

Dinamika Hubungan Keluarga pada Rumah Tangga Perantau Munte Desa Lebah Sempaga Kecamatan Narmada

Dynamics of Family Relationships in Migrant Households in the Lebah Sempaga Community, Narmada District

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Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji dinamika hubungan keluarga dalam rumah tangga migran di Dusun Lebah Munte, Desa Lebah Sempaga, Kecamatan Narmada. Migrasi adalah strategi adaptasi sosial-ekonomi yang umum bagi masyarakat lokal, tetapi telah menyebabkan pergeseran dalam pemenuhan fungsi keluarga. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan wawancara mendalam dengan salah satu informan yang mulai bermigrasi pada Februari 2024. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa motivasi utama migrasi adalah untuk meningkatkan kesejahteraan ekonomi keluarga, yang nyatanya berhasil meningkatkan kondisi ekonomi rumah tangga. Meski jarak, komunikasi sehari-hari melalui media digital menjaga ikatan emosional, namun tetap menghadirkan tantangan berupa beban emosional, kerinduan, kerentanan saat sakit, dan risiko dirasakan terabaikan oleh keluarga yang ditinggalkan. Penelitian ini menekankan dilema mendasar antara fungsi ekonomi dan afektif keluarga dalam konteks mobilitas penduduk. Artikel ini ditulis menggunakan pendekatan sosiologi keluarga, mengacu pada teori fungsi struktural dan hubungan keluarga jarak jauh.

Kata Kunci: Dinamika Keluarga, Migrasi, Fungsi Ekonomi, Fungsi Afektif, Komunikasi Jarak Jauh

Abstract

This article examines the dynamics of family relationships in migrant households in Lebah Munte Hamlet, Lebah Sempaga Village, Narmada District. The phenomenon of migration is a socio-economic adaptation strategy that is commonly carried out by the local community, but it causes a shift in the fulfillment of family functions. The study uses a qualitative approach with an in-depth interview method with one informant who has been migrating since February 2024. The results of the study show that the main incentive to migrate is to improve the economic welfare of families, which in fact has succeeded in improving household

economic conditions. Even though they are separated from each other, daily communication through digital media maintains inner bonds, but still presents challenges in the form of emotional burdens, longing, vulnerability when sick, and the risk of being perceived as neglected by the family left behind. This study confirms the existence of a fundamental dilemma between economic function and family affection function in the context of population mobility. This article is written with a sociological approach to the family, referring to the theory of structural function and long-distance family relationships.

Keywords: *Family Dynamics, Overseas, Economic Functions, Affection Functions, Long-Distance Communication*



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INTRODUCTION

The family is the most basic social institution, serving as the foundation for personality formation and the structure of community life (Bungin, 2021). As the smallest social unit, the family is responsible for meeting the various needs of its members, from physical and material needs to emotional and psychological needs. Throughout its development, family life is inextricably linked to changes triggered by social, economic, cultural, and technological dynamics that continue to evolve over time. One very common social phenomenon in Indonesia and part of the survival strategy of rural communities is population migration, or migration.

In Lebah Munte Hamlet, Lebah Sempaga Village, Narmada District, the practice of migrating is nothing new or unfamiliar to the residents. This phenomenon has been passed down through generations and is seen as one of the most effective ways to expand limited economic opportunities in their hometowns. The community views migrating as a path of devotion and sacrifice, where one family member willingly leaves their home environment in search of a better life for the entire family. This decision is often seen as a strategic solution to secure the family's future, but behind these noble intentions lies a variety of real impacts on the structure of household life.

Sociologically, the existence of a family is not only determined by blood ties or marriage, but also by the interaction, togetherness, and fulfillment of the need for affection among its members. When a family member chooses to migrate and live a considerable distance apart, the previously established order of interactions and habits undergoes significant changes. The togetherness that had been a daily habit changes to occasional meetings, and face-to-face communication is replaced by communication via technology. This situation raises fundamental questions about how the essence of the family is maintained when physical presence can no longer be continuously fulfilled.

The dynamics of relationships within migrant families are interesting to study because they present a contradictory and complex reality. On the one hand, migration brings tangible positive impacts in terms of improving living standards, meeting basic needs, and even the ability to finance the education of other family members. However, on the other hand, the distance created by migration often opens up space for the emergence of various equally significant emotional and psychological issues. This shift demands a high level of adaptability for both the migrant and the family left behind, so that family ties are not weakened or severed simply by the barriers of space and time.

Previous research has shown that families with members who migrate face unique challenges in dividing household roles and responsibilities (Sari & Fauzi, 2022). Responsibilities that were previously shared are now shared separately, requiring careful restructuring to avoid role gaps. In the context of the Lebah Munte Hamlet community, where family ties and togetherness are highly valued, this

challenge is even more significant because cultural values must be maintained even though lifestyles have completely changed.

This phenomenon also demonstrates the conflicting interests within the family institution itself. While material needs are essential for survival, there are also fundamental human needs for emotional closeness, protection, and a sense of belonging. When someone decides to migrate, they are actually making a difficult priority choice: prioritizing their family's economic future, even if it means sacrificing the togetherness and comfort of living with loved ones for a period of time.

Based on this background, this article focuses on an in-depth analysis of how the dynamics of family relationships occur in the context of migrant households. This article aims to map the fundamental reasons behind the decision to migrate, examine its impact on the household's economic condition, and identify strategies used to maintain harmonious relationships amidst distance. Furthermore, this article also examines the challenges and latent conflicts that arise from this situation to provide a complete picture of the reality of contemporary family life. Through this study, it is hoped that a more comprehensive understanding of the true nature of the family can be obtained, namely that family integrity is not always determined by continuous physical presence, but also by loyalty, shared goals, and the quality of interactions that are established despite the limitations of distance and time

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study focusing on the dynamics of family relationships among migrant households in Lebah Munte Hamlet, Lebah Sempaga Village, Narmada District. A qualitative approach was chosen because it is considered the most appropriate for understanding the meanings, perceptions, experiences, and processes of social interactions in depth and comprehensively (Sugiyono, 2022). This research aims to depict phenomena naturally as they exist without any artificial conditions, thus creating a more authentic and closer picture to the reality on the ground.

The data sources in this study are divided into two: primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly through in-depth interviews with an informant who is a native of Lebah Munte Hamlet and has been living away from home since February 2024. Informants were selected purposively, based on certain criteria relevant to the research focus, namely having direct experience of living away from home and being separated from family for a sufficient period of time to understand the dynamics of the relationship. Interviews were conducted using a structured questionnaire covering the informant's background, economic conditions, communication patterns, challenges, and perspectives on the impact of living away from home on their family.

Secondary data was collected through a literature review, including family sociology textbooks, scientific journals, previous research articles, and other supporting documents relevant to the theme of migration and family relationships. These sources served as a theoretical foundation, comparison, and reinforcement for the analysis of the field data obtained, ensuring that the study results were not only descriptive but also had a strong scientific basis and proven validity.

Data collection techniques were conducted through face-to-face interviews and a question-and-answer process that proceeded flexibly but remained focused on the research objectives. During the interviews, researchers recorded detailed responses, perspectives, and expressions of feelings conveyed by the informants. These notes were then fully transcribed and reorganized into a scientific narrative without altering the meaning or essence of the information conveyed to ensure the data's authenticity.

Data analysis was conducted descriptively and qualitatively, following the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. First, the collected data was selected and simplified by removing irrelevant information, sharpening the study's focus. Second, the simplified data was organized into a systematic description for ease of understanding and analysis. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on the patterns and findings emerging from the data, which were then linked to the previously prepared theoretical framework.

The validity and reliability of the data were ensured through source triangulation and in-depth analysis. Information obtained from interviews was compared with theories and previous research findings to ensure consistency. Furthermore, the researcher attempted to maintain objectivity by not incorporating personal judgment into the data, but rather allowing the findings to speak for themselves and interpreting them based on the scientific logic of family sociology, which underpins this article.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on interviews with informants, it was discovered that the decision to emigrate was made in February 2024. The informants began their journey away from their home environment with carefully considered intentions and goals. This decision was not made carelessly or hastily, but rather the result of in-depth consideration of the future and well-being of all family members. This step marked the beginning of a major shift in the dynamics of household life, which had previously been based on a pattern of daily togetherness.

The primary reason behind the informant's decision to migrate was a strong desire to help improve the family's economy. In his view, opportunities to earn a decent income in his hometown were still very limited and insufficient to guarantee a significant improvement in living standards. Therefore, migration was chosen as a path of service and a form of responsibility to contribute more to meeting the

family's needs. This reflects that in the context of rural communities, migration is seen as a moral obligation for individuals who have the ability to ease the economic burden on their parents and siblings.

The family's economic situation before the informant migrated was actually quite good, able to meet basic daily needs. However, the additional income earned from migration brought a noticeable change, becoming much better and more stable. The informant expressed deep gratitude because the fruits of his labor made it easier to meet the family's needs and even enabled him to save for the future. This finding is highly relevant to Bungin's (2021) opinion, which states that migration is an effective strategy that can elevate a family's economic position to a higher level.

This improved economic situation demonstrates that families can function optimally even when one member is far away. Remittances or work income provide a new source of income, strengthening household financial resilience. Sociologically, this demonstrates the family's flexibility in adapting mechanisms to meet material needs. Families no longer have to rely entirely on village income sources but instead have access to economic resources from outside their home region.

Despite being separated by considerable distance, efforts to maintain communication are intensive. The informant stated that he tries to communicate with his family almost daily, using communication technologies such as mobile phones and instant messaging apps. This daily communication serves as a key bridge across physical distances, ensuring that news and conditions are always well-monitored. This aligns with transnational family theory, which emphasizes that the presence of technology allows for maintaining relationships despite spatial separation (Utami & Susanto, 2023).

This regular communication pattern has a dual meaning: it serves not only as a means of conveying news but also as a channel for expressing longing, concern, and emotional support. For informants, hearing their family's voices or seeing their faces on their devices provides psychological strength to continue working while away from home. For families at home, this communication provides a sense of calm and reassurance that their loved ones are healthy and safe.

However, despite this ease of communication, informants still experienced significant and significant obstacles while living away from family. The most common challenges were illness or physical exhaustion. In these situations, the longing and need for family presence felt urgent but could not be met directly. There was no one to care for them, administer medication, or even offer a physical hug, making the burden of suffering even heavier than it would have been at home. This situation illustrates the vulnerability of individuals when direct physical and emotional support is unavailable.

This experience demonstrates that communication technology has significant limitations. While it can convey sound and images, it cannot replace the warmth of touch, physical attention, and tangible presence that are essential to the family's

affectionate function. This is what Suparlan (2020) calls the social cost that families must bear: the sacrifice of quality emotional relationships for the sake of achieving greater economic well-being. Distance creates an empty space that is difficult to fully fill with any means of communication.

In her efforts to maintain harmonious relationships, the informant realized that the key lies in awareness and commitment to maintaining good, quality communication. She strives not to simply ask for news mechanically, but also to listen to complaints, offer advice, and involve herself in every important event the family experiences at home. The awareness that she remains an integral part of the family, even though she is physically absent, provides a strong foundation for maintaining emotional bonds that will not fade over time.

This strategy is crucial given another potential risk acknowledged by informants: the possibility that the family left behind may feel neglected or under-appreciated. This feeling of neglect may arise not from malicious intent, but simply from the lack of regular face-to-face meetings and direct interaction. These misunderstandings often become the seeds of problems that can damage relationships if not promptly addressed with understanding and adequate explanation from the migrant.

The informant firmly conveyed a profound reflection on the psychological impact of moving away from home, namely the pain of enduring deep longing. He acknowledged that this decision meant he had to fight longing every day and was willing to miss important family moments. However, despite all the hardships and sacrifices, the informant confidently asserted that: "There was no other reason to leave them than for their own good and well-being." This statement became the crux of the entire dynamic that ensued. This expression demonstrates the existential dilemma faced by migrant households. There is an inner conflict between the desire to always be by the family's side and the necessity to leave for the sake of the family's future. This is the essence of the struggle between the two family functions that have been explained theoretically. The economic function encourages departure, while the affective function draws the family to stay. The decision is a bitter compromise accepted as a noble sacrifice.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that migrant families in Lebah Munte Hamlet have been able to adapt and create a new balance. The form of togetherness has shifted to a shared sense of purpose and shared purpose, while responsibility is realized through economic contributions and faithful communication. Although emotional challenges persist and the risk of distance looms, the family's strength endures because of a shared vision that this sacrifice is temporary for the greater good in the future. This dynamic demonstrates that the family is not a rigid structure, but rather a flexible and adaptive social institution. It can adapt to any situation as long as its members have a foundation of trust, loyalty, and mutual understanding. Migration has changed the way families function, but it has not

diminished the fundamental meaning of the family itself as a place of return, a refuge, and the greatest source of strength in the lives of each of its members.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion outlined above, it can be concluded that the decision to migrate for households in Lebah Munte Hamlet is an adaptation strategy driven by economic necessity and responsibility. This step is not a random decision, but rather a conscious choice made with the noble goal of improving the family's standard of living and opening up opportunities for a brighter future. In the local community's view, migration is a tangible form of dedication by a child or family member to the well-being of their loved ones.

In reality, this decision has had a significant positive impact on the family's economic situation. If previously their economic situation was relatively adequate, after the contribution from their migration, their standard of living has significantly improved, their needs are met more easily, and their financial resilience has become stronger. This demonstrates that a family's economic function can operate effectively even when members are separated by distance, thanks to a mechanism for remittances and ongoing financial support.

However, geographical distance presents its own challenges, particularly in meeting affective or emotional needs. The main obstacles experienced include deep longing, difficulties during illness due to the lack of physical support, and the risk of perceived neglect by the family left behind. These conditions demonstrate the social and psychological costs that must be borne as a logical consequence of prioritizing material needs for a specific period of time.

To maintain the integrity and harmony of a relationship, the key to success is a commitment to maintaining regular, high-quality communication. While communication technology plays a crucial role in connecting spaces, it still requires deep awareness and understanding from both parties. The experiences of informants demonstrate that, despite the changing nature of togetherness, the meaning of family remains strong, grounded in shared goals, loyalty, and the belief that all sacrifices are made solely for the good of the beloved family.

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