

## Negotiating Marital Communication in the Digital Era: Social Media Use among Working Couples from a Family Law Perspective

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### Abstract

*This study aims to identify and analyze the communication patterns of married couples who work in using social media effectively and adaptively to maintain household harmony. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with the determination of informants based on the principle of data saturation, considering that the population number is not known for sure. A total of 12 informants who were married couples with formal employment status were randomly selected. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis. The results of the study show that face-to-face communication remains the most crucial and effective foundation in maintaining household harmony, especially in resolving sensitive issues and deep conflicts. Meanwhile, social media functions as a complement to practical communication, especially in conditions of limited time, long distance relationships, and as a means of defusing conflicts in the early stages. However, the majority of informants consider that social media is not yet fully effective in conveying crucial issues such as criticism and differences of opinion due to the high risk of misunderstandings. These findings indicate that household harmony (sakinah, mawaddah, and rahmah) is supported by the application of interpersonal communication norms, such as openness, emotional control, mutual respect, and the establishment of ethical boundaries in digital behavior to prevent conflicts, including the potential for online infidelity. Based on these findings, this study recommends that married couples who actively work build a balanced communication agreement between face-to-face communication and social media utilization, accompanied by digital communication literacy oriented towards ethical values and family resilience.*

**Keywords:** Social Media; Communication of Working Couples; Family Law.

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis pola komunikasi pasangan suami istri yang bekerja dalam memanfaatkan media sosial secara efektif dan adaptif guna menjaga keharmonisan rumah tangga. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan penentuan informan berdasarkan prinsip saturasi data, mengingat jumlah populasi tidak diketahui secara pasti. Sebanyak 12 informan yang merupakan pasangan suami istri dengan status pekerjaan formal dipilih secara acak. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam dan dianalisis secara tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi tatap muka tetap menjadi fondasi paling krusial dan efektif dalam menjaga keharmonisan rumah tangga, terutama dalam menyelesaikan persoalan sensitif dan konflik mendalam. Sementara itu, media sosial berfungsi sebagai pelengkap komunikasi yang bersifat praktis, khususnya dalam kondisi keterbatasan waktu, hubungan jarak jauh (*long distance relationship*), serta sebagai sarana meredakan konflik pada tahap awal. Namun demikian, mayoritas informan menilai bahwa media



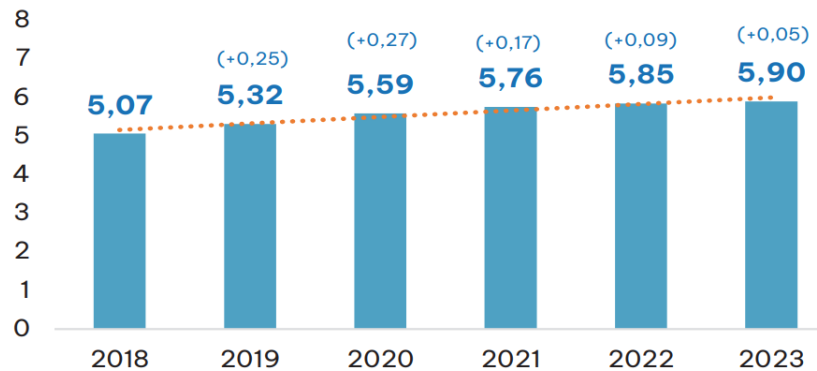
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sosial belum sepenuhnya efektif untuk menyampaikan isu krusial seperti kritik dan perbedaan pendapat karena tingginya risiko kesalahpahaman. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa keharmonisan rumah tangga (sakinah, mawaddah, dan rahmah) ditopang oleh penerapan norma komunikasi interpersonal, seperti keterbukaan, pengendalian emosi, sikap saling menghargai, serta penetapan batasan etis dalam perilaku digital untuk mencegah konflik, termasuk potensi perselingkuhan daring. Berdasarkan temuan tersebut, penelitian ini merekomendasikan agar pasangan suami istri yang bekerja secara aktif membangun kesepakatan komunikasi yang seimbang antara komunikasi tatap muka dan pemanfaatan media sosial, disertai literasi komunikasi digital yang berorientasi pada nilai etika dan ketahanan keluarga.

**Kata Kunci:** Media Sosial; Komunikasi Pasangan Bekerja; Hukum Keluarga.

## INTRODUCTION

The information and communication technology that is developing today is creating a new ecosystem in human social interaction, called social media. Social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and other applications are not just entertainment tools but instant messaging applications, and are even an integral part of daily life for people.



**Figure 1.** Development of Indonesia's ICT Development Index 2018-2023<sup>1</sup>

Indonesia's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) development has shown positive developments in the last 6 years, as shown by the increase in the value of the ICT Development Index, which is 0.83 points. The phenomenon of ICT development touches every level of relationships, starting from communication patterns in the family. The family is the smallest unit of society that is the first place where individuals learn to interact and manage relationships. The communication pattern that is formed greatly determines the quality of family harmony. The rapid development of communication technology has had a significant impact on various aspects of life, including the dynamics of marriage, especially for married couples who both have professional careers.<sup>2</sup>

Social media has fundamentally changed the pattern of interpersonal interaction, introducing complex challenges as well as new opportunities for maintaining household

<sup>1</sup> Directorate of Financial Statistics; Information Technology; and Tourism, "Information and Communication Technology Development Index 2023" (Jakarta, 2024), <https://www.bps.go.id/id/publication/2024/09/30/b50f00b8615fc8716c8e02d4/indeks-pembangunan-teknologi-informasi-dan-komunikasi-2023.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Maulidia Mulyani, "The Role of Social Media for Husband and Wife in Living a Long-Distance Marriage Relationship," *AL-HUKAMA: The Indonesian Journal of Islamic Family Law* 9, no. 2 (2019), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15642/alhukama.2019.9.2.359-479>.

harmony.<sup>3</sup> Family interactions or between husband and wife today tend to spend more time interacting with their devices, in contrast to the previous family interaction pattern which was dominated by intense face-to-face communication (verbal and nonverbal). These changes will directly change the way messages are conveyed, interpreted, and received, so it is not uncommon to cause new problems.<sup>4</sup> Rosli et al. in their research explained that social media dependence and addiction can interfere with quality time with family, triggering communication gaps at home when the focus on devices goes beyond face-to-face interactions.<sup>5</sup> In the context of the modern family, social media has become an inevitable "third party", which can simultaneously become a bridge as well as a dividing bridge in the relationship between married couples.<sup>6</sup>

In essence, marriage is founded on a foundation in the form of love, affection, and inner peace (sakinah). The foundation can be realized through effective and quality communication between husband and wife. In the context of the household, communication has a central role and as the main point in harmony. Open, honest, and empathetic communication is key to overcoming conflict, sharing burdens, and fostering mutual trust.<sup>7</sup> However, the current phenomenon of problems is the challenges faced by working married couples. Communication for working couples often faces complex problems. After a long day of activities outside the home with the pressure and demands of work, the time left to interact with your partner is very limited. Tired and mentally overloaded physical conditions often leave the partner vulnerable to negative emotions. In such situations, efforts to communicate face-to-face on important issues, such as finances, parenting, or personal issues can easily turn into a dispute if not done with a "cool head" and full of understanding.

So that effective communication between husband and wife is a crucial foundation in maintaining domestic harmony, especially in the framework of Islamic family law, where this interaction is not only personal but also has a deep religious dimension.<sup>8</sup> In this context, communication ethics sourced from Islamic teachings are the main guide to form a harmonious and sustainable pattern of interaction (sakinah).<sup>9</sup> Allah SWT says in Surah Ar-Rum Verse 21 namely:

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<sup>3</sup> Sarah P. Coundouris, Courtney L. Tyson, and Julie D. Henry, "Social Networking Site Use and Relationship Quality: A Double Edged Sword," *Computers in Human Behavior* 123 (2021), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.106871>.

<sup>4</sup> Tomaž Bratina, "Digital Devices and Interpersonal Communication Over Time," *Journal of Elementary Education* 16, no. 4 (2023): 425–39, <https://doi.org/10.18690/rei.2958>.

<sup>5</sup> Fatin Syahirah Rosli et al., "The Influence of Social Media on Marital Conflict: An Analytical Study Through the Lens of Maqasid Al-Shariah in Preserving Family Stability and Dignity," in *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, vol. IX, 2025, 598–608, <https://doi.org/https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.90700049>.

<sup>6</sup> Ola Erstad et al., "How Digital Technologies Become Embedded in Family Life Across Generations: Scoping The Agenda for Researching 'Platformised Relationality,'" *Families, Relationships and Societies* 13, no. 2 (2024): 164–80, <https://doi.org/10.1332/20467435Y2024D000000023>.

<sup>7</sup> Oci Asti Herni, Sapta Sari, and Yanto Yanto, "Interpersonal Communication in Creating a Sakinah Family," *Dehasen Multidisciplinary Journal (MUDE)* 3, no. 1 (2024): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.37676/mude.v3i1.5150>.

<sup>8</sup> Nidaan Fajriyah, "Improving Communication Patterns in Married Couples," *Procedia: Case Studies and Psychological Interventions* 11, no. 2 (2023): 49–54, <https://doi.org/10.22219/procedia.v11i2.24444>.

<sup>9</sup> Hasbi Ulul Albab, Akhmad Sulthoni, and Arif Firdausi Nur Romadlon, "Family Ethics in QS. At-Tahrim Hasby Ash-Shiddieqy's Perspective in Tafsir An-Nur," *El-Wasathy: Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2024): 38–57, <https://doi.org/10.61693/elwasathy.vol21.2024.38-57>.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

"Among the signs of His greatness is that He created for you pairs of your own so that you may feel at peace with him. He has made among you a sense of love and affection. Indeed, in such a thing there are signs (of Allah's greatness) for the people who think." Ar-Rum:21.

Surah Ar-Rum verse 21 underlines the essence of marriage as a means to achieve peace of mind (*sakinah*), *mawaddah* (love), and *rahmah* (affection) in the relationship between husband and wife. Marriage in Indonesia is regulated in Law Number 16 of 2019 concerning marriage, which defines marriage as an innate bond between a man and a woman with the aim of forming a happy and eternal family based on the One Godhead.<sup>10</sup>

Several previous studies have discussed the problems of social media in communication, especially communication in the household. Maulina et al. found that social media has a dual role in household dynamics. Some couples benefit from more intensive communication and emotional closeness, while others face tension due to privacy breaches or inappropriate interactions.<sup>11</sup> Huda and Arwata explained that the unwise use of social media can result in conflicts such as jealousy, infidelity, and domestic rifts. On the other hand, social media also plays a constructive role by facilitating long-distance communication and allowing families to share important moments.<sup>12</sup> However, in contrast to Agutina's research which states that digital technology can have a positive impact on family communication, facilitate long-distance interactions, allow rapid information sharing, and help monitor children.<sup>13</sup> Some of these studies have not focused on the influence of social media on communication patterns, especially communication between working husband and wife.

Given the complexity of interactions between working husband and wife, it is important to understand in depth what kind of communication patterns occur, where social media is the main instrument of their communication. These patterns include when they choose social media over direct communication, how they convey criticism or affection through the media, and the boundaries (norms) they apply. Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the communication patterns of working married couples who are considered the most effective and adaptive in the use of social media to maintain household harmony.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this study is qualitative descriptive. Qualitative is a fundamental methodological approach in the study of social sciences and humanities, seeking to reveal a comprehensive understanding of social phenomena through the interpretation of

<sup>10</sup> Hikmatullah, "The Harmonious Family Model in Islam," *Syaksia: Islamic Civil Law Journal* 23, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37035/syakhsia.v23i1.6471>.

<sup>11</sup> Nia Maulina et al., "Dynamics of Social Media Influence on Household Harmony in Family Law Perspective," *Sibatik Journal | Volume* 4, no. 7 (2025): 1393–1410, <https://publish.ojs-indonesia.com/index.php/SIBATIK>.

<sup>12</sup> Muhammad Hasbulloh Huda and Danang Rahmat Arwata, "THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE HARMONY OF MARRIED COUPLES IN GANJARAN VILLAGE, GONDANGLEGI DISTRICT," *MAQASHID Journal of Islamic Law* 7, no. 1 (2024): 68, <https://ejournal.alqolam.ac.id/index.php/maqashid/index>.

<sup>13</sup> Adelia Putri Agustina, "Changes in Family Communication Patterns in the Digital Era," *Global Communication: Journal of Social and Political Sciences* 6, no. 2 (2023): 73–80.

individual narratives and experiences.<sup>14</sup> This research approach aims to understand in depth the phenomenon or event of the influence of social media on the communication pattern of working married couples. The population in this study is a married couple who work formally, where the number of the population is unknown, so the determination of informants is based on the principle of data saturation or the cessation of information collection when no more significant new data or themes are found from additional participants.<sup>15</sup> The number of informants in this study was 12 informants, who were selected using purposive sampling techniques with the criteria of husband and wife who both use social media as a communication tool. Data collection in this study is by observation techniques of phenomena and data related to divorce cases from communication pattern factors, in-depth interviews with informants of married couples who work formally related to communication patterns with social media, and document analysis resulting from observations and interviews. The technique aims to obtain rich contextual data and provide in-depth insights into individual life experiences, particularly the influence of social media on the communication patterns of working married couples.

**RESULTS**

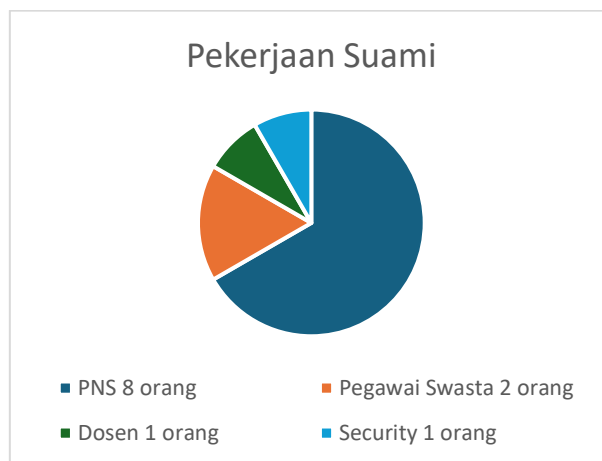
**Characteristic Informan**

1. The position of the informant as husband or wife

**Table 1.** The position of the informant as a husband or wife

<b>Husband</b>	<b>3 Report</b>
<b>Wife</b>	9 Reports
<b>Total</b>	12 Reporting

2. Husband and Wife Work from Informant Data



**Figure 3.** Husband's Job from Informant Data

<sup>14</sup> Anelda B Ultavia, Putri Jannati, and Fildza Malahati, "Qualitative: Understanding Research Characteristics as a Methodology," *Journal of Basic Education* 11, no. 2 (2023): 2023, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.46368/jpd.v11i2.902>.

<sup>15</sup> Subhaktiyasa Gede Putu, "Determining Population and Sample: Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methodology Approaches," *Scientific Journal of the Education Profession* 9, no. 4 (2024): 2721–31.

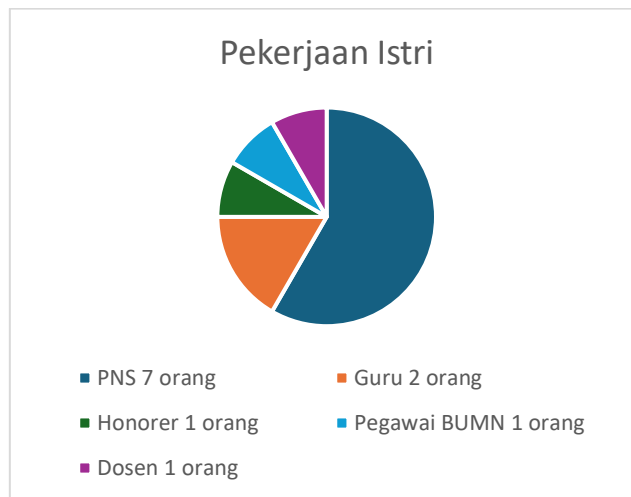


Figure 4. Wife's Job from Informant Data

3. Length of marriage from Informant data

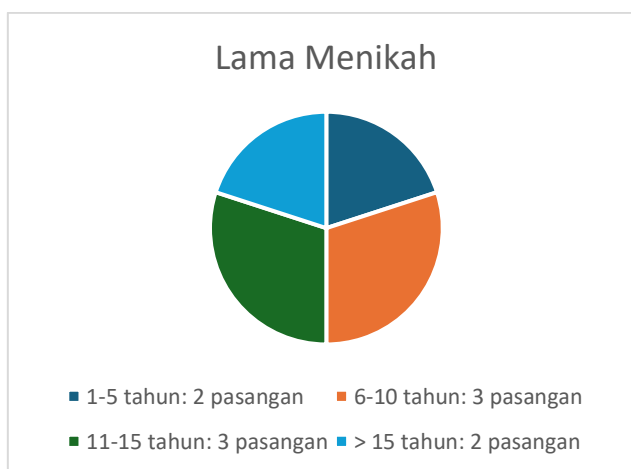


Figure 5. Length of marriage from informant data

4. Number of children



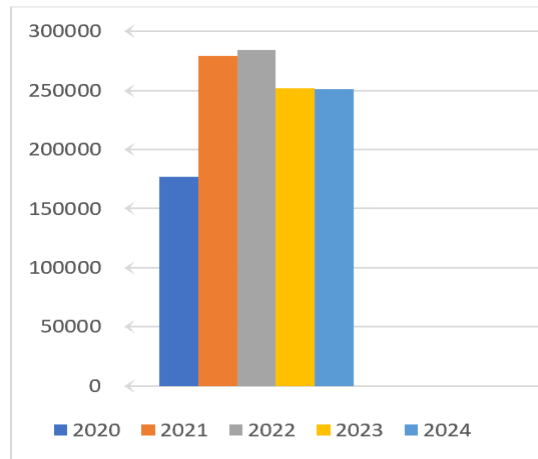
**Figure 6.** Number of children from informant data  
5. Social media that is often used in husband and wife communication



**Figure 7.** Social media that is often used in husband and wife communication

This study used 12 informants who were married couples who both worked formally. The informant's data is dominated by wives, namely 9 people, compared to husbands, 3 people. The majority of informants' jobs, both husbands and wives, are Civil Servants (PNS)/ASN. Husbands who work as civil servants/civil servants are 9 people (8 civil servants and 1 civil servant), while wives are 8 people (7 civil servants and 1 civil servant). Other jobs include private employees, lecturers, teachers, *honorary employees*, and SOE employees. Length of marriage (4–26 years) showed that the study included couples from various phases of marriage, ranging from early marriage to long marriages. Most of the informants (5 out of 12 couples) had 2 children, but there were also 2 couples who did not have children. The most commonly used social media in husband and wife communication is a combination of WhatsApp and Instagram (5 couples), followed by only WhatsApp (2 couples), WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok (2 couples), and only Instagram (3 couples). This is in line with the statement in the introduction that social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Instagram are an integral part of daily life and serve as instant messaging applications.

The main factor of problems in the household is in communication patterns that are not in line, causing disputes. The following is data on divorces that occurred in Indonesia in 2020-2024 caused by communication patterns



**Figure 2.** Divorce chart with factors of disputes and quarrels in Indonesia in 2020-2024<sup>16</sup>

The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) recorded divorce cases in Indonesia resulting from disputes and quarrels as the dominant factors. In 2024, BPS recorded 251,125 divorce cases from dispute and quarrel factors, then in 2023 there were 251,828 cases, and in 2022 there were 284,169 divorce cases. This factor occurs due to inappropriate communication patterns between husband and wife, resulting in disputes and quarrels.

**Time Spent by Husband and Wife Working in Using Social Media rather than Direct Communication**

Intense face-to-face communication (verbal and non-verbal) is effective and quality communication, so it is the key to family harmony and is considered very important. This statement was confirmed by all informants in this study. However, the informants also mentioned that the communication built so far is inseparable from social media which has become a "third party", thus creating a new pattern of interaction, where every condition experienced by every busy working couple tends to spend more time with gadgets. Most of the informants, namely 10 informants, stated that they spent between 1-5 hours on social media outside of working hours. The time used is generally at night. The statement shows that social media is widely used in leisure time after working hours. From the results of interviews with informants, the majority stated that they chose to use social media instead of talking directly, especially in certain situations, namely:

- 1) Building long-distance communication (LDR), where 6 informants confirmed that social media is the main solution to maintain communication when separated by physical distance.
- 2) Facing conflict or quarrelling, which causes 2 informants to prefer social media to calm down and reduce tension.
- 3) When time constraints, especially during working hours, are used for practical purposes such as arranging child pick-ups, home notifications, and short information sharing.

Although social media is used as a medium of communication, informants stated that direct communication remains the main choice in many situations, as it is considered

<sup>16</sup> Central Statistics Agency (BPS), "Number of Divorces by Province and Factors Causing Divorce (Cases)," 2025, <https://www.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/3/YVdoU1IwVmlTM2h4YzFoV1psWkViRXhqTIZwRFVUMDkjMw==/jumlah-perceraian-menurut-provinsi-dan-faktor-penyebab-perceraian--perkara---2024.html?year=2024>.

more effective in building household harmony, as well as in conveying messages that require emotional clarity. The use of social media is considered a necessary complement, but it does not replace face-to-face communication which is considered to have the power to convey emotional nuances and build closeness.

### **Communication Patterns of Husband and Wife Working in Conveying Crucial Issues Through Social Media**

Husband and wife communication should be built properly (*mu'asyarah bi al-ma'ruf*) in order to achieve calm in the household (*sakinah*), because communication is a crucial foundation. Non-face-to-face communication or through social media risks misinterpreting messages, especially for sensitive issues. The majority of informants stated that the delivery of important things such as criticism, sensitive issues, or apologies through social media is considered to have a high risk. The following are the results of the interview with the informant:

- 1) Sensitive issues, as many as 8 informants stated that the main risk that was most mentioned was misunderstanding in delivery.
- 2) Criticism and apology, as many as 4 informants stated that the main risk mentioned most was ineffectiveness in conveying criticism and apologies through social media.

The results of the interviews emphasized that face-to-face communication remains a safer foundation for important issues, as it allows for two-way communication, namely conveying and listening, which was considered more effective by 10 informants. Furthermore, according to the majority of informants, 1-way communication, namely just listening or conveying or 3-direction, namely with a third person, is considered ineffective.

In-depth interviews with informants found that 3 informants mentioned the most frequently discussed issues, namely related to children, followed by a combination with other issues such as the economy, family, career, and others. The informants also explained that although fatigue after work is often a cause of emotional susceptibility, 8 informants stated that they still control *their mood* to communicate, while the other 4 informants chose to communicate casually.

In the context of conveying crucial issues such as criticism, sensitive issues, and apologies through social media, the majority of working married couples show that communication through social media presents its own challenges. From the results of interviews with informants, there is a tendency that the delivery of these issues is not fully effective if it is done through social media.

Misunderstandings in communication resolution strategies carried out by couples usually focus on solving problems in a *cool manner*, finding the right time to communicate, and avoiding hastily conveying sensitive issues on social media. Therefore, although social media is an important medium in communication, in the context of crucial issues, direct or face-to-face communication is still recommended to maintain harmony and clarity of messages.

### **Limitations and Norms of Social Media Use in Working Husband and Wife**

The results of interviews with informants reveal various views and experiences of married couples who work related to limits and norms in the use of social media as a communication medium. Of the 12 informants, the majority emphasized that the main principle of communication in a husband and wife relationship is the existence of a special space and time to communicate with each other, followed by an attitude of openness to each other (11 informants) and not looking for fault with each other (10

informants). In addition, communication carried out with a cool or calm head is also considered important to maintain household harmony (8 informants). These principles are in line with the goal of a harmonious and *sakinah* marriage as regulated in family law.

Although social media has become an important instrument in the lives of working couples, the majority of informants (7 people) revealed that there is no written agreement or rule regarding the use of social media in their households. However, most of them consider that excessive use of social media or that disrupts marital relationships can be considered a violation of ethical and moral norms in marriage. Obvious examples of violations identified are interactions with the opposite sex unrelated to work and chat activities that lead to virtual infidelity, which has the potential to trigger a divorce.

Regarding the privacy aspect in the use of social media, from the results of interviews with informants, two relatively balanced views were found. A total of 6 informants emphasized that there is no privacy in social media because the principle of openness between couples must be upheld. On the other hand, 5 informants stated that there is privacy in the use of social media even though it does not necessarily require special permission from the partner. These findings show the complexity of balancing openness and respect for private space in digital communication, which is also a reflection of the dynamics of social norms and family values.

Overall, these results confirm that the digital communication patterns of working married couples need to be directed with clear boundaries and mutually agreed norms so as not to damage the harmony of the household. Openness, communication timing, and calm communication are the keys to controlling the use of social media as a means of communication in marriage. It also emphasizes that face-to-face communication remains the main foundation in maintaining harmony in accordance with the values of family law and applicable marriage ethics.

## DISCUSSION

In the context of social media use, this study confirms that social media is chosen in certain situations, especially when couples are in a long-distance relationship (LDR), facing conflicts, or when time constraints, especially during working hours, so that practical communication through social media is more effective. Six couples use social media as the primary solution in maintaining long-distance communication, and two couples use it during conflict to calm emotional tensions. However, face-to-face communication is still considered the most effective for building emotional closeness and resolving sensitive issues, so social media is positioned more as a complement to communication.

This statement is in line with Mulyani who stated that the use of social media also allows for fast and efficient message delivery, maintains harmony in long-distance relationships, and facilitates continuous interaction even though they are geographically separated.<sup>17</sup> It is also in line with the theory of husband and wife rights and obligations in interpersonal communication, which emphasizes the importance of openness, empathy, support, positive attitudes, and equality in daily interactions.<sup>18</sup> Husband and wife communication with social media in this study is also in accordance with the concept of

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<sup>17</sup> Mulyani, "The Role of Social Media for Husband and Wife in Living a Long-Distance Marriage Relationship."

<sup>18</sup> Lestanto Lestanto, Ambarwati Ambarwati, and Made Wilantara, "Interpersonal Communication Patterns of Married Couples in Maintaining the Household," *Journal of Comprehensive Science* 2, no. 7 (July 3, 2023): 1976–93, <https://doi.org/10.59188/JCS.V2I7.424>.

the Islamic family in the digital era, where the use of technology can strengthen communication in the family, especially in the context of sharing information and Islamic advice. This makes it easier to maintain harmonious family ties even though physical distance separates them.<sup>19</sup>

Analysis of the results of the study shows that although face-to-face communication is still recognized as the most effective method for building emotional closeness and resolving sensitive issues, social media has a crucial role as a complement to communication in husband and wife relationships, especially in challenging situations such as long-distance relationships (LDRs), when conflicts occur, or time constraints during working hours. The use of social media was chosen for its effectiveness and practicality, in line with the literature on the speed of efficient message delivery and the maintenance of harmony of long-distance relationships, as well as facilitating continuous interaction despite being geographically separated. In addition, these findings are also in line with the concept of husband and wife rights and obligations in interpersonal communication that emphasizes openness, as well as supporting adaptation to the concept of the Islamic family in the digital age that utilizes technology to strengthen family bonds and share Islamic advice.

This study shows that the communication patterns of married couples who work together are greatly influenced by the need to manage time and roles between work and home life. Effective communication patterns are the main key in maintaining family harmony, and these communication patterns can be categorized into 3 forms, namely *one-way traffic communication*, *two-way traffic communication*, and multi-way patterns (communication as transactions). The one-way pattern involves sending messages from one party to the other without any direct interaction back, which is often used when conveying brief or practical information, such as setting a child's pick-up time via text message. A two-way pattern occurs when husband and wife exchange information dialogically, such as *video calls* or *interactive chats* that allow for clarification and problem solving. Meanwhile, the multi-directional pattern involves more than two people, for example when discussions involve children or other family members, which often happens through social media groups or digital family discussions.

The results of the study descriptively show that although social media is used in daily communication, the majority of working married couples experience challenges and consider that communication is not fully effective when used to convey crucial or sensitive issues. Based on informant interviews, there is a strong tendency that attempts to convey criticism, discuss sensitive issues, or make apologies through digital *platforms* are often less successful, indicating that social media has significant limitations in handling messages that require the emotional depth, contextual clarity, and interpersonal nuances typically available through face-to-face interactions. The results of the study also underscore that linear communication patterns can vary in problem solving, with some couples resolving issues instantly while others take longer, even leading to a one-way communication flow.

The explanation of the results of the interviews with informants is in accordance with Fajriyah's research which confirms that although social media provides a means of fast and efficient communication, its existence serves more as a complement than a

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<sup>19</sup> Miftahol Ulum et al., *ISLAMIC FAMILY LAW*, DSI Press (Jakarta, 2025), [https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/HUKUM\\_KELUARGA\\_ISLAM/vDJJEQAAQBAJ?hl=id&gbpv=1&dq=komunikasi+suami+istri+dalam+perspektif+hukum+keluarga+islam&pg=PA10&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/HUKUM_KELUARGA_ISLAM/vDJJEQAAQBAJ?hl=id&gbpv=1&dq=komunikasi+suami+istri+dalam+perspektif+hukum+keluarga+islam&pg=PA10&printsec=frontcover).

substitute for face-to-face communication, especially to facilitate in-depth interpersonal communication and conflict resolution.<sup>20</sup> The communication pattern applied by the informants in this study is also in accordance with the concept of fulfilling the rights and obligations of husband and wife, which is an integral part of Islamic family law. One of the husband's obligations is to treat his wife well, as well as maintain the honor and safety of the family. Wives have the obligation to obey their husbands in good things, manage the household well, and maintain the honor of themselves and their families.<sup>21</sup>

In carrying out the life of husband and wife, it is inseparable from the fulfillment of various rights and obligations, especially for husband and wife who both work or have formal careers, meaning that every desire and problem in running a family life includes rights and obligations that are outlined in fulfilling desires, biological fulfillment, fulfillment of a sense of calm, fulfillment of primary nature such as clothing, food, and board and other secondary fulfillments.<sup>22</sup> Within the framework of Islamic law, the rights of husbands include maintenance, protection, and respect for his wife and children. The husband's obligation is to meet the family's economic needs, maintain honor, and play an active role in education and childcare. On the other hand, the rights of the wife include protection, respect, and economic rights, including child custody. The wife's obligation is to obey her husband, maintain the honor of the family, and participate in the management of the household.<sup>23</sup> The rights and obligations of husband and wife can be carried out in a balanced manner, if husband and wife can implement a good communication pattern even with social media intermediaries, because it is in accordance with the development of the times and current circumstances.

Regarding the limits and norms of social media use, the main principles of communication held by married couples are the existence of a special space and time to communicate, be open to each other, avoid finding fault with each other, and maintain communication with a cool head. Although the majority of couples do not have written rules about the use of social media, they agree that excessive use of social media or behavior that disturbs harmony, such as inappropriate communication with the opposite sex outside of work and online infidelity, can be considered a violation of ethical and moral norms in marriage. When it comes to privacy, there are two views between couples; Some state that there is no privacy in the use of social media as part of openness, while others acknowledge that there is a space for privacy even though it does not always require explicit permission from the partner. This reflects the complexity of balancing openness and respect for personal space in digital communication.

The analysis shows that although the majority of married couples do not have written rules regarding the use of social media, they adhere to the principles of ethical

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<sup>20</sup> Fajriyah, "Improving Communication Patterns in Married Couples."

<sup>21</sup> Sukiati, *Indonesian Islamic Family Law in the Era of Modernization, Merdeka Kreasi* (Medan, 2025), [https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/Hukum\\_Keluarga\\_Islam\\_Indonesia\\_di\\_Era\\_Mo/st-UEQAAQBAJ?hl=id&gbpv=1&dq=pola+komunikasi+suami+istri+dalam+perspektif+hukum+keluarga+islam&pg=PA60&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/Hukum_Keluarga_Islam_Indonesia_di_Era_Mo/st-UEQAAQBAJ?hl=id&gbpv=1&dq=pola+komunikasi+suami+istri+dalam+perspektif+hukum+keluarga+islam&pg=PA60&printsec=frontcover).

<sup>22</sup> Dadang Jaya and Hamdan Firmansyah, *FIQH MUNAKAHAT SEKUPU IN MARRIAGE* (Cirebon: Arr Rad Pratama, 2024), [https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/FIKIH\\_MUNAKAHAT\\_SEKUPU\\_DALAM\\_PERNIKAHAN/00hlEQAAQBAJ?hl=id&gbpv=1&dq=hak+dan+kewajiban+suami+istri+dalam+komunikasi&pg=PA43&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/FIKIH_MUNAKAHAT_SEKUPU_DALAM_PERNIKAHAN/00hlEQAAQBAJ?hl=id&gbpv=1&dq=hak+dan+kewajiban+suami+istri+dalam+komunikasi&pg=PA43&printsec=frontcover).

<sup>23</sup> Rina Septiani, *Family Law in Muslim Countries* (Banyumas: Insight Ilmu, 2025), [https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/Hukum\\_Keluarga\\_di\\_Negara\\_Muslim/sqd-EQAAQBAJ?hl=id&gbpv=1&dq=hak+dan+kewajiban+suami+istri+dalam+komunikasi&pg=PA57&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/Hukum_Keluarga_di_Negara_Muslim/sqd-EQAAQBAJ?hl=id&gbpv=1&dq=hak+dan+kewajiban+suami+istri+dalam+komunikasi&pg=PA57&printsec=frontcover).

non-verbal communication, which emphasize openness, avoiding faultfinding, and maintaining communication with a "cool head," while setting strict moral boundaries against behaviors that can disrupt harmony, such as inappropriate communication with the opposite sex and online infidelity. These findings highlight that traditional marriage norms are inherently applied to the digital realm, making the abuse of social media a violation of marital ethics and morals. In addition, there are complex dynamics in privacy issues, with some couples adopting the concept of total openness by necessitating the privacy of social media, while others seek to balance openness with respect for personal space, reflecting the ongoing negotiation between transparency and individual autonomy in digital communication.

Based on this explanation, Rosli's research confirms that excessive use of social media can cause marital conflicts, trigger jealousy, suspicion, and create communication gaps between couples.<sup>24</sup> The limits and norms of social media use in working husband and wife should be inseparable from Islamic communication ethics for married couples in order to maintain family harmony, namely (1) by taking profits and leaving losses through the use and utilization of social media, meaning using them wisely; (2) using fair or proportionate time management in family, personal, and social relationships; (3) open to partners in the use of social media; (4) choosing good friends on social media, because social media has the potential to be a trigger for disputes and even infidelity; (5) speak kind words in *posts* and message comments; (6) to maintain the disgrace of the spouse and family; and (7) maintaining self-esteem.<sup>25</sup> Thus, in facing the development of the current era, where husband and wife communication is also influenced by the presence of social media, especially for husband and wife who work, it is necessary to have boundaries and norms, so that a *sakinah, mawaddah, and rahmah relationship can be established*.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that face-to-face communication has proven to remain the most crucial and effective foundation in building harmony and resolving sensitive issues in the family in accordance with the principles of Islamic family law, while social media serves as an inevitable complement to the dynamics of couples' communication in the digital era. Social media is used mainly for practical communication needs due to limited working hours, maintenance of long-distance relationships (LDR), and early conflict mitigation; However, the majority of couples consider that social media is not yet fully effective in conveying crucial issues such as deep criticism or apologies due to the high risk of misinterpretation, so direct communication is still prioritized. Relationship harmony is maintained through the application of ethical communication norms, such as openness, emotional control, avoiding mutual blame, and setting strict moral boundaries against digital behavior that has the potential to damage trust, including online infidelity. These findings confirm that adaptive and proportional communication patterns by placing face-to-face communication as the main means and social media as supporters are key in realizing the goals of *sakinah, mawaddah, and rahmah* marriage; Therefore, this study recommends

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<sup>24</sup> Rosli et al., "The Influence of Social Media on Marital Conflict: An Analytical Study Through the Lens of Maqasid Al-Shariah in Preserving Family Stability and Dignity."

<sup>25</sup> Anang Sujoko et al., *Communication of Indonesian and Asian Perspectives* (Malang: UB Press, 2023), [https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/Komunikasi\\_Perspektif\\_Indonesia\\_dan\\_Asia/jKDtEAAAQBAJ?hl=id&gbpv=1&dq=komunikasi+suami+istri+dengan+menggunakan+media+sosial+dalam+perspective+hukum+keluarga+islam&pg=PA119&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/Komunikasi_Perspektif_Indonesia_dan_Asia/jKDtEAAAQBAJ?hl=id&gbpv=1&dq=komunikasi+suami+istri+dengan+menggunakan+media+sosial+dalam+perspective+hukum+keluarga+islam&pg=PA119&printsec=frontcover).

the need to strengthen digital communication literacy and foster Islamic family communication ethics for married couples so that the use of social media remains in harmony with marriage values and domestic harmony.

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