

# Communication Patterns in Long Distance Relationships and Their Effect on Relationship Quality

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## ABSTRACT

Long-distance relationships require effective communication patterns to maintain emotional closeness and relationship quality. Digital communication technology is becoming the main tool for interaction, but its limitations often hinder the depth of emotional interaction. This paper discusses how communication patterns in long-distance relationships affect emotional satisfaction and relationship quality. Regular, open and honest communication can increase emotional closeness, whereas limited or ineffective communication can lead to feelings of loneliness and tension. Trust, communication skills, and appropriate expectations are important factors in maintaining relationship quality. Couples who have good communication tend to feel more connected and satisfied in their relationships. Developing good communication skills and maintaining commitment are key to overcoming challenges in long-distance relationships. The findings may provide insights for couples to improve the way they communicate in long-distance relationships.

## INTRODUCTION

Communication patterns play an important role in maintaining emotional closeness and continuity between couples in long-distance relationships. Evolving technology allows long-distance couples to keep in touch regularly through various platforms, such as text messaging, voice calls, and video calls. There are differences in the way communication occurs, which is influenced by factors such as personality, culture, and the intensity of interactions. This contributes to the creation of different communication patterns in long-distance relationships compared to those that take place in the same place.

Some couples find it difficult to maintain effective communication due to time and space constraints. Communication through digital media cannot always replace face-to-face interactions that can provide deeper emotional closeness. As a result, problems in understanding, tension, and disappointment in the relationship often arise. Many couples face difficulties in expressing feelings clearly and openly, especially when problems arise and cannot be resolved directly. Based on this, it is important to understand the various factors that shape the communication patterns of couples in long-distance relationships.

One of the main issues that couples in long-distance relationships often face is the limited expression of emotions that can be translated through digital communication. Missing non-verbal elements in interactions such as facial expressions, body language, and voice intonation makes understanding the message more difficult (Wharton, 2009). This often leads to misinterpretation or feelings of not being understood between the two parties, which can add to the emotional distance in the relationship (Baker & Clark, 2020). Effective communication is essential to keeping long-distance relationships healthy, and one way to overcome this barrier is to find ways to make up for missing non-verbal communication.

Other issues that hinder smooth interaction are limited communication time and time zone differences. Couples who are in different time zones may struggle to find the right time to talk or share experiences, leading to feelings of loneliness or lack of attention. In some cases, communication becomes inhibited and less intense, which can lead to the couple feeling underappreciated or neglected (Gupta & Khandelwal, 2018). Hindered or reduced communication often leaves couples feeling less connected to each other.

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It is important to observe communication patterns in long-distance relationships because of their significant impact on the emotional well-being of individuals and the quality of the relationship itself. The inability to communicate effectively can lead to greater relationship problems, such as decreased satisfaction and insecurity (Firmin et al., 2013). These insecurities can further exacerbate the situation, causing couples to feel emotionally disconnected, perhaps even doubting each other's commitment. Couples can be better prepared for the various issues that may arise, as well as find better ways to maintain emotional closeness despite the distance by understanding these communication dynamics.

This study aims to understand how communication patterns formed in long-distance relationships affect the relationship quality and emotional satisfaction of the couple. This study hopes to provide insight into the impact of limited or different communication in forming emotional closeness and how it can affect the continuity of the relationship by analyzing the communication patterns of couples separated by distance.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a literature study approach to analyze the communication patterns of couples in long-distance relationships. This literature study approach aims to collect, evaluate and synthesize findings from previous studies relevant to this topic. The literature reviewed includes various scientific articles, books, and research reports that discuss communication in long-distance relationships, digital interaction, and its impact on relationship quality and emotional satisfaction of couples. The study was able to identify factors that influence communication patterns in long-distance relationships but also provide in-depth insights into relevant interpersonal communication theories. This literature review is expected to present a more comprehensive picture of relationship dynamics under distance and time constraints (Jiang & Hancock, 2013).

This literature study will also examine findings that link communication patterns with other factors, such as trust, openness, and conflict in long-distance relationships. The literature selection process is done by looking for journals that have been verified and published in reliable scientific publications. The selection of appropriate literature is very important to produce valid and objective research results. In this case, the literature study plays an important role in presenting diverse perspectives so that it can provide a broader picture of how couples communicate in long-distance relationships and the challenges and dynamics they face (Sahlstein, 2004).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Communication patterns of couples in long-distance relationships play a very important role in influencing their relationship quality and emotional satisfaction. In relationships separated by physical distance, communication becomes the main tool to maintain emotional closeness and overcome physical limitations (Holmes, 2010). Various types of digital communication media, such as text messages, voice calls, and video calls, are used to replace in-person interactions. The quality of communication conducted through these digital media can affect how emotionally connected couples feel (Baker & Clark, 2020). The limitations of communicating face-to-face often lead to the loss of important non-verbal context, such as facial expressions and body language, which can reduce the depth of emotional interactions. Although limitations in face-to-face communication remain, couples who use communication media effectively can maintain a strong emotional bond despite the distance separating them.

Communication in long-distance relationships often requires adjustments to more structured communication patterns. Distant couples tend to have limited time to talk to each other, due to time zone differences or the demands of their respective work and personal lives (Gupta & Khandelwal, 2018). This leads to shorter interactions and may be inadequate in conveying feelings in depth. This decrease in the quality of communication can negatively affect a couple's emotional satisfaction. For example, if one couple feels that the conversations they are having are inadequate or not meeting their emotional needs, they may begin to feel neglected, potentially reducing satisfaction in the relationship. It is important for couples to set a specific time to talk and ensure that the conversation still includes emotional aspects that strengthen their bond. This can be done by planning more flexible times to communicate or using technology to create a more personalized and in-depth communication experience, so that despite the distance, emotional closeness can be maintained.

One of the factors that influence communication patterns in long-distance relationships is the openness and frequency of communication. Couples who regularly communicate, either through text messages or video calls, are more likely to feel emotionally connected. Couples who keep communication open and often share personal feelings or problems tend to be more satisfied with their relationship (Dainton & Aylor, 2002). If long-distance communication is limited or tends to be inhibited, feelings of loneliness or isolation can arise, which can decrease the overall quality of the relationship.

Trust is also a key element in the communication patterns of couples in long-distance relationships. In the absence of strong trust, couples may feel anxious or doubtful of each other's commitment, especially since they cannot monitor each other's activities in person. This uncertainty often causes couples to feel insecure or worried about the integrity of their relationship. Transparent and honest communication is needed to build and maintain trust in long-distance relationships. Couples need to share their thoughts, feelings, and concerns openly with each other. This open communication will prevent misunderstandings or inaccurate assumptions, which can undermine trust between the two (McRae & Cobb, 2020). Being honest about their emotional needs, expectations and challenges also helps couples understand each other better, and gives them the opportunity to support each other more effectively. Strong trust can increase emotional satisfaction as couples feel more secure and valued in their relationship (Maguire & Kinney, 2007).

Conflict in long-distance relationships can have a significant impact on communication patterns and emotional satisfaction. When couples experience disagreements or tension, it is important to have effective communication channels to resolve the issue. However, in long-distance relationships, conflict resolution can be more difficult due to the limitations of interacting in person. Some couples may struggle to resolve differences of opinion or emotional issues through text messages or virtual conversations, which can often lead to feelings of frustration or misunderstanding (Jiang & Hancock, 2013). Poor conflict resolution in long-distance relationships can lead to decreased emotional satisfaction, which in turn affects the overall quality of the relationship (Pistole et al., 2010). It is important for couples in long-distance relationships to develop good communication skills and have a more patient and open approach to resolving conflicts.

Unresolved emotions or unexpressed tensions in long-distance communication often build up, and this can affect the overall quality of the relationship. Couples who are unable to express their feelings in an adequate way or who feel unheard can feel underappreciated or not understood. This creates emotional tension that can be difficult to overcome, especially when couples are separated by physical distance that makes it difficult to express emotions directly. The inability to address conflict or resolve emotional issues in a healthy way can decrease satisfaction in the relationship and can even potentially lead to separation (Sahlstein, 2004). Couples need to have an awareness of the importance of handling conflict constructively, and strive to remain open and honest about their feelings.

A couple's communication skills also play an important role in maintaining a healthy long-distance relationship. Couples who have good communication skills, such as the ability to listen empathetically and communicate their feelings openly, are better able to maintain the quality of their relationship despite distance. These abilities help couples to feel more connected and better able to cope with the challenges that arise in a long-distance relationship. In contrast, couples who are less skilled at communicating may have difficulty in expressing their feelings or in understanding their couple's feelings, which can reduce emotional satisfaction in the relationship (Baker & Clark, 2020).

Feelings of loneliness can also affect relationship quality in the context of long-distance relationships. Although digital communication allows couples to stay connected, feelings of loneliness and isolation often arise, especially if communication is limited or insufficient. Couples who feel lonely may be more likely to feel dissatisfied with their relationship, even if communication technically continues. This sense of loneliness can lower the level of emotional satisfaction in the relationship and can lead to a decrease in overall relationship quality (Vasilenko et al., 2017). When partners feel lonely or not cared for enough, they can start to feel that their relationship is not fulfilling the emotional needs they should be getting from their partner. This can lead to a decline in the quality of the relationship, as these feelings affect how couples view and value each other.

Differences in expectations towards communication in long-distance relationships are often a source of tension. Some couples may expect more frequent or more in-depth communication, while others may be content with more limited or practical communication. This mismatch of expectations can lead to dissatisfaction in the relationship and can decrease the quality of the relationship. Couples who disagree about how often they should communicate or the type of communication they expect can have difficulty in maintaining emotional closeness (Dainton & Aylor, 2002).

Another factor that influences communication patterns in long-distance relationships is the level of commitment each couple has. Couples who have a strong commitment to their relationship tend to put more effort into maintaining effective and frequent communication. They are more likely to overcome communication challenges that arise and feel more satisfied with their relationship despite being separated by distance (Gupta & Khandelwal, 2018). In contrast, less committed couples may not feel compelled to communicate regularly or may get frustrated more quickly when communication hits a roadblock.

Overall, the quality of communication in long-distance relationships greatly affects the emotional satisfaction of the couple and the quality of their relationship. Open, honest, and regular communication can increase emotional closeness and strengthen the relationship, while limited or inadequate communication can lead to tension and decreased satisfaction. In long-distance relationships, factors such as trust, communication skills, openness, and shared expectations play an important role in determining how couples feel about their relationship and the extent to which they feel emotionally connected.

## CONCLUSION

Communication patterns of couples in long-distance relationships greatly affect the quality of the relationship and their emotional satisfaction. Communication through digital media such as text messages, voice calls, and video calls can maintain emotional closeness even when couples are separated by physical distance. However, the quality of this communication is highly dependent on various factors, such as frequency of communication, openness, and trust between couples. When communication is open and regular, couples tend to feel more emotionally connected, which increases satisfaction in the relationship. Conversely, limited or inadequate communication often leads to feelings of loneliness, tension, and incomprehension, which ultimately reduces emotional satisfaction and relationship quality. Factors such as communication skills, mismatched expectations and differences in commitment also play an important role in maintaining a healthy long-distance relationship.

Based on these findings, the advice that can be given is the importance of couples to communicate regularly and openly. Maintaining good quality communication can help overcome challenges in long-distance relationships. Couples also need to ensure that they have the same expectations regarding communication and are ready to adapt to each other's emotional needs. Developing good communication skills, such as the ability to listen with empathy and convey feelings clearly, can improve the quality of interactions in a long-distance relationship. In addition, it is important for couples to maintain trust and commitment to keep the relationship strong and fulfilling despite the distance.

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