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## IMPLEMENTATION OF EFFECTIVE QUR'ANI-COMMUNICATION WITHIN NEW MARRIED COUPLES

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### ABSTRACT:

This study aims to get an overview of the implementation of effective communication in marriage based on an Islamic perspective. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach in which data collection was earned through in-depth interviews with 11 new couples in Surakarta. Data were analyzed by description, interpretation, and explanation. The main findings of this study indicate that couples use communication principles based on the Qur'an concept in the form of *qaulan baligha*, *qaulan karima*, *qaulan maisura*, *qaulan ma'ruf*, *qaulan layyina*, and *qaulan sadiida* with the situation and cultural background of each partner. The implementation of effective communication involves choosing words, setting the intonation and other aspects of communication, and making the couple's relationship closer and more harmonious. This study also indicates that communication -based on the Qur'an concept made the couples easier to solve problems well.

### INTRODUCTION

Marriage is bound by internal and external strength. External strength comes from protection and recognition of the State Marriage Law, and the ties between the two families and the community. Meanwhile, internal bonds are non-formal relationships that are built with a sincere will and are based on feelings of love and affection that bind husband and wife. However, spouses commitment do not always run smoothly. Data obtained from the Surakarta Religious Court Office in 2016, there are 574 divorce cases with 13 factors causing divorce. From 13 causes of divorce, communication problems rank 4<sup>th</sup> as a cause of divorce after economic problems, infidelity, and spouses leaving home. The data above is in line with the results of previous research which states that

communication is a factor causing divorce (Dariyo, 2004 & Williamson et al, 2014). The communication problem in these cases is verbal violence and the indecisive nature of the partner.

Research findings by Esere, Ake-Yeyeodu, & Comfort Oladun (2014) reveal that barriers to effective communication between partners occur because the partner comes home continuously late, harsh words, tone of voice during conversation and conversation content that raises memories of past events (Kibtiyah, et al., 2020). Esere et al. argue that effective communication can be created if the partner can consider the contribution of the partner, trust to partner, and considers the partner's opinion when discussing problems.

Another research conducted by Azizah (2009) shows a method for creating harmonious conditions in marriage. They are maintaining communication between family members, mutual understanding, patient, honest, having the trust to each other, not easily prejudice against their partner, respecting the partner's opinion, must love and cherish all family members. Partner communication that does not function properly in daily life results uncomfortable to spouses and uncomfortable condition at home, which results in bad relationships. If this condition exists for along time, and communication is not immediately corrected, there will be a desire to divorce from his or her spouse. Several things affect lousy communication. These come from dishonest (Suud et al., 2020) and not open to the spouses; disrespect between partners, trustworthiness, and unwillingness to listen to partners.

The researcher conducted initial interviews with 17 students who are ready for marriage. The results of the interviews showed their understanding of the conditions in marriage life that they obtained from parents' marriage stories and other people's stories. According to Rahmat (2007), communication readiness is an essential element that ensures the continuity of the relationship because it relates to every aspect of human relations. Willingness and ability to communicate extensively contribute to the health and happiness (Bahiroh, et.al., 2020) of partner relationships, affect intimacy with partners, and interactions with other people (Devito, 2013). Devito explained five positive attitudes to support communication. They are (1) openness to interact with others, and being honest with others; (2) empathy as the ability to put yourself in the shoes of others, accept other people's complaints and feel what they feel; (3) support by minimizing defensiveness in communication; (4) positive feelings as the ability to have positive feelings and create a conducive situation; and (5) equality as a partner's shared values, attitudes, behaviour, habits, experiences.

Previous research conducted by Haris & Kumar (2018) shows that interpersonal communication skills are needed to establish good relationships between spouses. The results also reveal that interpersonal communication skills can predict marital satisfaction between spouses. On the other hand, Baghipour (2010) considers communication skills as a symbolic and efficient skill to transfer meanings and messages that

exist in one's mind. When the couple has better communication quality, they can feel closer to each other, can share thoughts and feelings, can feel more intimate, and can prevent misunderstandings that might occur. The couples also more enjoy being together.

Meanwhile, Islam has provided right guidance on how to communicate effectively, both to spouses and others. Effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal communication, are needed to maintain peace and harmony in the marriage life. Supaat & Fa'atin (2019) who examined the role of the Muslim family circumflex model to avoid parent's violent behaviour against children in Indonesia say that communication has a role in the negotiation process in families that are changing the development process of their members. Furthermore, Supaat & Fa'atin argue that communication is needed to create a healthy Muslim family, for example, being open when facing problems in the family.

The research researched the extent to which effective communication in the Al-Qur'an can be carried out by couples and has a positive impact on husband and wife relationships. This study involved 11 newly married couples for three months in the city of Surakarta. Data obtained through in-depth interview techniques to map the communication patterns carried out in marriage.

## **METHODS**

This research uses a qualitative approach. Data was collected through in-depth interviews by using structured and open-ended questions to generate opinions from each participant. Researcher employed 11 couples who had passed the three months of marriage in Surakarta. The researcher named participants as C1, C2 and so forth. The research sample used cluster sampling. It used nonprobability sampling because it is selected only for couples who are willing to be the sample of research subjects with a minimum calculation of 30% of the total population. The criteria for participants are couples who are registered as married in January 2019, have a Muslim religion, age from 18 years old (female) and 19 years old (male), with the lowest education background in Junior High School, and have never participated in prenuptial training. Data were analyzed through the description, interpretation, and explanation steps. This research still considered reliability and validity. Reliability in this study was carried out to ensure research can be reliable while validity functions to ensure steps (Creswell, 2016).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Communication***

Communication is an important element that ensures the continuity of the relationship (Rahmad, 2012). Communication is an essential element to ensure the continuity of the relationship (Rahmad, 2012).

Etymologically, communication comes from Latin, *communicatio*, which means notification or exchange. As an adjective word, *communis* means collective thought or common sense (Onong, 2002), and the process of sharing meaning (Baran, 1984). The communication factor is an essential aspect in a husband and wife relationship because it relates to almost all aspects of the spouse relationship (Olson, 2002). Communication conveys through verbal and nonverbal interactions that both are interrelated. Verbal interaction is communication that conveyed by the communicator to the communicant in a written or oral way.

Devito (2013) presents five positive attitudes support interpersonal communication. They are openness, empathy, support, positive feelings, and equality. Openness is defined as a willingness to open oneself to general problems in order to know what people think about their thoughts so that communication is accessible. Openness creates a person willingness to respond honestly and candidly to something he says. An open attitude will encourage mutual trust, and support, mutual understanding, mutual respect, and the most important thing is to develop the quality of interpersonal relationships. Couples must be able to open up to each other and trust their partner as a place to tell each other.

The second positive attitude is empathy. Empathy is defined as a person's ability to put him / her self in another person's position or role. A person is emotionally and intellectually able to understand what other people feel and experience. Someone who can accept each other's complaints and feel what their partner feels encourages a sense of acceptance from other parties and creates effective communication between partners (Devito, 2013).

The third positive attitude is support. Support is supportive behavior given to others, including partners. This supportive attitude reduces defensiveness which causes interpersonal communication to fail. Defensive people will protect themselves more from the threats they respond to than they will understand other people's messages. The indicator in this aspect is if someone can encourage them to do better and encourage their partner (Rahmad, 2012).

The fourth is a sense of positivity. Positive feeling, namely having indicators of being able to create a conducive situation. If this is related to family life, then trust in a partner is very important because trust will produce positive thoughts towards the partner, not finding fault, lack of a partner (Tubbs, 1974).

The last is equality which is defined as equality between husband and wife in having the right to convey ideas and even reject the partner's opinion. Equality will create a comfortable atmosphere of communication because there is no feeling of pressure between partners. It can be a pillar of a secure household because every family

member feels equal, respected, protected, which in turn creates peace in each family member.

### ***Communication in Islam perspective***

Islam provides guidelines on verbal communication as conveyed by Allah in the Qur'an. First, *qaulan ma'ruufa* (good words), which are the words that can be accepted by the values prevailing in society (Shihab, 2007). Words made by providing benefits to others, not harsh, which deserve to be heard because they do not offend others, thus causing mutual good. Second, *qaulan maysuran*, which is words that are easy to understand and accept by others, which contain empathy so that they attract others. Same as *qaulan ma'ruufa*, apart from being interpreted as a kind, easy (Khafidah, et al. 2020), and gentle word, it is also a promise to give something. This word is also used for people who refuse someone else's request without offending. Third, *qaulan sadidan* which means correct and firm words in terms of content, and the choice of words in conveying. Words that are untrue and not firm when trying to convey a truth will lead to multiple interpretations to other parties.

Fourth, *qaulan layyinan*, which is a gentle, non-verbal, and comfortable speech. These words can be used to provide calm or comfort to a partner. Fifth, *qaulan baligha*, which is a word conveyed by adjusting the abilities of the person being spoken to, such as parents advising their children. The choice of words must follow the intelligence and abilities of the child so that the advice acceptable. In another case, a husband advises his wife by adjusting the characteristics of the wife's character so that it can touch the soul (Khaidir, et., al., 2020). Sixth, *qaulan karima*, it is defined as noble words delivered with respect, not offending, and glorifying. Communicate in noble language to all family and relatives, and it is very appropriate for parents or parents-in-law, or to other people who have entered old age. Seventh, *qaulan tsaqilan*, which is words that have quality and meaning, both spiritually and intellectually (Shihab, 2007). Usually, these words are conveyed by the ulama, the da'i or the parents who are advising their children. Eighth, *ahsanu qaulan*, means words conveyed by choosing the best choice of words (Ibn Kathir,). Ibn Kathir said that these words were usually conveyed to people who called for kindness to others, and he had done what was said to others.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Interview result***

The results of interviews with 11 newlywed couples were conducted after the couple had been married for three months. The researcher got 11 forms of communication that are usually done by couples. In simple terms, the form of pair communication can be seen in table 1. Gentle, positive thinking, open, deliberative, and showing mutual understanding and respect are forms of communication that often arise between partners. The couples applied expressions choices of "please", "sorry" and "thank you" on their communication. Partners carried out open

communication, including to convey things that the partner does not like even though they are sad and disappointed. At least there are four motives of the use communication form above between partners.

Table 1 *Couples communication form*

Communication form	Presentasge %
Discussion	36.36%
Openness communication	54.55%
Thinking possitively and enjoying the momment	45.45%
Gentle	45.45%
Others	45.45%

Participants choose a form of communication with various motives, such as communication to solve problems. Couples also believe that communication is a form of the wife's obedience to her husband. In certain situations, couples need communication to convey rejection of the partner. Besides, participants communicate with the partner's family.

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Communication form	Presentage %
Qaulan Tsaqilan	9%
Qaulan Baligha	21%
Qaulan Karima	9%
Qaulan Ma'rufa	54.5%
Qaulan Maitura	9%
Qaulan Syadiida	73%
Qaulan Layiinan	73%

*mmunication form refering to Al Quran*

Couples apply Qurani communication in the form of qaulan syadiida and qaulain layiinan as many as 73% of participants in the three months of marriage. The form of syadiida communication is manifested by participants communicating gently and using the words "please", "sorry", and "thank you". Besides, as many as 54.5% of couples apply the principle of qaulan ma'rufa which is manifested through a positive way of thinking and having an attitude of enjoying communication between partners.

Dealing with conflict, participants apply open communication. Although the participants met a condition that they had to convey things, the

participants did not like. In open communication, participants face conditions withstand sadness and disappointment. This form of communication requires participants to see their partner's emotional state. In this case, participants use communication as a form of problem-solving. Participants also use communication to convey rejection subtly so that the partner is not offended.

The interview results show equality communication which is applied through discussion in making decisions. Participants also show acceptance of each other's weaknesses and strengths of a partner. Participants use sentences that show mutual understanding and respect between partners. Participants show communication motives as a form of obedience to their partner.

## DISCUSSION

The gentle words of the couple that contain suggestions and motivations indicate that one party wants to convince the other that what is being conveyed is right and for a good thing. The gentle words make heart comfortable. This way is suitable for the concept of communication applied in the *qaulan Layyinan*, which is used to motivate others to the truth without degrading the opinions of other parties. The use of *qaulan layyinan* also aims to soften the hearts of the people it talks to. The habit of couples using words such as "sorry", "please", and "thank you" shows affection and attention to the partner that has a positive impact. These words indicate life satisfaction and are associated with gratitude and materialism (Nathaniel, 2009). Gratitude is manifested in the form of the words "thank you". A person who has gratitude creates a higher level of life satisfaction and considers materialism to be less important than relationships with other people. Nathaniel also added that grateful people generally get a positive psychological boost (Masyhuri, et.al., 2020).

The word "sorry" indicates the speaker has a loose heart and indicates that the partner has an atmosphere of equality. C4 explained that the couple feels equal between husband and wife; there is no feeling higher or lower. Thus the partner does not feel reluctant to apologize, without shame and prestige. Couples have used *qaulan ma'ruufa*, which the couple uses words that have value and are accepted in society, which give the effect of mutual goodness because the couple feels mutual respect. An apology can only be made for someone who does not feel lower or higher. Equality will cause couples to have the same position and facilitate partner communication. An equal position does not mean that a person accepts and agrees to all verbal and nonverbal behaviour of the other party. Equality means accepting other parties as interlocutors, or equality requires someone to give positive unconditional rewards to others. The conditions that this partner has built will foster good interactions with the partner, increase the same perception, and will make the partner's communication more effective.

Good communication will be more accessible for others to accept. Soft words that are received are appreciation so that someone will reply with kind words or attitudes as a reward. Good communication will affect

individual behaviour (Firsty, Bunga, et al., 2017). Poor communication will cause misunderstanding between communicants, and eliminate feelings of appreciation so that it will not cause affection, but it can offend, even anger. Qaulan layyinan in the Qur'an is used when Musa a.s. preach to Fir'aun. Musa used gentle sentences to ask the harsh and authoritarian Fir'aun to accept his teachings. Musa used the gentle words as a tribute to Fir'aun who had educated him and endured his life from baby to adulthood. It also shows that a person should respect people who have served him well. Thus, Musa used gentle communication as an ethic of respecting Fir'aun as the monarch at that time. In the context of a husband and wife relationship, qaulan layyinan is very relevant. The function of qaulan layyinan is used in the context of respect for the services that have been performed between partners, as respect for the position of the couple in the family, and as a form of evidence of affection for the partner.

The interview results showed that the couple thought positively about each other, giving birth to positive words and attitudes such as joking and communicating casually. Using jokes when conveying something important, or joking to respond to an emotional partner is also included in the category of qaulan layyinan. Managing good communication can improve the continuity of family relationships (Howard, 2010), as said by the couple with the sentence "enjoy, so the communication is good." It can be an investment in love and commitment related to relationship stability (John, 1982), as well as support for couples, especially in times of stress (Bodenmann, 2009). Smooth communication needs to be maintained to avoid or overcome marriage life problems; thus, misunderstanding between partners can be avoided. In this case, the couple needs to try to ignore each other's egos, confirm the information that comes and their desires, and communicate with effective communication by making joint decisions.

The interview results showed that the couple thought positively to each other, deliver positive words and attitudes such as joking and communicating casually. Using jokes when conveying something important, or joking to respond to an emotional partner is also included in the category of qaulan layyinan. Joking is a communication that creates a flexible relationship and comfortable. A joke creates positive feelings. Thus it makes emotions more controlled. Managing good communication can improve the continuity of family relationships (Howard, 2010), as said by the couple with the sentence " I enjoy, so the communication is good." It can be an investment in love and commitment related to relationship stability (John, 1982), as well as support for couples, especially in times of stress (Bodenmann, 2009). Smooth communication needs to be maintained to avoid or overcome marriage life problems; thus, misunderstanding between partners can be avoided. In this case, the couple needs to try to ignore each other's egos, confirm the information that comes and their desires, and communicate with effective communication by making joint decisions.



A positive attitude in communication will foster positive encouragement which then creates positive communication. According to Nickola's opinion (2017), which explains that within serious problems, there is a need for communication to be carried out by giving positive responses. In this case, qaulan layyinan is often delivered by several couples and has an essential role in the sustainability of the husband and wife relationship. Besides, this service communication pattern can be used as a message or an invitation to kindness to a partner in a very acceptable way because it uses pleasant and gentle words so that it can give the spirit to do better. Qaulan layyinan need clear statement but gentle, looking for the right time and a comfortable atmosphere. The conversation that is well-meaning but delivered in a loud voice is challenging to accept for those who listen to it.

The interview results also contained the husband's expressions aimed at the wife as an understanding of something that was liked by the partner, which caused the partner's comfort. This expression shows that the husband uses the concept of qaulan matsuura, which is using sentences that have empathy for the communicant. A sense of empathy is needed in everyday life, especially for partners, because empathy is related to the heart and the response to what other people experience. The feeling of empathy given to his or her partner will create a sense of support. Someone who provides support to their partner with a willingness to accept the partner's opinion will be more accepting because they feel supported. Support is a form of attention aimed at both parties because the results of the support obtained by the partner will foster a feeling of being cared for, trusted and appreciated so that it influences the continuity of the relationship with the partner. Feelings of being cared for and valued will create a positive response. This expression is similar to Cherni (2013) that effective communication can only be done if the message delivered successfully reaches the target with feedback by the goal. The mutual response given between partners creates greater openness and opportunities for marriage satisfaction (Justin, 2017). If this does not happen, there will be dissatisfaction in communication.

Parental affection is manifested in the form of parental intervention in the child's family. Parents ask married children to stay with them. Therefore, in reality, many husbands and wives still live with their parents, as shown in the C7 interview. This condition opens up opportunities for parents to intervene in children's family problems. Parents always want the best for their children as a classic excuse and a "weapon" to justify their attitude. This bond of feelings makes parents feel they are still entitled and responsible for children who are married so that sometimes parents feel they have the right to manage the marriage life of their child and son-in-law. Parents are not entirely willing to let go of a married child because they feel they are still part of the child's life even though they have given up custody of their child to their wife or husband. Even though the perspective of children and parents is different in dealing with a problem because both have their own standards.

Understanding the role of each family and good communication with the partner's family will have a positive influence on the relationship between the couple to become closer and more harmonious. C1 shows that this spouse can do qaulan karima by communicating well to family members, especially his in-laws. C1 conveyed openly and showed the real conditions so that they did not feel awkward with the partner's family. Communication in the concept of qaulan karima to parents or in-laws is the best ethics in communicating with others. Qaulan karima contains sincerity and high morals because someone speaks politely and intimately with parents. This communication is usually conveyed to parents or older people without offending the other party. This communication maintains civility and is non-patronizing and contains the honour and respect elements. Islam itself has given orders to children to interact with their parents by maintaining politeness and treating it as well as possible, both from the voice and the type of words conveyed.

Being a good listener is one of the effective communications in building a relationship with a partner. The interview results with C8 show that the couple has been able to listen to the partner well without giving a response. Couples use the type of qaulan ma'ruufa which has the nature of conveying refusals gently and kind words so that the partner is not offended. In this case, the couple does not give an immediate response but yields to the husband's wishes even though it feels forced at the beginning. The husband also uses the type of qaulan sadiida, which he conveys it firmly in the right way so that he can understand the feelings of a partner and can maintain good relationships with each other. Although qaulan ma'ruufa and qaulan sadiida have different characteristics, they can be done side by side because they have the same goal, which is to adopt a communication approach that can be accepted by the other person.

New couples should always want to be together without being disturbed by other people, including social media. The husband does not like it when his wife often plays a cellphone. This condition shows that the partner is more comfortable when communicating directly. This communication gives a special meaning to the spouse relationship because each other feels needed and cared for by the partner without being disturbed by his wife's busyness in other things. It also shows the husband's assertiveness in managing his wife. This statement is supported by the research conducted by Rakhma (2018), which states that good communication can be done by utilizing free time with joint activities to build closer family member relationships. Research conducted by Sule (2017) confirms that communication between couples and families related to adjustments in the family greatly helps improve communication skills with families. Couples togetherness in early marriage is a necessity because it will provide opportunities for couples to get to know each other.

The wife's obedience is influenced by mutual understanding and care between partners. *Qaulan sadiidan* also came in the following situation. "For example, when my wife has a problem with her family, later I will provide a solution to solve the problem, then calm my wife." The concept of the sentence used is *qaulan sadiidan*, which is the husband chooses the appropriate and the right sentences, providing a solution to the wife's problem. Solutions are firm and honest. Sentences that are conveyed honestly and openly are easily well received (Suud, F. M., et al. 2019). Correct sentence content tends to make listeners feel confident and comfortable. However, in the process, the husband also inserts the concept of *qaulan layyinan*. When the husband tries to calm his wife, he uses soft words and full of affection that creates calm and comfort.

Open communication applies to C1, C3, C8, C9, C10, C11, which indicates mutual trust and understanding of a partner's emotional state and partner's nature. This communication is by the concept of *qaulan sadiida* that conveying truth to the interlocutor is deliberately open, and in the right way so that it penetrates and leaves an impression on the soul. One of the characteristics of open communication is that it is straightforward, uses a vocabulary that is understood, and adapts to the style and grammar of the partner. The couple implements *qaulan sadiidan* because they honestly convey something that is not true. This type of sentence can also be categorized as *qaulan tsaqilan* because one party advises the other. A form of couple openness is the partner's attitude that they can accept something they do not like by talking well, and used it as a joke together. Couples choose to be open when talking about something they do not like to avoid discomfort. This statement is reinforced by Lisbon's research, that couples can express something they do not like with the aim of improving partner behaviour by maintaining openness and honesty.

Openness is an essential thing to build awareness to acknowledge the feelings and thoughts of others and must be responsible for it (Suud, F. M., et al. 2019). Openness should be done by husband or wife so that other couples will follow and openness can be done together. Research by Uwom et al. (2015) states the same thing that marital instability can be reduced when there is open communication between partners. Likewise, in Hatixhe's research (2017) suggests that conflict resolution can be easily made with open and honest communication, so that discomfort, anxiety, and even frustration can be avoided. Problem-solving strategies with discussion can resolve conflicts and save the condition of the couple's relationship (Betsy, 2011). Another form of the implementation of *qaulan sadiida* is deliberation by the husband and wife in dealing with problems.

## CONCLUSION

Couples require adjustments within the three month marriage period. Adjustments require clear and firm communication but conveyed gently. It should not hurt or offend following the concept of *qaulan layyinan* and

*qaulan sadiidan*. Self-confidence in each spouse is still very high, so that openness is an effective means of making adjustments. The spouse presents a communication openness strategy to keep the positive feelings and thoughts of the spouse and to establish a harmonious relationship. Besides, the success of communication between spouse will be determined by the common understanding between husband and wife in communicating. It is influenced by the clarity of the message, the way the message conveyed, the communication behaviour, and the situation in communication. These are what couples do in implementing *qaulan baligha* because they have to adjust to the emotional condition and habits of the partner. In this study, the Quran communication principles in the form of *qaulan baligha*, *qaulan karima*, *qaulan maitsura*, *qaulan ma'rufa*, *qaulan layyina*, *qaulan tsaqilan* and *qaulan sadiida* have been applied by participants. *Qaulan layyina* and *qaulan sadiida* were mostly used by 73%, considering that the marriage had only been running for three months. 54.5% of spouses used *qaulan ma'rufa*. *Qaulan karima* is used by couples only to communicate with in-laws. Meanwhile, *qaulan maitsura* and *qaulan tsaqilan* are supporters and have the same strategic strength. In the application, each couple has their case according to their situation and cultural background. Implementation of the concept of effective communication in the Qur'an considers word choice and intonation arrangement. This communication concept can make the couple's relationship closer and more harmonious. The results of this study indicate that communication in the Qur'an concept can establish a good and harmonious relationship between partners and makes it easier for couples to solve problems well.

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