

COMMUNICATION OF MARRIED COUPLE AFFECTED BY LAYOFFS DURING THE COVID-19 IN LAMONGAN, EAST JAVA



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Article History :

Submission : January 20, 2023
Revised : March 12, 2023
Accepted : June 20, 2023
Published : June 30, 2023

Keyword :

Communication of
Married Couple, Covid-
19, Layoffs.

Kata Kunci : *Komunikasi
Suami Istri, Covid-19,
Putus Kerja.*

Abstract

The COVID-19 epidemic has had a significant impact on the lives of people all over the world, particularly in the economic sphere, which has driven to a strategy of eliminating employees (PHK). Some individuals, including those in the Lamongan Regency, were laid off. Therefore, the family's primary source of income stagnates. In fact, living is one of the most essential elements for constructing a sakinah family. In 2021, there are 455 divorce cases in the Lamongan Regency, of which 40% are a result of family economic crisis. Therefore, it is fascinating to examine how husbands and wives who were laid off during the Covid-19 pandemic interacted to establish a sakinah household.

Pandemi COVID-19 telah memberikan pengaruh pada kehidupan masyarakat di dunia, terutama di bidang ekonomi yang menyebabkan adanya kebijakan pengurangan tenaga kerja melalui pemutusan hubungan kerja (PHK). Sebagian masyarakat kehilangan pekerjaannya, termasuk di Kabupaten Lamongan. Sehingga sumber pemasukan untuk memberi nafkah pada keluarga menjadi terhenti. Padahal, nafkah menjadi salah satu komponen penting untuk membina keluarga yang sakinah. Pada tahun 2021, terdapat 455 kasus perceraian di Kabupaten Lamongan dan 40% disebabkan oleh masalah ekonomi keluarga. Dengan demikian, menjadi menarik untuk meneliti cara komunikasi suami-istri yang terkena PHK selama masa pandemi Covid-19 untuk mewujudkan keluarga yang sakinah.

INTRODUCTION

Reported by merdeka.com¹ on Tuesday, September 7, 2021, based on information from the Class IA Lamongan Religious Court (PA), there were 455 divorce cases recorded from August 2021 to August 2021, including 142 talak divorces and 313 contested divorces. This indicates that, compared to husbands who file for divorce, the majority of divorce plaintiffs are wives.

As explained further, one of the causes of divorce is economics. In the midst of a pandemic, the family's financial situation is susceptible to deterioration. This makes it more convenient for married couples to become angry. Mazir, the Junior Registrar of Law of the Religious Court (PA) of Lamongan, stated that the couple's divorce petition was primarily motivated by ongoing conflicts, followed by economic factors. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a significant change in the number of divorces in PA Lamongan, as indicated by the data presented above. Although, in reality, marriages between men and women are intended to be eternal and not time-limited, According to article 1 of Law No. 1 of 1974 pertaining to Marriage, "Marriage is a physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with the purpose of forming a happy and eternal family (household) based on Belief in the One Almighty God." The purpose of the "eternal" clause is for husbands and wives to remain in the

¹ Rizka Nur Layli M, "Perceraian di Lamongan Meroket Buntut kesulitan Ekonomi Saat Pandemi", Merdeka.com, <https://www.merdeka.com/jatim/perceraian-di-lamongan-meroket-buntut-kesulitan-ekonomi-saat-pandemi-begini-faktanya.html>.



same household forever. According to Islamic teachings, marriage is a contract known as *aqad* (consent) between two types of Adam's children who love each other, and their relationship encompasses all aspects of human life.

In order to build a *sakinah* family, it is therefore essential for husband and wife to communicate within the home. Thus, a *Sakinah* family is one that is physically and mentally tranquil, happy, and prosperous. The *Sakinah* family is a legitimate marriage – based family. A *sakinah* family will be able to fulfil spiritual and material needs in a proper and balanced manner, as well as maintain an atmosphere of affection among family members and harmony with their environment. Moreover, the *Sakinah* family plays an important role in noble missions, such as practising, living, and enhancing the values of faith, piety, and noble morality.

Thus, it can be concluded that a *sakinah* family consists of husbands, wives, and other family members who live together and lead a peaceful, happy, and harmonious life. The husband and wife experience happiness together. Additionally, both satisfy each other's needs and complement one another.

The formation of a family to ensure its well – being requires resources derived from subsistence. The activity of earning a living depends primarily on men. Therefore, the *Sakinah* family should refer to the concept of meeting one another's daily requirements. This concept emphasises that the responsibility for earning a living is no longer solely the responsibility of the husband but can be shared by the husband and wife. To strengthen the contextualization of the social community and the residence of the community family, it is necessary to establish a family structure for kinship. A husband affected by Termination of Employment (PHK) during the COVID – 19 period must, in addition to finding a new source of income, think of ways to maintain the harmony of his household, given that the cost of living is a relatively significant factor.

According to an article published by Liputan6.com on December 14, 2021,² a survey conducted by the Ministry of Manpower in November 2021 revealed that 72,983 employees had been terminated due to the COVID – 19 pandemic. The survey also revealed that 4,156 businesses had laid off employees. This action was taken as a result of the COVID – 19 pandemic's negative impact on the company's finances. As stated in the Comprehensive Indonesian Dictionary, termination of Employment (PHK) refers to the ending of rights and obligations between workers and companies or employers as a result of a specific event. This can occur due to resignation, termination by the company, or contract expiration.³

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative methodology, as data collection and interpretation are conducted without the use of quantitative data.⁴ This method is applicable because the collected data consists of opinions, responses, information, concepts, and descriptive information to identify problems.⁵ This study presents data in the form of both primary and secondary data. Among many others: *first*, data is information or material that can be utilised to conduct an analysis. To facilitate this study, the collected data include: The community of Lamongan's demographic, monographic, and social conditions. Data from interviews with married Lamongan

² Liputan6.com, 14th Desember 2021

³ <https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id/entri/PHK>

⁴ Suharsimi Arikunto, *Prosedur Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan Praktek* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2002), 12.

⁵ Hadari Nawawi, *Metode Penelitian Ilmiah* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 1994), 176.

district residents who were either both or one of the victims of layoffs during the Covid-19 pandemic. The opinions of figures regarding the sakinah family, as well as information on how to make it happen. *Second*, Based on the data collected above, the following are the data sources for this study: Primary sources are sources of information gathered directly from the source by the author.⁶ The primary data include: Marriage between a man and a woman From this source, forms of communication within the household will be investigated in order to create a sakinah family, even if both or one of the family members are laid off during the Covid-19 pandemic. Spiritual leaders. This source will be examined for information on the Sakinah family and its implementation. The secondary sources consist of a number of references that support the primary sources, which are books that discuss Marriage Registrar Assistants (P3N) in Indonesian Laws and Regulations. Among others; Law No. 1 of 1974 relating to Marriage and The Islamic Law Collection. The interview is a face-to-face question-and-answer session between the interviewer and the interviewee regarding the problem under study, during which the interviewer seeks to obtain the perceptions, attitudes, and perspectives of the interviewees that pertain to the problem under study.⁷ The objective was to collect information through direct questioning and interviews with married couples and religious leaders. Document Study is one method of data collection in research. Generally, secondary data from books and other research-related documents is utilized to compile the data collected by documentation techniques.⁸ Multiple references containing marriage and Sakinah family information were combed for secondary data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Form of The Sakinah Household in Lamongan, East Java

Allah has provided a means for humans to satisfy their biological requirements. Allah explains through the Quran and the hadith of his prophet the procedure for satisfying these biological needs, which is known as marriage. These rules cover pre-marriage, including engagement; marriage, including rights and responsibilities between husband and wife; and post-marriage, including divorce. This is unlike animals, who do not have rules for satisfying their biological needs.⁹

The very noble purpose of marriage is directly proportional to the existence of clear rules regarding human marriage. In addition to fulfilling the biological needs of marriage, it also serves several very noble purposes, namely: to protect oneself from actions that Allah has forbidden; to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad; to protect offspring and to continue offspring, which are the continuation of life and the continuation of ideals; to form a family; and from a family, the ummah, the people of the Prophet Muhammad SAW.¹⁰

Article 1 of Law No. 1 of 1974 pertaining to Marriage states, "*Marriage is a physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with the intention of forming a happy and eternal family (household) on the basis of Belief in the One Supreme God.*" The purpose of the "eternal" clause is for husbands and wives to remain in the same household forever. Clearly, according to Islamic teachings, marriage is a contract known as *aqad* (consent or *qabul*) between two types of Adam's children who love each other, and their relationship encompasses all aspects of human life.

⁶ Suharsimi Arikunto.

⁷ Masruhan, *Metodologi Penelitian Hukum*, (Surabaya: Hilal Pustaka, 2013), 237.

⁸ Husaini Usman dan Purnomo Setiady Akbar, *Metodologi Penelitian Sosial*, (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 1996), 73.

⁹ M. Thalib, *Perkawinan Menurut Islam*, (Surabaya: Al Ikhlas, 1993), 1.

¹⁰ Kamal Mukhtar, *Asas-asas Hukum Islam tentang Perkawinan*, (Jakarta: (Bulan Bintang, 1974), 14.

On a practical level, everybody desires a Sakinah family. A sakinah family consists of two elements: family and sakinah (including mawaddah and rahmah). The family is defined as the smallest community composed of at least a husband and wife as the primary source and their offspring.¹¹

According to Mufidah Ch, a family is a lifelong bond based on the occurrence of marriage, but it can also be the result of breastfeeding or parental behaviour.¹²

According to Mardani, the family is divided into two groups: small families and large families. The small family, also known as the nuclear family, consists of a father, a mother, and their children. While the extended family consists of all family members that have grown as a result of the marriage.¹³

The family in question consists of a husband and wife who are married.¹⁴ If not through marriage, then the family is the focal point of this passage. And living with a man and a woman does not constitute a family if they are not married. Consequently, marriage is required to form a family.¹⁵

As Allah SWT explains in verse 21 of the letter Ar – Rum of the Qur'an: "*And one of the signs of His power is that He created for you wives of your own kind, so that you would be attracted to him and feel at ease with him, and He created them with love and affection between you. Indeed, there are indicators for those who think*" (QS. Ar Rum: 21).

In this verse, the word "marriage" has three distinct meanings¹⁶: *first*, Litaskunu ilaiha , means to be calm. The hope is that marriage will bring the offender peace of mind. *Second*, mawaddah, cultivate a feeling of love. The root of the word mawaddah is wadada (fierce or passionate), which means suddenly overflowing, because it refers to a young couple where the love is very high and filled with jealousy, while the affection is still low, and there are many collisions as a result of their inability to control the love, which is sometimes very difficult to control. *Third*, the Rahmah means dear. The affection between a young couple is so low, whereas their love is so great. Throughout his life, the couple's age increases, their affection grows, and their mawaddah decreases. It is not a tumult of love (mawaddah) that exists for them, but affection, when we observe grandparents and grandparents engaging in close physical contact (rahmah). Where jealousy is absent in love.

If this verse is truly comprehended, we will acknowledge that what many people strive for today is also what Allah SWT has outlined as the purpose of marriage: to have peace and harmony and live in an atmosphere of love and affection. Islam also desires that there be mutual trust, respect, assistance, and advice between husband and wife. Peace exists within the heart. Living in the same house with a suitable wife causes the husband's mind to become steady, and if the wife is truly wise, in addition to loving her husband, he will become at ease at home and at peace with himself.¹⁷

¹¹ Departemen Agama RI, *Membina Keluarga Sakinah*, (Jakarta: Direktorat Jendral Bimbingan Masyarakat Islam dan Penyelenggara Haji, 2004), 4.

¹² Mufidah Ch, *Psikologi Keluarga Islam Berwawasan Gender*, (Malang: UIN Maliki Press, 2008), 33.

¹³ Mardani, *Hukum Keluarga Islam di Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Kencana, 2016), 3.

¹⁴ Departemen Agama RI.

¹⁵ BP4 Provinsi DKI Jakarta, *Membina Keluarga Sakinah*, (Jakarta: Badan Penasihat Pembinaan dan Pelestarian Perkawinan (BP4) Provinsi DKI Jakarta, 2009), 4.

¹⁶ Ahmad Mubarak, *Nasehat Perkawinan dan Konsep Hidup Keluarga*, (Jakarta: Jatibangsa, 2006), 18.

¹⁷ Departemen Agama RI, *Pedoman Konselor Keluarga Sakinah*, (Jakarta: Departemen Agama, 2001), 89.

In Article 1 of the Marriage Law defines *marriage as a physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife for the purpose of forming a happy and eternal family (household) based on the Belief in One Almighty God*. Clearly, according to Islamic teachings, marriage is a contract known as *aqad* (consent or *qabul*) between two types of Adam's children who love each other, and their relationship encompasses all aspects of human life.

Perfect intimacy, needing and loving each other, and being willing to devote oneself to the other are inseparable parts of unity; both must share the responsibility of complementing and assisting one another in navigating the ark of domestic life.

The family is the hub of all community activities, as society is composed of families. The life of religion, the security of society, and the tranquilly of life all depend on the health of families and households. There is no institution in existence with a greater purpose than the family and household. The family and home are the centres of everything for everyone, including character and personality development, education, morals and ethics, social feelings, love, and affection.

Thus, it is clear how heavy and holy the burden that will be borne and carried by the husband/wife pair is, and it is also clear that for the level of marriage and establishing a happy household, careful preparation is required physically and psychologically, as well as mutually agreed – upon plans for the future, an assessment of what is expected to be repaired and perfected, including the house to be occupied and sources or livelihoods for living expenses, and a plan for the future that is mutually agreed upon.

Similarly, the function of marriage and the nature of the family must be understood and internalised. Future ideals must be in harmony with future goals, and goals must be agreed upon. If their life goals and ideals conflict, they cannot attain happiness.

The desire to achieve objectives must be elegantly intertwined with efforts and game rules that are both liked, patterns, a fair distribution of duties, discipline, and harmonious working relationships. Occasionally, work plans and family life must be regulated, supervised, and observed to determine whether everything goes according to plan, whether goals are achieved without difficulty, or whether there are difficulties and obstacles, tensions that must be alleviated, or discipline and vigilance that must be increased.

The ability of the husband to serve as the family's leader must also receive constant consideration. As a leader, the husband must have a broad perspective, be able to assess and identify points of weakness or sources of misunderstanding and devise methods for overcoming them.

In Article 31 paragraph 3 of the Marriage Law states, "*The husband is the head of the family and the wife is the housewife*." As the head of the family, the husband must possess authority, diverse knowledge, expertise, and skills, as well as a sound mental state. There are numerous husbands who are unable to provide leadership and serve as role models for their families.

"Sakinah family" consists of two words that complement each other. The term "sakinah" is an adjective for the noun "family," and its purpose is to describe the noun "family." The term "sakinah" refers to inner peace and tranquility.

A sakinah family is one that is physically and mentally tranquil, happy, and prosperous.¹⁸ The Sakinah family is a legitimate marriage-based family. A sakinah family will be able to fulfill spiritual and material needs in a proper and balanced manner, as well as maintain an atmosphere of affection among family members and harmony with their environment. Moreover, the sakinah family plays an important role in noble missions, such as practicing, living, and enhancing the values of faith, piety, and noble morality.¹⁹

Thus, it can be concluded that a sakinah family consists of husbands, wives, and other family members who live together and lead a peaceful, happy, and harmonious life. The husband and wife experience happiness together. Additionally, both satisfy each other's needs to complement one another.

Parents are required to educate their children in order for them to become productive members of society. In addition, parents must give their children the freedom to do good. According to the preceding discussion regarding the definition of family, a sakinah family is one that creates a harmonious environment through mutual respect. The preceding description demonstrates that family obligations are a shared responsibility.

Nonetheless, the formation of a Sakinah family is not devoid of obstacles. As experienced by a married couple residing in the Lamongan district. Both or one of the husband and wife must be employed to support the family. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck Indonesia, the Termination of Employment (PHK) policy implemented by the company where they worked affected them. Consequently, their financial income has ceased.

The formation of a family to ensure its well-being requires resources derived from subsistence. The activity of earning a living depends primarily on men. Therefore, the Sakinah family should refer to the concept of meeting one another's daily requirements. This concept emphasizes that the responsibility for earning a living is no longer solely the responsibility of the husband but can be shared by the husband and wife. To strengthen the contextualization of the social community and the residence of the community family, it is necessary to establish a family structure for kinship.

Sulaiha (pseudonym)²⁰ stated that she and her husband, Toni (pseudonym), worked for the same two businesses. They began working prior to their marriage. They have been recorded as working for a decade until 2020.

In March 2020, however, Toni, Sulaiha's husband, was forced to confront a harsh reality. The policy of reducing the workforce due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has devastated all aspects of life, including the production economic sector, had an effect on him. Consequently, he became one of the employees who received a Termination of Employment (PHK) from his place of employment.

The husband's layoffs diminished the family's income and economic stability. This is because, following the layoffs, Sulaiha's salary is the only source of income. In addition, they each have two children who have completed both senior high school (SMA) and elementary school (SD).

¹⁸ Zaitun Subhan, *Membina Keluarga Sakinah*, (Yogyakarta: Lkis 2004), p. 6.

¹⁹ Departemen Agama, *Pembinaan Gerakan Keluarga Sakinah*, (Jakarta: Ditjen Bimas Islam dan Haji), 2.

²⁰ Sulaiha (pseudonym), *Interview*, {16 August 2022}.

In contrast to Riza's (pseudonym) message.²¹ She is a housewife with no outside income. The only contributor to the family's income is the husband, who has worked for a company for seven years. Throughout these seven years, the family's financial situation was quite stable.

According to Riza, the company where her husband worked implemented a workforce reduction policy in mid–May 2020. Since the COVID–19 pandemic began to affect multiple regions in Indonesia, the company's production activities began to decrease. Therefore, the required number of workers decreases. So that Riza's husband is one of dozens affected by layoffs at his place of employment.

Lia (a pseudonym) conveyed the same message,²² namely that she, too, is a housewife with no income. Her daily expenses, including the education of her only child, are met by her factory–working husband's salary.

Lia stated that her husband was still relatively new to his factory job. The employment relationship is still restricted to contract workers. When other businesses lay off employees, the factory where the husband works will also do so. In addition, the husband is a contract worker. In order to reduce the factory's burden when production decreases, the company does not renew the contracts of workers who are still obligated to the factory.

Also experienced by Rosi (pseudonym) was Termination of Employment (PHK).²³ He explained that he was the head of the family and the family's backbone. His wife is a housewife only. He is a factory worker. However, in April of 2020, he was affected by the Covid–19 pandemic's workforce reduction policy. The factory where he worked implemented layoffs, affecting him and dozens of other employees.

The informants understood that, in order to form a stable family, it was necessary to have sufficient income to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, and education. Consequently, in the early stages of layoffs, they were also concerned about family harmony.

However, as Lia (pseudonym) stated, she is still required to obey and respect her husband despite being laid off from her job. According to her, the husband is the head of the household and must be obeyed. Regardless of the condition of the husband, including his financial condition, the wife will support him. He emphasized that this is the teaching of his religion. in order that

This is also supported by Rosi's (pseudonym) statement.²⁴ As a husband, he must provide his wife with understanding and compassion. That a wife must submit to her husband. As long as the husband stays within the boundaries of religion and law and maintains family responsibility. Therefore, there is no reason for a wife to not support her husband's efforts, much less disobey him.

Using theory from James C. Scott, the preceding statements identify the husband as the patron and the wife as the client. This patryn–client theory will aid researchers in interpreting the pattern of husband and wife relationships in a family in order to create a *sakinah* family in the midst of the unfortunate layoff policy.

²¹ Riza (pseudonym), *Interview*, {20 August 2022}.

²² Lia (pseudonym), *Interview*, {1 September 2022}.

²³ Rosi (pseudonym), *Interview*, {5 September 2022}.

²⁴ Rosi (pseudonym), *Interview*, {5 September 2022}.

In some literature, the word "patron" appears in a Spanish phrase that, from a linguistic standpoint, means "a person with power, status, authority, and influence."²⁵ And the term "client" refers to subordinates or those who are ordered and commanded. Therefore, the pattern of patron–client relationships is a relationship between two unequal groups, communities, or individuals in terms of power, status, or income. This places the client in a subordinate (inferior) position and status. While the patron holds a superior, understood as a person who is in a position to assist his clients.²⁶

In a different editorial, the patron–client relationship is defined as an example of an instrumental friendship in which a person with a higher socioeconomic status (the patron) uses his influence and resources to provide protection, benefits, or both. both to a lesser person (the client), who reciprocates the gift by providing general support and assistance, as well as the patron's personal services.²⁷

In the case of husband and wife in Lamongan, the husband has a very important role and status as the family's head. They are obligated to keep their families safe, provide for their daily needs, etc. In the meantime, the wife and children enjoy the fruits of the husband's labor. A wife can taste the flavour because her husband ensures her safety. Every day, a wife's needs are met because her husband works hard and takes full responsibility for meeting them. Despite the fact that, in some families, a wife also earns an income from her employment, this is not always the case. However, the primary responsibility remains with the husband.

Such circumstances naturally place the husband in the position of patron, as he possesses the resources his wife requires, such as a sense of security and a means of subsistence. Meanwhile, the wife is in the position of the Client because she receives services and resources from the Patron (husband) that she cannot produce herself, namely security and a means of subsistence.

Additionally, the client's patronage is a social interaction that stems from a vertical relationship. One actor has a more prominent role than the others. This actor with a higher position then provides the necessary assistance to the actor with a lower position, who normally feels obligated to repay the favor.

Scott provided an illustration of his findings by examining the reciprocal relationship between sharecroppers and landowners. To become patrons, landowners recruit customers with their capital. They provide employment through the cultivation of the patron's land. In addition to being a patron, he does not hesitate to protect his clients by providing guarantees in the event of famine and defending land cultivators from brokers. Depending on the patron's future needs, he expects a gift from his client in exchange for this protection.

Several auxiliary components serve to facilitate the patron–clan relationship. These elements are: first, that what is given by one party is something of value in the eyes of the other party, whether the gift is in the form of goods or services and can take various forms; and second, that what is given by one party is something of value in the eyes of the other party. Second, the recipient of this gift feels obligated to repay it, thereby creating a reciprocal relationship. A reciprocal element distinguishes it from coercive relationships and those based on formal authority. Third, there are societal

²⁵ Sunyoto Usman, *Sosiologi; Sejarah, Teori dan Metodologi*, (Yogyakarta: Center for Indonesian Research and Development [CIReD], 2004), 132.

²⁶ James C. Scott, *Moral Ekonomi Petani*, (Jakarta: LP3S, 1983), p. 14.

²⁷ James C. Scott, "Patron Client, Politics and Political Change in South East Asia," *The American Political Science Review*, 1 (Maret, 1972), 92.

norms that permit lower – ranking parties (clients) to make offers, which means that if one party feels that the other party is not providing what is expected, he can withdraw from the relationship without penalty.²⁸

Returning to the discussion of the husband and wife case in Lamongan, the husband's hard work to provide a sense of security and economic stability for his wife and children is solely to fulfill his responsibilities as the head of the family and to ensure that those he leads in the family feel a sense of belonging and respect and obey him. A husband's desired outcomes include the wife's responsibility fulfillment, respect, and submission.

On the other hand, a wife feels indebted to her husband and is dependent on him for the security and economic support he has provided. As a result, as a client, the wife chooses an attitude of obedience to her husband under all circumstances. This is evident from the fact that some of the interviewees chose to remain submissive and communicate well with their husbands despite the husband's job loss.

CONCLUSION

During the Covid – 19 pandemic, the Termination of Employment Relations (PHK) policy implemented by several companies caused people in the Lamongan district to lose their jobs and struggle to provide for their wives and children. In reality, living is one of the most essential components of a harmonious family. However, the communication established by husbands and wives who have been laid off maintains family harmony. The wife (client) who borrows a wife from James C. Scott requires herself to always obey her husband (patron) under all circumstances.

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