

Communication Between Husband and Wife Who Do Not Have Children

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Article History: Received on 16 September 2024, Revised on 30 October 2024,
Published on 25 November 2024

Abstract: This study 1) recognize and characterize the interpersonal communication styles of a husband and wife without children; 2) Assess the impact of interpersonal communication on the quality of relationships between husband and wife who do not yet have children; 3) Identify the strategies and mechanisms used by estranged relatives who do not have children to address communication challenges in their relationships; and 4) Offering practical advice to marriage counselors based on the results of their research. The qualitative research approach was used to understand events in life from the viewpoint of the one going through them. The finding showed that Husband and wife interactions not accompanied by children are typically more passionate and emotional. Social pressure, expectations from the extended family, and feelings of inferiority are some of the difficulties faced by a husband and wife who are not yet parents. Open and sincere communication styles are typically employed by harmonious couples. This kind of support lessens stress and makes the emotional connection between a husband and wife stronger. New insights into the subject of communication studies are offered by this study. This study takes a holistic approach, taking into account several variables that affect communication, such as emotional support, cultural expectations, and social pressure. This study pinpoints the successful communication techniques employed by harmonious couples, offering helpful advice to other couples in like circumstances. This study offers a fresh viewpoint on the function of social support in the dynamics of marital communication by highlighting the significance of emotional support from a range of sources in assisting couples in overcoming stress and obstacles.

Keywords: Children, Communication, Husband and Wife

A. Introduction

Post-wedding plans are undoubtedly enduring and long-term. Married couples need to talk not only about financial concerns but also about their intentions for future children. Though God will ultimately decide their fate, it is wise to plan and decide whether to have children. However, as it happens, a lot of couples choose to live child-free, much like in the Land of Sakura. However, a lot of couples also wish to start a family right away, but they are deemed infertile because their biological

makeup does not allow it. These are, of course, the judgments made by each marriage and should be respected, even though each has advantages and disadvantages of its own.

Beranda > News

Konten dari Pengguna

Shoushika: Fenomena Childfree di Jepang



Raditya Disa Henintyar
Seorang Mahasiswa S1 Universitas Airlangga.

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Figure 1

Japan had ups and downs in the number of births following World War II, with 1975 seeing the worst fall, which is expected to continue annually. Japan's declining birthrate is referred to as Shoushika, while the country's rising senior population is known as Koureika Shakai. The Childfree Movement is a result of Japanese society's overemphasis on careers throughout life. To them marriage and the act of having children as optional. Put differently, Shoushika refers to a situation in which there is a persistent decrease in the number of births, leading to a loss of population and the subsequent generation carrying on the legacy of the preceding generation. The number of births in Japan has been steadily declining since the middle of the 1970s and has remained that way until the last few years. There may be a cause for the birth rate fall in Japan, but it has taken time for it to happen. It is undeniable that Japan has currently turned into a nation with very few births and a massive senior population that is only becoming older.



Figure 2

Returning to Indonesia, Central Java Province is home to most of the country's infertility cases. Dr. Ashon Sa'adi Sp. OG, a health activist from the Ferina Surabaya Mother and Child Hospital (RSIA), stated that cases of infertility or reproductive abnormalities affect both men and women in many developed areas. Based on information from RSIA Ferina, it can be shown that a significant number of patients—12,800 patients between 2016 and 2023 come from Central Java. About 4,500 patients are located in the Soloraya area out of the total.

Approximately 4% of people living in Central Java need assisted reproduction, such as IVF or insemination. Dr. Ashon asked the patient to undergo a sperm test to make an additional diagnosis. According to him, if the findings are normal and the number is adequate, no further testing is required; nevertheless, if the amount is low—that is, less than 5–10 million—a hormone check must be performed. He asserts that males who work excessive hours without getting enough sleep will generate sperm of low quality. However, if a person gets six to seven hours of sleep each day, their sperm quality will improve. Therefore, it's essential to change one's lifestyle and give up alcohol and smoking to prevent reproductive diseases.

Based on the aforementioned two case studies, several factors, including concerns about extended family, financial preparation, job priorities, and the desire to enjoy life together, can be listed as reasons why couples choose to put off having children. Then others already desire a family but are prevented from doing so due to biological issues, also known as infertility. Additionally, a key component of dispute resolution and fortifying emotional ties is the capacity to actively listen to both partners and constructively communicate wants and feelings. Beginning with this, having a listening and conversing attitude toward one another can help resolve disagreements positively. Good communication builds a strong sense of trust and openness between partners since it makes them feel closer and more connected. Because these two examples are so distinct from one another, researchers are curious about how interpersonal communication processes function in couples who have diverse backgrounds and objectives.

The researcher cited (Markman et al., 2010), an expert in interpersonal communication, to support the previous paragraph. One of the crucial elements in a husband and wife's relationship, he said. Intimacy, trust, and relationship pleasure can all rise in a partnership with effective communication. However ineffective communication can also result in miscommunication, disagreements, and a decline in the quality of relationships.

Thus, if the foundation of a marriage is providing for each other's needs, then it truly has a very noble purpose and character. A happy family life can be constructed with agreement as a strong base. Multiple conflicts of differences arise from the existence of these discrepancies. Even when several issues arise in a marriage, it will nevertheless function well if there is easy and effective communication between the

husband and wife. But if there are obstacles or hiccups in the husband and wife's communication, issues will not be adequately addressed and the marriage will quickly fall apart.

The exchange of information between two or more individuals is a prerequisite for communication. According to a study by Kurniawati (2013), communication actors play a crucial role in married life because it allows people to get to know and understand one another, which fosters an openness that inadvertently aids in the process of marital adjustment. As a result, despite their differences, husband and wife must constantly remain united as the cornerstone of good interpersonal connection. Every pair needs to follow all interpersonal communication guidelines. Two persons engage in interpersonal communication when one acts as the communicator and conveys the message and the other as the communicator and receives it (Widyastuti, 2018; Zakiah, 2012).

Then, various kinds of problems in a married couple are certainly diverse. And this can cause tension and conflict. One condition affecting communication dynamics in marriage is the absence of children. Couples who do not yet have children often face different social and emotional pressures than couples who already have children. These pressures can affect the way they communicate with each other and, in turn, the quality of their relationship (Hewitt et al., 2020).

The following conclusions can be drawn from the two points above of view: First, there is currently a dearth of research on interpersonal communication between husband and wife who are not yet parents; therefore, this study can close the knowledge gap in the academic literature in this area.

Moreover, interpersonal communication needs a minimum of two individuals with distinct and divergent traits, beliefs, attitudes, ideas, and actions. Furthermore, interpersonal communication necessitates the exchange of gifts and favors among the participants. Stated differently, communication is the exchange of ideas, thoughts, and information between the participants.

Rokeach emphasizes the same point, saying that a belief is a huge (hundreds of thousands) assertion that a person makes about themselves and their surroundings. Beliefs can be broad or narrow. Beliefs are arranged in a system based on the degree or weight of their significance to the ego. At the core of this system are relatively established and difficult to change, while at the periphery are several peripheral or insignificant beliefs that are easily changed (Morissan & Wardhany, 2009). Second, the fact that many childless couples deal with different issues that may impair their relationships and communication makes the phenomena practically relevant.

A husband and wife's conversation may not always go as planned. Tension and conflict are inevitable in a husband and wife's life. Spouses' inability to adequately

explain their feelings and thoughts might be one of the many factors impeding communication, as can variances in communication styles and each person's hectic schedule. Misunderstandings can arise from different communication styles, such as one person preferring to talk directly while the other is more reserved or wants to avoid confrontation. It can be challenging for couples to find time for meaningful, calm communication on top of the demands of daily life and the workplace. Effective communication can also be hampered by the incapacity to articulate emotions, such as a fear of being misunderstood or of opening up.

The basis and color of the entire family relationship is then established by the husband and wife's relationship. When there is a breakdown in the husband-and-wife relationship, many families disintegrate. Making adjustments as a couple is essential to the longevity of the marriage. Because of its dynamic nature, this adjustment calls for adaptable mindsets and methods of thinking. Constant connection with oneself, other people, and the environment is what adjustment is all about (Nurviana, 2019). According to Glenn (Lestari, 2016), there are three markers for the adjustment process: conflict, communication, and different family tasks. The lack of conflict does not indicate a successful adjustment in a married relationship. Constructive attitudes and conflict-resolution techniques are not indicative of adjustment in marriage.

Consequently, it may be said that having kids is seen as a crucial aspect of being married. Families, friends, and the larger community frequently put pressure on couples who are childless. These pressures may take the form of persistent inquiries about the couple's intentions to become parents, presumptions regarding their reproductive health, or unfavorable stereotypes associated with childlessness. These outside factors may have an impact on a couple's communication dynamics, leading to stress, strain, and conflict in their union (Lestari, 2016).

Effective communication is essential to preserving a happy and fulfilling relationship, according to an earlier study. However, particular dynamics need to be better understood in the context of couples who are not yet parents. For instance, how a couple handles and communicates their thoughts around not having children, how they stand by one another in the face of social pressure, and how they work out plans.

The growing number of couples choosing to put off or forego having children for a variety of reasons—career, health, or personal preferences, for example—supports the urgency of this research. Thus, it becomes much more crucial to comprehend interpersonal communication in this setting to promote the well-being of couples going through comparable circumstances.

The purpose of this study is to investigate in further detail the interpersonal communication patterns of a married couple without children, the variables

influencing these patterns, and the effects these patterns have on the quality of their relationship. Therefore, it is anticipated that this study will make a substantial theoretical and practical addition to the field of marriage counseling and communication studies.

B. Methods

The qualitative research approach was used because it emphasizes a thorough examination of participants' subjective experiences, which is crucial for comprehending the dynamics of communication in husband-and-wife relationships. Phenomenology is the qualitative method that's employed. This method seeks to comprehend events in life from the viewpoint of the one going through them. Phenomenology will be used in this study to investigate how couples who are childless perceive and comprehend communication in their relationship. The couples that took part in this study were not yet parents. Purposive sampling was used to recruit participants, meaning that individuals who fit specific criteria related to the study's goals were chosen. The data saturation principle, which states that data gathering should end when no new information is emerging, was used to establish the appropriate number of participants.

Procedures for Hiring: 1) First Contact: Getting in touch with couples via phone or email to inform them of the study's goals and expectations; 2) Informed Consent: giving participants who agree to participate in the study all the information they need to know and getting their written consent; 3) Interview Scheduling: A schedule for in-depth interviews and observations should be established based on participant convenience. Research Ethics: 1) Confidentiality: Guaranteeing that any data submitted by participants will remain private and won't be utilized for any other reason than this study; 2) Anonymity: safeguarding participant identities in study reports through the use of codes or pseudonyms; 3) Informed Consent: granting participants the freedom to leave the study at any moment and without repercussions; 4) Transparency: As a token of gratitude for their involvement, participants may request access to the study's findings.

Four techniques are available for data analysis: (1) Thematic Analysis; (2) Content Analysis; (3) Narrative Analysis; and (4) Interactive Qualitative Analysis. Using these data analysis tools, researchers can gain a profound understanding of patterns and themes in husband-and-wife interpersonal communication. Combining these methods will enable a more thorough interpretation of the data, leading to a better knowledge of the communication dynamics in childless couples. Strategies for data validity: 1) Triangulation; 2) Validity of Member Checks; 3) Audit Trail; 4) Reliability of Data; and 5) Reflection of Researchers.

C. Results and Discussion

Couples who have not yet had children confront particular communication issues that need careful consideration. In this situation, controlling emotions, societal pressures, and personal expectations—all of which can have a big impact on the relationship—and regular interactions are all part of communication. This study looks at a variety of interpersonal communication topics, including how couples can effectively communicate under pressure.

The notion of interpersonal communication states that good communication is a fundamental component of a married couple's union. According to Burleson (2003), effective communication can improve relationship satisfaction and fortify emotional ties. In stressful situations like not having children, open and honest communication is extremely vital for couples to better understand one another and resolve disputes.

The issue may worsen due to social and cultural pressures surrounding the value of having children. Having children is viewed as a necessary component of marriage in many cultures, and couples who choose not to have children frequently experience social shame. Couples' communication may suffer and the emotional load may increase. Turner (1987) emphasized how social expectations might influence interactions and behavior in his theory of social forces.

In married marriages, verbal communication is essential. Couples can manage uncertainty and conflict better when they are honest with one other about their thoughts and worries about not having children. According to communication theory developed by Berger and Calabrese in 1975 (Goldsmith, 2001; Knobloch & Miller, 2013), couples' intimacy can grow and uncertainty can be decreased by communicating openly.

An important factor in determining the quality of a couple's interactions is nonverbal communication. Touch, body language, and facial expressions can all be used to communicate emotions and support that aren't necessarily verbally spoken. According to Mehrabian (2017) nonverbal communication frequently transmits messages that are more profound and emotive than verbal communication.

Understanding and feeling one's partner's emotions, or having empathy, is a crucial component of communication. Empathic couples typically enjoy more peaceful and encouraging relationships. According to Davis, (2006; 2015; 1987) theory of empathy, relationships are more intimate and satisfying when there is empathy.

Effective emotion management is essential for productive communication. Relationships tend to last longer for couples who can manage to let go of negative feelings like grief and dissatisfaction. (Goleman, 1995) emphasizes in his book "Emotional Intelligence" how crucial emotional regulation is to a healthy and

fulfilling relationship.

Communicating as a couple can be impacted by social support from friends and family. Support from the outside can make things worse, but positive support can help the couple learn how to handle stress. According to House (1981), those who receive enough social support are better able to handle stress and strain.

Therapy and counseling can provide people the skills and techniques they need to manage stress in their relationships and enhance communication. Counselors can assist couples in identifying communication issues and offering solutions to enhance their relationships. According to Alexander & Robbins (2019), family therapy aids in understanding and managing interpersonal dynamics and emotional dynamics in individuals.

Investing in good communication and conflict resolution techniques is necessary to keep a relationship harmonious. Stronger relationships are typically experienced by couples that exhibit affection and spend meaningful time together. Positive experiences reinforce desired actions, such as peaceful conversation, as demonstrated by Brigham (1980).

When one is under stress, such as when one is childless, communicating might be difficult. Even in high-stress situations, couples must learn how to successfully communicate with one another. According to Lazarus and Folkman (Biggs et al., 2017), effective coping mechanisms enable people to manage stress and preserve their mental health.

Relationship dynamics are impacted by individual variances in communication and stress management strategies. To improve communication, couples must acknowledge and appreciate these distinctions. According to Eysenck (1992) and Roberts et al., (2006), personality differences can have an impact on communication and interaction within a partnership.

The realities that couples encounter when raising children frequently diverge from their aspirations. Managing expectations and lowering stress need open communication about these facts and expectations. According to Ronnie & Philip (2021) expectancies theory, people's expectations affect how they handle difficulties and control their expectations.

A couple's communication may be impacted by pressure from friends, family, and the community. To prevent relationship damage, couples must learn how to handle this pressure. Turner (1987) highlighted how social pressure can impact a person's conduct and speech, as well as heighten pre-existing stress.

When faced with the prospect of not becoming parents, couples frequently need to

discuss other options with one other, such adopting a child or using a donor. Openness and understanding are necessary for these conversations. According to Zafirovski (2018), rational cost-benefit analysis is the basis for decisions regarding alternatives in rational choice theory.

Relationship communication and conflict resolution can be influenced by prior experiences. Couples need to be conscious of these factors and make an effort to break down obstacles to communication. According to Bandura (1977) social learning theory, an individual's conduct and interactions are influenced by their past experiences.

Communication between couples can be impacted by technology, particularly in situations when they cannot meet in person or are in long-distance relationships. In his virtual communication theory, Walther (1996) makes the case that technology can help build solid relationships and enable efficient communication.

Every relationship, even marriage, has conflict. Couples must learn effective techniques for handling disagreement. According to Rahim (2023) conflict management theory, couples can resolve conflict in a way that benefits both parties by using compromise and negotiation techniques.

Relationship commitment has an impact on how partners approach and handle issues. Strongly committed couples typically have better success settling disputes and preserving their union. According to Rusbult (1980) theory of commitment, a person's level of commitment influences how they handle obstacles.

The mental well-being of a couple can influence their relationships and communication. Emotional disorders like sadness or anxiety might hinder the ability to communicate effectively. According to Seligman (2008) mental health hypothesis, a healthy relationship is contingent upon one's mental well-being.

A partner's emotional support might make it easier to handle stress and improve relationship satisfaction. Stronger and more harmonious marriages are typically found between couples that support one another emotionally. According to Cutrona et al. (2005) emotional support theory, this kind of support can enhance the health of relationships.

Reducing uncertainty requires open discussion about hopes and worries about not having children. Couples can better understand one another and ease tensions by having these conversations. According to Knobloch & Miller (2013), communication that is open and honest fosters intimacy and lessens ambiguity.

Managing the stress of not having children requires the development of strong coping mechanisms. Couples must learn coping mechanisms for handling stress and

preserving their mental health. According to Biggs et al. (2017), healthy coping mechanisms enable people to manage stress and preserve their emotional well-being.

Empathy and listening are two social qualities that are crucial for effective interpersonal communication. Socially adept couples typically have better communication and dispute-resolution skills. According to Hargie (2021) view, social communication skills play a crucial role in healthy partnerships.

Couples who are under stress from not having children find it harder to communicate. To maintain the stability of their relationship, couples must develop appropriate stress management techniques. According to the stress theory developed by Pearlin & Schooler (1978), a relationship's quality and well-being can be impacted by effective stress management.

It takes cooperation and adaptability to deal with circumstances that don't fit expectations, like not having children. Couples must talk about necessary adjustments and modify their expectations. As demonstrated by Lazarus and Folkman (Biggs et al., 2017), effective adaptation can lessen stress and enhance the health of relationships.

Couples without children engage in interpersonal communication in a variety of ways, including through social support, cultural influences, and emotional regulation. Successful communication management makes it easier for a couple to handle stress and keep their relationship happy. A helpful foundation for comprehending the dynamics of communication in this circumstance is provided by theories of social support, communication, and stress management.

D. Conclusions

This research intends to investigate interpersonal communication between a married couple without children, emphasizing communication dynamics, obstacles encountered, and tactics employed to preserve peace in the home. Several inferences that can be made in light of the study's findings include the following: 1) Communication Dynamics: Husband and wife interactions that are not accompanied by children are typically more emotional and passionate. Being childless is frequently a delicate subject that can cause conflict and strain in a partnership; 2) Difficulties Faced: Social pressure, expectations from the extended family, and feelings of inferiority are just a few of the difficulties faced by husband and wife without children. These difficulties frequently impede effective communication and intensify already-existing disputes; 3) Communication Style: Open and sincere communication styles are typically employed by harmonious couples. They talk about their emotions more frequently, share worries, and work together to find

solutions to issues; and 4) The Importance of Emotional Support: Couples who receive emotional support from their partners, family, and close friends are better able to handle the strains and difficulties that come with being childless. The emotional connection between a husband and wife is strengthened and stress is lessened with this support. Freshness: 1) Holistic Approach: This study takes a holistic approach, taking into account several variables that affect communication, such as emotional support, cultural expectations, and social pressure; 2) Communication Strategies: This study reveals the useful communication techniques employed by harmonious couples, offering helpful advice to other couples in comparable circumstances; 3) Impact of Emotional Support: This study offers a fresh viewpoint on the function of social support in family communication dynamics by highlighting the significance of emotional support from a variety of sources in assisting couples in overcoming stress and obstacles.

E. Acknowledgement

Thank you to the Rector of Telkom University, Indonesia, and friends who have supported us in conducting this research.

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