

Digital Communication in Building Emotional Closeness in Long Distance Marriages from the Perspective of the Quran

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Abstract. Long Distance Marriage (LDM) is an increasingly common phenomenon in this era of globalization, where married couples are separated by long physical distances due to work, education, or other obligations. One of the biggest challenges that LDM couples face is maintaining emotional closeness and effective communication. This research aims to explore digital communication strategies that can be used to build and sustain emotional intimacy between husband and wife in LDM. Through qualitative methods, including in-depth interviews with 5 LDM couples, several key strategies were identified, such as the use of voice and video calls, text and voice messages, media sharing, and regular communication scheduling. The findings suggest that the quality of communication, including emotional depth, openness, and honesty, is critical in strengthening emotional bonds. Additionally, the consistency and frequency of communication are essential to keeping the relationship alive and dynamic. The Quran emphasizes the importance of communication based on truthfulness and sincerity, as seen in the verse: "O you who have believed, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice" (QS. Al-Ahzab: 70). This reinforces the idea that openness and honesty are fundamental to maintaining trust and emotional closeness, especially in LDM. The implications of this research highlight that by utilizing appropriate digital communication strategies and upholding the principles of openness and honesty, LDM couples can foster strong and enduring relationships, even when separated by physical distance.

Keywords: Long Distance Marriage, Digital Communication, AL-Qur'an

Introduction

In the era of globalization and high mobility, more and more couples are engaging in long-distance marriages (LDM). This situation is often caused by work, study demands, or other factors that require the husband and wife to live in different locations for a certain period.¹ This physical separation poses a major challenge in maintaining emotional closeness and intimacy in a marital relationship, as emphasized in the Qur'an, where marriage is described as a means to find peace, affection, and mercy.² Allah SWT states in Surah Ar-Rum verse 21: "And among His signs is that He created for you wives from among yourselves so that you may find tranquility in them, and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who give thought."³

¹ Aylor, Brooks A. "Maintaining long-distance relationships." *Maintaining relationships through communication*. Routledge, 2003. 127-139.

² Said, N. M. (2013). Dakwah dan problematika umat islam. *Jurnal Dakwah Tabligh*, 14(1), 1–23.

³ M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Quran*, (Bandung: mizan, 1996). 34.

Engaging in a long-distance marriage (LDM) presents various challenges that can affect the relationship between husband and wife.⁴ The absence of physical presence often leads to feelings of loneliness and loss, as physical touch is an important part of intimacy in marriage. When couples are unable to meet in person, they may feel disconnected and lack comfort. Although communication technology such as WhatsApp facilitates couples in staying connected, digital communication has its limitations. Text messages can be misinterpreted due to the lack of non-verbal cues like tone of voice and facial expressions, which can trigger miscommunication and tension in the relationship.⁵

Furthermore, when couples live apart, feelings of jealousy and distrust can arise. Without constant physical presence, couples may feel insecure or worried about each other's fidelity. These concerns are often exacerbated by a lack of open and honest communication. The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of maintaining a marital relationship with trust and good communication. In Surah An-Nisa verse 19, Allah SWT says: "And live with them (your wives) in kindness..."⁶ This highlights the importance of fair and good communication in marriage to overcome challenges like those experienced in LDM.

Conflicts can also arise due to the limitations of long-distance communication, while effective conflict resolution often requires face-to-face interaction. In long-distance relationships, couples must rely on voice or video calls to resolve disputes, which may be less adequate compared to direct conversations. This can prolong or worsen existing conflicts.⁷

Digital communication is a crucial factor in maintaining the quality of the husband-wife relationship. Without effective communication, couples may experience loneliness, a lack of emotional support, and increased potential for conflict. One of the popular digital communication tools in LDM is WhatsApp. This application allows couples to share everyday moments, express affection, and communicate in real-time. However, despite its many benefits, the use of WhatsApp also presents its own challenges. Dependence on digital communication can replace deeper face-to-face interactions, which can lead to miscommunication or misinterpretation. Moreover, excessive use can lower the quality of virtual relationships and increase the potential for technology addiction.⁸

Previous research relevant to this study includes works by Stafford and Merolla (2007) and Sahlstein (2006), which highlight communication challenges in long-distance relationships. However, they also found that couples who successfully adapt to long-distance communication tend to use creative and routine communication strategies to maintain emotional closeness.⁹

⁴ Dargie, E., Blair, K. L., Goldfinger, C., & Pukall, C. F. (2015). Go long! Predictors of positive relationship outcomes in long-distance dating relationships. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 41(2), 181-202. doi:10.1080/0092623X.2013.864366

⁵ Dainton, M., & Aylor, B. (2002). Patterns of communication channel use in the maintenance of long-distance relationships. *Communication Research Reports*, 19(2), 118-129. doi:10.1080/08824090209384839

⁶ M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Quran*, (Bandung: mizan, 1996). 34.

⁷ Sahlstein, Erin M. "Relating at a distance: Negotiating being together and being apart in long distance relationships." *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 21.5 (2004): 689-710.

⁸ Jiang, L. C., & Hancock, J. T. (2013). Absence makes the communication grow fonder: Geographic separation, interpersonal media, and intimacy in dating relationships. *Journal of Communication*, 63(3), 556-577. doi:10.1111/jcom.12029

⁹ Merolla, A. J., & Stafford, L. (2007). Idealization and communication in long-distance premarital relationships. *Journal of Communication*, 57(4), 656-676. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2007.00362.x

Stafford and Merolla (2007), in their study titled *"Idealization and Communication in Long-Distance Premarital Relationships,"* explored how idealization and various forms of communication affect long-distance relationships. They found that couples in long-distance relationships tend to have higher levels of idealization towards their partners, which can positively impact maintaining long-term relationships. However, excessive idealization can also create problems when couples eventually meet in person and face realities that don't match their expectations.

Sahlstein (2006), in his study titled *"The Communication of Distance: An Examination of the Transition to Long-Distance Relationships,"* examined how couples adapt to the transition into long-distance relationships. This study highlights the communication challenges faced by couples, particularly the difficulty in conveying emotions through digital media.¹⁰ Dainton and Aylor (2002), in their study on *"The Use of Technology in Long-Distance Relationships,"* examined the role of communication technologies such as email and instant messaging in maintaining long-distance relationships.¹¹ They concluded that while technology helps couples stay connected, digital media cannot replace the deeper quality of face-to-face interactions. Jiang and Hancock (2013), in their study titled *"Digital Communication in Long-Distance Relationships,"* explored how LDM couples use digital communication tools such as WhatsApp to maintain emotional closeness. While this app facilitates real-time interaction, the study shows that dependence on digital communication can lead to issues such as miscommunication and excessive reliance on technology.¹²

Scientifically, Long Distance Marriage is defined as a marriage in which husband and wife are geographically separated for extended periods.¹³ In the context of Islam, marriage is an act of worship that must be maintained with patience, as indicated in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 153: "Indeed, Allah is with those who are patient." Patience in facing the challenges of a long-distance marriage is key to maintaining household harmony, including in terms of trust and communication. This research uses a qualitative approach to understand the experiences and communication strategies of five married couples who have been in Long Distance Marriages for at least one year. These couples have successfully maintained emotional closeness without experiencing divorce, demonstrating the importance of good communication strategies in preserving household unity in long-distance conditions.

Discussion

The life of a husband and wife will never be devoid of communication. Communication is the transmission of information, desires, wills or prohibitions, or the delivery of intentions and goals to another party (Simon & Alouini, 2004). Communication between husband and wife has special tools and measures, which may not be understood by others. Many codes or symbols are

¹⁰ Sahlstein, E. M. (2006). The communication of distance: An examination of the transition to long-distance relationships. *Journal of Family Communication*, 6(2), 143-165. doi:10.1207/s15327698jfc0602_4

¹¹ Dainton, M., & Aylor, B. (2002). Patterns of communication channel use in the maintenance of long-distance relationships. *Communication Research Reports*, 19(2), 118-129. doi:10.1080/08824090209384839

¹² Jiang, L. C., & Hancock, J. T. (2013). Absence makes the communication grow fonder: Geographic separation, interpersonal media, and intimacy in dating relationships. *Journal of Communication*, 63(3), 556-577. doi:10.1111/jcom.12029

¹³ Kelmer, Gretchen, et al. "Relationship quality, commitment, and stability in long-distance relationships." *Family process* 52.2 (2013): 257-270.

used that are more effective than words. A husband and wife who do not communicate well, even if they seem to live in the same house, often have a cold and distant relationship. Their smiles are always sour, and jokes or laughter are non-existent. Each is likely holding something inside, perhaps a small issue, maybe a big one, or perhaps it isn't even an issue at all, but simply a misunderstanding.¹⁴

The lack of clarity in communication between spouses, often due to reluctance to speak up, can lead to significant misunderstandings and incorrect assumptions. This hesitation to address issues openly fosters an environment of unresolved dissatisfaction, eroding trust between partners. Over time, this silence can escalate into frustration or resentment, as neither party feels confident in the other's willingness to listen or care. Such dynamics are commonly observed in marital conflicts, where both partners might remain silent for extended periods, harboring unspoken grievances. These hidden issues, when finally uncovered by consultants or mediators, often reveal a pattern of emotional withdrawal and a lack of proactive dialogue.

The phenomenon of the 'silent treatment' amplifies this dynamic.¹⁵ When one spouse adopts an indifferent stance by withdrawing from communication, the other often mirrors this behavior, creating a vicious cycle of mutual silence. This response deepens emotional divides and perpetuates a state of unresolved tension, eventually resulting in an impasse. The teaching of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), emphasizing the virtue of breaking such silence, underscores the importance of taking the first step to initiate dialogue. This proactive approach not only prevents misunderstandings but also fosters an atmosphere of trust and reconciliation.

In the context of Long-Distance Marriages (LDM), effective communication becomes even more critical due to the physical separation of partners. Digital communication tools offer a vital means to bridge this gap, enabling couples to maintain emotional closeness despite the distance. Platforms such as video calls, instant messaging, and social media provide opportunities to share daily experiences, express feelings, and sustain intimacy. Research has highlighted the positive correlation between the use of digital communication technologies and relationship satisfaction in long-distance setups. Features like real-time interaction, personalized messages, and visual connectivity enhance the sense of presence and reduce feelings of isolation.

By adopting structured digital communication strategies, couples in LDM can overcome the challenges posed by physical distance. Regularly scheduled interactions and the deliberate sharing of personal experiences foster emotional intimacy and mutual understanding. These practices mitigate the risk of miscommunication and the potential for silent withdrawal, ensuring that the relationship remains strong and resilient. Emphasizing the importance of speaking up and leveraging digital tools effectively can thus help couples navigate the complexities of long-distance relationships, turning potential challenges into opportunities for deeper connection.

Quality vs. Quantity of Communication

While it is important to maintain regular communication, the quality of communication is equally crucial. Couples must ensure that the time they spend communicating is truly meaningful and strengthens their emotional bond. The importance of quality versus quantity of

¹⁴ Kelmer, Gretchen, et al. "Relationship quality, commitment, and stability in long-distance relationships." *Family process* 52.2 (2013): 257-270.

¹⁵ Suminar, Jenny Ratna, and Sitti Murni Kaddi. "The phenomenon of marriage couples with long-distance relationship." *MIMBAR: Jurnal Sosial Dan Pembangunan* 34.1 (2018): 121-129.

communication in LDM highlights that it is not just how often couples interact that matters, but also how meaningful and deep those interactions are. These two aspects complement each other and can work together to strengthen the emotional bond between husband and wife in an LDM.

As mentioned by Couple 1, they believe it is important for couples to engage in quality conversations during digital communication.

"So after the small talk, it's better to have a quality conversation about the day, any complaints or joys, and ask for solutions from the partner." (interview with Couple 1)

"So, if there is a quality conversation, even though we are not physically present, it still feels like we're close even though we're far apart." (interview with Couple 2)

By maintaining a balance between the quality and quantity of communication, couples in a Long Distance Marriage (LDM) can create and sustain a strong and resilient relationship, even in the face of physical separation and other challenges. Quality communication involves meaningful and emotionally engaging conversations that address each partner's feelings, thoughts, and experiences. Meanwhile, sufficient quantity ensures consistent interaction, fostering a sense of presence and commitment despite the distance. Together, these aspects help couples navigate the complexities of long-distance relationships by promoting understanding, trust, and emotional intimacy.

The importance of harmonious communication in marriage is rooted in Islamic teachings. The Qur'an explicitly emphasizes this in Surah An-Nisa verse 19: *"And live with them (your wives) in kindness..."* This verse underscores the obligation to treat one another with care, respect, and compassion, including through effective and loving communication. Good communication is not merely about exchanging information but also about ensuring that both partners feel heard, valued, and supported, which is particularly critical in LDM situations where physical proximity is lacking.

In the context of LDM, adhering to this Quranic principle can be realized through thoughtful and consistent use of digital communication tools. Regular video calls, voice messages, and personalized texts can help bridge the emotional gap caused by physical distance. Couples can also create routines or rituals, such as sharing updates about their daily lives, offering words of encouragement, or making time for meaningful discussions about their relationship and future goals.

Moreover, balancing quality and quantity ensures that communication does not become superficial or overly burdensome. Overcommunicating without substance can lead to fatigue, while infrequent communication might result in feelings of neglect. By striving for a thoughtful balance, couples can honor the spirit of Surah An-Nisa verse 19, cultivating a relationship that is rooted in kindness and mutual respect, even when faced with the challenges of long-distance marriage.

Quality communication in LDM emphasizes the depth, intimacy, and meaning of interactions between husband and wife. In the context of LDM, quality communication becomes key in building a strong emotional connection. This quality includes the ability to convey and understand emotions clearly and deeply. Couples should feel comfortable discussing their feelings without fear of judgment or negative consequences. The Qur'an also stresses the importance of honesty and openness in relationships, as reflected in Surah Al-Ahzab verse 70: *"O you who believe, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice."* Honesty in communication helps to strengthen the sense of security and trust between spouses.

Quantity of communication also plays an important role in LDM. While the quality of interactions is crucial, the frequency and consistency of communication also help strengthen emotional bonds. The quantity of communication relates to how often couples interact, maintaining a stable relationship even when physically apart. Couples 3 and 4 in the interview acknowledged the importance of maintaining a regular communication schedule:

"We set a specific time or hour every day to make time for calls, even when busy." (Interview with Couple 3)

"There is a special schedule, no matter how busy, unless something urgent comes up, there might be some flexibility." (Interview with Couple 4)

The Qur'an in Surah Ar-Rum verse 21 states that Allah created spouses so that they may find tranquility in one another through love and mercy: "*And among His signs is this: that He created for you mates from among yourselves, so that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between you...*" Regular communication, whether through voice calls, video calls, or text messages, is one of the ways couples can maintain tranquility and emotional closeness, even when separated by distance.

Quantity of communication involves consistent and regular interaction between husband and wife, as well as the use of various digital communication platforms such as video calls, text messages, and media sharing. Consistency and spontaneity in communication can help couples stay connected and maintain a sense of togetherness, despite the physical distance. As Couples 3 and 4 mentioned:

"Quantity, to me, is about consistency and regularity, so it's not just high quality once or twice, but it's consistent and scheduled." (Interview with Couple 1)

"This is key to maintaining an emotional bond—consistent, it doesn't need to be long, just 10 minutes, but regular and meaningful." (Interview with Couple 2)

By following the principles of good communication as taught in the Qur'an, couples in LDM can overcome the challenges of distance and build a harmonious and strong relationship.

Consistency in communication is the cornerstone of maintaining a healthy and resilient long-distance relationship. Regular interaction serves as a bridge that connects partners emotionally, compensating for the lack of physical presence and reinforcing the foundation of their bond. By communicating consistently, couples in Long Distance Marriages (LDM) can address multiple critical aspects of their relationship that contribute to its success and happiness. First, consistent communication fosters emotional closeness. Through regular conversations, partners can express their feelings, share daily experiences, and discuss thoughts that deepen their understanding of one another. This constant emotional exchange nurtures intimacy, ensuring that both parties feel valued and connected despite the geographical distance.¹⁶

Second, it helps to prevent misunderstandings. In the absence of frequent communication, assumptions and misinterpretations can arise, potentially leading to conflicts. Regular discussions allow couples to clarify intentions, resolve doubts, and maintain transparency, thus reducing the likelihood of miscommunication. Third, consistent communication is vital in building trust. When couples make a habit of staying in touch and sharing updates about their lives, it creates a sense of reliability and security. Trust is further reinforced when partners demonstrate a genuine interest in each other's well-being, even from afar. Fourth, it strengthens commitment. By prioritizing regular communication, couples reaffirm their dedication to the relationship. This consistent effort reflects their willingness to invest time and energy, reinforcing the importance of the relationship in their lives.

Fifth, consistent communication helps to combat loneliness. Long-distance relationships often involve feelings of isolation due to the lack of physical proximity. Regular interactions provide emotional support and a sense of companionship, alleviating the sense of solitude and fostering positivity. Sixth, it enhances the quality of the relationship. Frequent and meaningful

¹⁶ Sahlstein, Erin M. "Making plans: Praxis strategies for negotiating uncertainty—certainty in long-distance relationships." *Western Journal of Communication* 70.2 (2006): 147-165.

conversations encourage partners to explore each other's thoughts, aspirations, and challenges. This deepened understanding improves compatibility and creates a more fulfilling relationship.

Seventh, consistent communication facilitates problem-solving. Disagreements and challenges are inevitable in any relationship, but regular communication allows couples to address issues promptly before they escalate. This proactive approach helps maintain harmony and reduces stress in the relationship. Lastly, consistent communication develops openness and honesty. When partners regularly share their thoughts and emotions, they cultivate a habit of transparency. This openness not only strengthens their connection but also ensures a foundation of trust and authenticity. In a Long Distance Marriage, consistency in communication is indispensable. It acts as the glue that holds the relationship together, enabling couples to maintain emotional intimacy and overcome the barriers imposed by physical distance. By prioritizing regular and meaningful interactions, couples can create a strong and enduring bond, ensuring both happiness and success in their relationship.¹⁷

Consistent communication allows couples to routinely share their emotions, experiences, and thoughts. According to the "Social Penetration" theory by Altman and Taylor (1973), relationships develop through the exchange of increasingly deep and personal information.¹⁸ By talking regularly, couples can deepen their connection through ongoing emotional exchanges. Regular communication affirms the emotional and physical presence of each partner in each other's lives. A study by Stafford and Canary (1991) suggests that acts of commitment affirmation, such as consistent communication, can enhance feelings of attachment and trust in a relationship.

Uncertainty and ambiguity often become sources of stress in long-distance relationships. According to the "Uncertainty Reduction" theory by Berger and Calabrese (1975), consistent communication can help reduce uncertainty by providing the necessary information to understand and predict a partner's behavior. This increases trust and reduces anxiety within the relationship.

Openness and Honesty: Foundations of Trust and Connection

Openness and honesty in communication are essential foundations in building trust and emotional closeness, especially in long-distance relationships (LDR).¹⁹ Couples must feel safe and comfortable to speak openly about their feelings, concerns, and hopes without fear of judgment or negative consequences. Honesty is the primary pillar in every relationship, as mentioned in the Quran, "O you who have believed, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice" (QS. Al-Ahzab: 70). In this context, honesty means always telling the truth without misleading or withholding information, as honesty is key to building and maintaining trust.

In an LDR, an honest partner will more easily feel secure and appreciated. This also reflects consistency between what is said and what is done. When someone promises to contact at a specific time, it is important to fulfill that promise. Allah says, "And fulfill [every] commitment. Indeed, the commitment is ever [that about which one will be] questioned" (QS. Al-Isra: 34). This consistency helps strengthen trust and reduce anxiety.

In communication, small lies or "white lies" are often considered harmless. However, the Quran reminds us that even small matters can have significant consequences. "So whoever does

¹⁷ Warsah, I., Putra, R., & Morganna, R. (2021). Merging Religiosity on Social Media: Indonesian Millennial Youth's Understanding of the Concepts of Jihad and Religious Tolerance. *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan Dan Kemasyarakatan*, 19(2)(2), 291-303.

¹⁸ Putra, R. A. (2017). *Manajemen konflik dalam film my name is kba perspektif konsep dakwah*. 02(01), 23–30.

¹⁹ Cameron, Jessica J., and Michael Ross. "In times of uncertainty: Predicting the survival of long-distance relationships." *The Journal of Social Psychology* 147.6 (2007): 581-606.

an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it" (QS. Az-Zalzalah: 7-8). In an LDR, even the smallest lie can damage the hard-earned trust. Therefore, couples should strive to always be honest, even when the truth may be uncomfortable.

Research shows that honesty and openness in communication not only increase relationship satisfaction but also psychological well-being. When someone lies to their partner, it is a violation of their partner's right to know the truth. In Islam, respecting the rights of others, especially a life partner, is part of the trust (*amanah*) that must be upheld. As Allah says, "Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due..." (QS. An-Nisa: 58).

In facing the challenges of LDRs, such as time zone differences and lack of physical interaction, it is important for couples to develop patience. Allah commands His people to be patient, "And be patient. Indeed, Allah is with the patient" (QS. Al-Anfal: 46). This patience and understanding will help couples overcome the tension that may arise due to physical distance.

Finally, if dishonesty occurs in the relationship, it is important to immediately seek forgiveness and take responsibility. "And those who, when they commit an immorality or wrong themselves [by transgression], remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins" (QS. Ali Imran: 135). The courage to admit mistakes and make amends is a crucial step in maintaining the integrity of the relationship.

In Islamic teachings, honesty is one of the most important moral values and is considered the foundation of all relationships, including the relationship between husband and wife. Honesty is an integral part of the character of a good Muslim and is a sign of strong faith. The Quran and Hadith frequently emphasize the importance of honesty in every aspect of life, including in marriage. Honesty helps build and maintain trust, which is the foundation of a strong and healthy relationship.

In the context of "Digital Communication in Building Emotional Closeness in Long Distance Marriages (LDM) from the Perspective of the Quran," openness and honesty are crucial aspects in maintaining and strengthening the emotional bond between spouses separated by physical distance. In a long-distance relationship, digital communication becomes the only way for couples to stay connected, making openness and honesty vital in ensuring that the relationship remains healthy and harmonious.

Openness allows couples to speak truthfully about their feelings, concerns, and hopes, helping to avoid misunderstandings that often arise due to physical distance. In Islam, this openness aligns with the teachings of the Quran, which encourages believers to always speak the truth and communicate clearly. For example, QS. Al-Ahzab: 70 reminds, "O you who have believed, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice." This verse emphasizes the importance of open and honest communication as a foundation for building trust, which is essential in long-distance relationships.

Honesty in digital communication is also the foundation of trust between couples. In LDM, honesty plays a vital role because spouses cannot monitor each other directly. Therefore, any form of dishonesty, no matter how small, can damage the trust that has been built. QS. Al-Baqarah: 42 emphasizes not to mix truth with falsehood and not to hide the truth. This reinforces that in a marriage, honesty must be a primary principle, especially in interactions that take place through digital technology.

Moreover, consistency in fulfilling promises is an important part of honesty in LDM communication. When couples commit to communicating at certain times or sharing stories openly, fulfilling these commitments becomes one way to strengthen mutual trust. Allah reminds in QS. Al-Isra: 34, "And fulfill [every] commitment. Indeed, the commitment is ever [that about which one will be] questioned." This principle applies in the context of LDM, where kept promises and continuous honesty help stabilize the relationship and reduce anxieties that may arise due to physical distance.

Jealousy and suspicion can also be significant challenges in LDM, often triggered by a lack of openness or small lies in communication. With full honesty, couples can reduce anxiety and

create a sense of security in their relationship. Honesty, combined with openness about daily activities or social media usage, will help create a healthier relationship free from negative assumptions.

Honesty and openness also directly contribute to emotional closeness. Couples who can speak honestly about all aspects of their relationship, both the pleasant and the challenging, will build a more intimate and understanding relationship. This is in line with the Quran's teachings on maintaining integrity in words and actions, especially in human relationships, as stated in QS. Al-Anfal: 46, "And be patient. Indeed, Allah is with the patient."

Openness and honesty in digital communication are essential for preserving trust and ensuring the emotional well-being of partners in a Long Distance Marriage (LDM). These elements create a solid foundation that enables couples to navigate the complexities of their relationship, despite the physical distance that separates them. Trust, as the cornerstone of any successful relationship, thrives when both partners engage in truthful and transparent communication, particularly in a digital context where nonverbal cues are often absent.

In LDM scenarios, openness involves sharing thoughts, feelings, and experiences candidly. This level of vulnerability allows partners to better understand each other's emotions, expectations, and challenges. When both parties are open about their lives, it minimizes the potential for misunderstandings and unfounded assumptions, which can otherwise create tension and insecurity. For instance, regular updates about daily activities, challenges, or achievements help partners feel involved in each other's lives, reducing the emotional distance between them.

Honesty, on the other hand, ensures that communication remains authentic and reliable. By consistently adhering to truthfulness, couples reinforce a sense of security and predictability in the relationship. Honesty involves not only avoiding deceit but also addressing difficult topics with sensitivity and respect. Discussing concerns or challenges openly helps couples find solutions collaboratively, strengthening their bond and mutual respect.²⁰

Islamic principles provide a valuable framework for practicing openness and honesty in relationships. Teachings such as speaking the truth (*Surah Al-Ahzab: 70*, "O you who have believed, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice"), fulfilling promises (*Surah Al-Isra: 34*, "And fulfill [every] commitment. Indeed, the commitment is ever [that about which one will be] questioned"), and maintaining honesty reflect the ethical standards that underpin a harmonious and faithful relationship. By incorporating these principles, couples in LDM can navigate their relationship with integrity and a shared moral compass. Furthermore, openness and honesty facilitate the resolution of challenges that often arise in long-distance relationships. Whether dealing with feelings of loneliness, misunderstandings, or unmet expectations, a transparent and truthful approach allows couples to address issues constructively. By fostering a culture of honesty, partners can discuss their needs and concerns without fear of judgment or rejection, creating an environment of mutual support.

Ultimately, practicing openness and honesty in digital communication enables couples to build a stronger, more harmonious, and enduring relationship. When paired with the guiding principles of Islam, such as sincerity and truthfulness, these practices not only sustain the dynamics of the relationship but also enhance its spiritual and emotional depth. This alignment of ethical behavior with effective communication ensures that couples in LDM can overcome challenges and maintain a bond that is both resilient and fulfilling.

²⁰ Marsman, Judith, and Julia A. Horsfield. "Long distance relationships: enhancer-promoter communication and dynamic gene transcription." *Biochimica et Biophysica Acta (BBA)-Gene Regulatory Mechanisms* 1819.11-12 (2012): 1217-1227.

Conclusion

The conclusion of the study is that effective and quality communication plays a crucial role in maintaining and strengthening emotional intimacy between couples in Long Distance Marriage (LDM). The use of digital communication strategies, such as voice and video calls, text and voice messages, and media sharing, has been proven to build emotional connections despite physical distance. From the perspective of the Quran, honesty and openness in communication are strongly emphasized as the foundation of a strong relationship. Allah SWT says in QS. Al-Ahzab: 70, "O you who have believed, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice." This principle highlights the importance of honest and sincere communication to build trust in marital relationships, especially in LDM situations.

Furthermore, consistency in communication is recognized as essential to keeping the dynamics of the relationship alive. The Quran underscores the importance of fulfilling promises, as stated in QS. Al-Isra: 34, "And fulfill [every] commitment. Indeed, the commitment is ever [that about which one will be] questioned," which is relevant in the context of routine communication in LDM. Therefore, digital communication grounded in Quranic principles, such as openness, honesty, and consistency, can help LDM couples build strong, harmonious, and lasting relationships.

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