action with the Verstehen approach. Failure to interpret the behavior of family members will result in misunderstandings. Therefore, interpretative approaches and abilities are needed in interpreting the intentions of actions carried out by family members.<sup>19</sup>

### **3. Research Results**

Married couples who undergo long-distance marriages between husbands who work as truck drivers and their wives and children in Manggungsari village, Weleri district, are mostly in the background because more husbands' work outside the city than at home. This is because the husband, as a truck driver, is in charge of sending goods from a company outside the city and even outside the province. In addition, there are economic considerations because most of them are only working husbands, while their wives are housewives. In this case, husband and wife rarely meet, so communication between them must be built properly in order to achieve family resilience. The study showed a picture of informants' views regarding the condition of families undergoing long-distance marriage, including the following:

*The first informant*, based on the results of an initial interview with Mrs. Suminten, obtained the idea that the relationship between Suminten and her husband Suyatno had been running for 21 years and had been blessed with three children. Suyatno worked as a project truck driver more often out of town than at home. In the past, a trip for Suyatno outside the city could be up to 2 weeks to 1 month; however, since about 10 years ago, it was at most 1 week, while returning home was only 1-2 days. 1) Since the beginning of their marriage, Suyatno has worked as a driver. 2) They are used to living a domestic life with a pattern of long-distance marriage because, Suminten, before marriage, already understood the consequences of her husband's work. 3) Although there are not a few who are seductive about her husband, who could be close to other women, Suminten chooses not to be provoked, especially since only her husband works. 4) According to Suminten, everything depends on God, so she chose to believe in her husband and leave everything to Allah SWT.

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<sup>18</sup> Margaret Poloma, *Sosiologi Kontemporer* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2010), 20.

<sup>19</sup> A. Octamata Tenri Awaru, *Sosiologi Keluarga*, (Bandung: CV. Media Sains Indonesia, 2020), 24-25.

The family of Mr. Suyatno and Mrs. Suminten has high family resilience because it meets all three aspects, including 1) physical endurance; the needs of the family such as a livable house, adequate food, education costs for their children. 2) social resilience; Mrs. Suminten, in carrying out a long-distance marriage, completely surrenders to Allah SWT and trusts her husband. 3) psychological resilience; in carrying out a long-distance marriage because for work, there are not a few who tempt Mr. Suyatno, but in this case, Mrs. Suminten has known the consequences so that she is not provoked by outside talk, remains, and still believes in her husband. 3) psychological resilience; in carrying out a long-distance marriage, Mrs. Suminten thinking positively that Mr. Suyatno carries out his obligations as a husband while working out of town.

*The second informant*, based on the results of an interview with Mrs. Dita, obtained the idea that Dita and Rohanis had been married for 16 years and had been blessed with one child. Dita and Rohanis lived a pattern of long-distance marriage because of Rohanis's work, which was more often out of town than at home. Rohanis outside the city can be up to 1 month at most and at home only 1-2 days. 1) Before marriage, Rohanis worked as a truck driver. 2) Dita has become accustomed to living a long-distance relationship because the Dita's father works as a driver too, so she is used to seeing her parents go through a long-distance marriage. 3) For now, because there are more and more needs, Dita never minded her husband's work being outside more often than at home. 4) The important thing is that the living remain the living.

When viewed from the perspective of family resilience, the Mrs. Dita and Mr. Rohanis families has a resilience that can be said to be sufficient, caused by several aspects; 1) physical endurance; the necessities of life have been fulfilled for the family, such as a livable house and the cost of daily life. 2) social resilience; Mrs. Dita is used to have a long-distance relationship with her father.

*The third informant*, based on the results of an interview with Mrs. Sumiatun, Mrs. Sumiatun and Mr. Imam have been married for 23 years and are blessed with one child. From the beginning of their marriage, they have lived a pattern of long-distance marriage. 1) At first, Sumiatun who migrated to Hong Kong to become a TKW was away, but now she is home. Meanwhile, her husband worked as a truck driver. 2) Sumiatun and Imam are used to living in households with long-distance marriage. 3) Their relationship was fine as long as Imam worked out of town. 4) Currently, the most important thing is that her husband work for their family because the economy is not good.

The family resilience of Mr. Imam and Mrs. Sumiatun's family is high resilience, caused by several aspects. 1) physical endurance; for daily expenses, it is lacking, but Mrs. Sumiati has to manage finances the cost of living to be sufficient. 2) social resilience; Mrs. Sumiati and Mr. Imam always maintain good communication, this aims at the good of their family. 3) psychological resilience; Mr. Imam, who is struggling for the family (his wife and children) by working as a truck driver and Mrs. Sumiati have understood her husband's current job and are used to long-distance marriages.

### **C. Conclusion**

The conclusion of the study is that long-distance marriage (LDM) should maintain communication and trust between fellow spouses and children. Because with good and proper communication, a relationship can survive. As well as understanding the responsibilities of each partner to the family, it is also very important. In the midst of a community lifestyle that tends to be hedonistic and permissive, it is mandatory for every Muslim to build resilience in their respective families based on Islamic teachings, namely the Qur'an and Hadith. Family resilience not only has a positive impact on the more prosperous family members but also makes a very important contribution to religion, nation, and state. With the preservation of families from the problems that eat away at the resilience of the family, we have saved the next generation.

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