*Article*

Psychological Well-being In Fisher Families: Analyzed Of Affectionate Verbal Communication and Husband-Wife Interaction

**Abstract**

*Psychological well-being is a critical determinant of family stability and harmony, particularly among fishing families who encounter substantial economic and environmental challenges. It facilitates adaptation to adverse circumstances, stress management, and the maintenance of harmonious family relationships. This study investigates the influence of affectionate communication and spousal interaction on the psychological well-being of fishing families. A quantitative, cross-sectional design was applied to a sample of 63 respondents from Sukabumi and Cirebon, building on previous research. Data were analyzed to assess relationships between affectionate verbal communication, spousal interaction quality, and psychological well-being. Affectionate verbal communication and spousal interaction were generally rated at a moderate level, whereas overall psychological well-being was rated high. A significant positive association was found between the number of family members, the quality of spousal interaction, and psychological well-being. Strengthening effective communication skills is essential for fishing families to cope with socio-economic and environmental pressures. Policy implications include the need for government-led mental health services and empowerment programs, such as financial literacy training and capital assistance.*

**Keywords:** Husband-wife interaction, Fishing families, Psychological well-being, Verbal communication of affection

# Introduction

Psychological well-being is a fundamental determinant of family stability and harmony, enabling individuals to adapt to challenges, manage stress, and maintain positive interpersonal relationships. For fishing families, who often face significant economic, environmental, and occupational risks, psychological well-being is especially critical. Fishing as an occupation is marked by fluctuating income and high physical danger due to unpredictable weather and sea conditions. These uncertainties can destabilize household income, increase stress levels, and strain family relationships.

Globally, fishing communities are recognized as vulnerable socio-economic groups, with poverty rates often exceeding those of non-coastal populations (Pollnac et al., 2012). In Indonesia, this vulnerability is evident: data from the Central Statistics Agency (2022) indicate that 10.86 million Indonesians live in poverty, with 12.5% residing in coastal areas (Zahra et al., 2016). Such economic pressures not only affect physical living conditions but also have profound implications for mental health and marital harmony within fishing households (Wibowo & Satria, 2016; Conger et al., 2010).

Research has shown that fishermen’s spouses—particularly wives—experience unique psychological challenges (Erlina, 2021). In this context, interpersonal communication plays a pivotal role in fostering emotional stability. Studies in fishing communities, such as those in Meskom Village, Bengkalis, reveal that trust, mutual support, and open communication between spouses enhance relationship quality and contribute to emotional resilience (Zuhdi et al., 2023). Communication is a core component of family well-being, influencing not only the quality of marital interaction but also moderating the impact of external stressors (Arwan, 2018; Caughlin et al., 2011). Families with effective communication tend to experience better health, happiness, harmony, and overall quality of life, both mentally and physically. Hence, effective communication is crucial for fostering positive relationships within the family (Defina et al., 2023).

However, despite its importance, many fishing families in coastal Indonesia lack access to mental health services (Erlina, 2021; Surur, 2023), leaving them without the support necessary to cope effectively with daily stressors. This gap in support systems may exacerbate psychological strain, reduce quality of life, and undermine family resilience. While prior studies highlight the benefits of positive communication patterns and strong marital relationships for psychological well-being (Carr et al., 2014), there remains a scarcity of research focusing specifically on Indonesian fishing families.

# Conceptual Framework

***Psychological Well-Being***

Psychological well-being refers to a state of happiness that reflects an individual’s freedom from distress, characterized by a balance between positive and negative aspects (Diener & Larsen, 1993, as cited in Amalia & Rahmatika, 2020). Within the family context, communication plays a pivotal role in shaping various dimensions of psychological well-being. Poor communication, an unfavorable psychological atmosphere, and inconsistent leadership styles are major factors that can deteriorate the psychological well-being of children and adolescents (Wandira et al., 2024). Moreover, Maukar and Huwae (2024) identify additional influences on family communication—such as self-image, psychological atmosphere, physical environment, leadership style, language etiquette, and age differences—which significantly contribute to individual psychological well-being.

**Verbal Communication**

Communication serves as an essential medium for transmitting values within the family. When parents adopt a less dialogic parenting style, coupled with hostility and conflict, it can lead to strained and less harmonious relationships among family members (Meifilina et al., 2024). Effective communication involves delivering messages clearly so that the recipient fully understands them. This process encompasses the appropriate use of verbal and nonverbal language, as well as active listening skills (Wihara et al., 2024). Verbal communication is inherently direct, leaving less room for misinterpretation. According to Abed et al. (2023), positive communication is characterized by the ability to share personal stories, express affection, and provide emotional support. In contrast, negative communication includes verbal aggression or a lack of empathy in family interactions, both of which can negatively affect the emotional well-being of family members. Verbal communication encompasses both verbal violence and affection. Verbal violence includes attacks on the other party's self-concept through insults, character attacks, harsh taunts, and the use of derogatory language, while verbal affection represents positive communication expressed through kind words, attention, and responsibility” (Defina et al., 2023)

**Husband-Wife Interaction**

Husband–wife interaction refers to a relational process involving emotional connection and self-regulation. Strong interaction within the family has been shown to enhance marital quality (Waldinger & Schulz, 2006, as cited in Herawati et al., 2018). Herawati et al. (2018) found that family interaction can be optimized through open communication among family members. Spousal communication entails both giving and receiving information and feedback. Within the family unit, husband–wife interactions may be either positive or negative (Nadhifah et al., 2021). Furthermore, Nadhifah et al. (2021) concluded that the quality of husband–wife interaction is one of the key determinants of overall family happiness.

# Method

**Research Design**

This study adopts a quantitative approach to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. A quantitative approach generates numerical data that can be statistically analyzed, offering valuable insights into the relationships between variables. The study employs a cross-sectional design, conducted at a single point in time across two regions: Sukabumi Regency, representing the south coast, and Cirebon Regency, representing the north coast.

**Sample**

The study population consisted of fishing families in the coastal areas of West Java, with the selected respondents being fishermen’s wives residing in Palabuhan Ratu District, Sukabumi, and Gebang Mekar District, Cirebon. Respondents were selected purposively, resulting in a sample of 63 participants. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires.

**Instruments**

Data were obtained via interviews using a structured questionnaire covering three main variables: husband–wife interaction, verbal communication of affection, and psychological well-being. All instruments had been previously tested for validity and reliability.

1. *Husband–wife interaction* was measured using 20 items, with a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.524.
2. *Verbal communication of affection* was measured using 10 items, with a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.678.
3. *Psychological well-being* was measured based on Sunarti (2019) using 10 items, with a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.903.

For the husband–wife interaction and verbal communication of affection variables, responses were recorded on a Likert scale: 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, and 5 = always. Psychological well-being was assessed using a semantic differential scale ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 7 (very satisfied).

**Procedure**

Primary data were collected using the structured questionnaire, which was subsequently processed and analyzed using Microsoft Excel and Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS). Data management involved several stages: coding, scoring, statistical analysis, and interpretation of results. Descriptive analysis was used to identify the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of fishing families. In addition, regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of independent variables—family characteristics, husband–wife interaction, verbal communication of affection, and verbal communication of violence—on psychological well-being.

**Ethical Considerations**

The study underwent ethical review and received approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee of Bogor Agricultural University (IPB University), approval number 1058/IT3.KEPMSM-IPB/SK/2023. This research forms part of a continuing study conducted in the previous year.

**Results**

**Characteristics of Fishermen's Families**

The statistical test results indicate that the p-values for all family characteristics are greater than 0.05, suggesting no significant differences between the northern (Gebang Mekar) and southern (Palabuhan Ratu) regions in terms of husband’s and wife’s age, age at marriage, number of family members, number of sons and daughters, age of the youngest child, and household expenditure. These findings suggest that the demographic and economic characteristics of fishing families in the two regions are relatively similar.

The results further show that approximately 50% of wives in both areas do not work outside the home, implying that the primary economic responsibility rests with the husband. In addition, the majority of both husbands and wives have an education level equivalent to primary school. With regard to housing conditions, most respondents own their homes; however, in terms of fishing assets, more than half of the fishermen reported that the boats they use are not privately owned but belong to others.

**Verbal Communication** **of Affection**

The results indicate that the majority of respondents (44 individuals, 69.8%) fell within the medium category for verbal expressions of affection. This suggests that most couples demonstrate a moderate level of verbal emotional warmth—generally positive but not yet optimal in fostering deeper emotional connection. Twelve respondents (19%) were classified in the high category, reflecting consistent and strong verbal expressions of affection toward their partners. In contrast, seven respondents (11.1%) were placed in the low category, indicating limited verbal expressions of affection within their marital relationships. These findings highlight the importance of directing greater attention toward couples in the low category to improve emotional communication.

Analysis of response patterns further shows that approximately 61.9% of husbands regularly expressed affection toward their wives, while 52.4% provided verbal comfort. Additionally, 57.1% of respondents reported giving praise to their husbands. However, a portion of respondents stated that their husbands never offered verbal praise or comfort, and some reported never receiving verbal expressions of affection at all. These findings suggest that, although verbal expressions of affection occur with some regularity, their effectiveness in strengthening emotional bonds between family members remains suboptimal. Enhancing the quality of verbal communication within families is therefore essential to fostering more harmonious and emotionally connected relationships between spouses and among other family members.

Table 1. Crosstab of Verbal Affection Index Categories by Age at Marriage, Wife's Occupation, and Family Size

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | |  | |  | | **Index Category** | | |  |
| Low | | | Medium | | | High | |
| n | % | | n | | % | n | % |
| Age at Marriage | Below Age According to BKKBN | 4 | 6.35 | | 34 | | 53.97 | 7 | 11.11 |
| Above Age According to BKKBN | 3 | 4.76 | | 10 | | 15.87 | 5 | 7.94 |
| Wife's Occupation | Not Working | 6 | 9.52 | | 19 | | 30.16 | 10 | 15.87 |
|  | Working | 1 | 1.59 | | 25 | | 38.68 | 2 | 3.17 |
| Family Size | Small Family | 2 | 3.17 | | 22 | | 34.92 | 2 | 3.17 |
|  | Medium Family | 3 | 4.76 | | 17 | | 26.98 | 5 | 7.94 |
|  | Large Family | 2 | 3.17 | | 5 | | 7.94 | 0 | 0.00 |
| **Total** | | **7** | **11.2** | | **44** | | **69.8** | **12** | **19** |

The analysis of verbal affection by age at marriage shows that the majority of respondents—whether married below or above the ideal age recommended by the National Population and Family Planning Board (BKKBN)—fell into the medium verbal affection category. Of the 63 respondents, 44 individuals (69.84%) were in the moderate category, comprising 34 who married below the BKKBN-recommended age and 10 who married above it. These results suggest that age at marriage, whether earlier or later than the BKKBN guideline, does not have a dominant effect on the frequency or intensity of verbal affection within marital relationships.

Regarding wives’ occupations, both working and non-working wives were predominantly in the medium verbal affection category. Among the 44 respondents (69.84%) in this category, 19 were non-working wives and 25 were working wives. Notably, non-working wives were more likely to fall into the high verbal affection category (10 individuals) compared to working wives (2 individuals). Conversely, low verbal affection was more common among non-working wives (6 individuals) than among working wives (1 individual). These findings indicate that a wife’s employment status does not have a straightforward, linear relationship with verbal affection levels; however, there is a tendency for non-working wives to express higher levels of verbal affection.

In terms of family size, couples from both small and medium-sized families were most often in the medium verbal affection category, with 22 and 17 respondents, respectively. High verbal affection was predominantly found in small families (9 respondents), whereas no respondents from large families fell into the high category. This suggests that verbal expressions of affection are more consistently maintained and expressed in smaller families, whereas in larger families, such expressions may diminish, possibly due to increased caregiving demands or the greater complexity of family dynamics.

**Husband-Wife Interaction**

The majority of respondents were in the medium category for husband–wife interaction, with 46 individuals (73%). This indicates that most couples demonstrate a moderate level of interaction quality, reflecting generally positive engagement, though with potential for enhancement. Fourteen respondents (22.2%) were in the high category, indicating strong and consistent interaction patterns within their marital relationships, while three respondents (4.8%) fell into the low category, suggesting limited interaction quality. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions to strengthen communication and relational engagement among couples with low interaction levels.

In terms of specific behaviors, more than half of respondents (61.95%) reported making efforts to spend time with their husbands, and 52.4% expressed enjoyment in assisting their husbands with work or solving problems together. However, challenges remain: 25.4% of respondents admitted to raising their voices at their husbands, and 22.2% reported avoiding interaction altogether at times. These results reveal imbalances in interaction quality that warrant attention. Overall, the study highlights significant opportunities to improve both the quality and quantity of verbal and non-verbal interactions between spouses, with the aim of fostering stronger relationships, creating a more harmonious marital atmosphere, and deepening emotional bonds.

Table 2. Crosstab of husband-wife interaction Index Categories by Age at Marriage, Wife's Occupation, and Family Size

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | |  | |  | | **Index Category** | | |  |
| Low | | | Medium | | | High | |
| n | % | | n | | % | n | % |
| Age at Marriage | Below Age According to BKKBN | 3 | 4.67 | | 31 | | 49.21 | 11 | 17.46 |
| Above Age According to BKKBN | 0 | 0 | | 15 | | 23.81 | 3 | 4.76 |
| Wife's Occupation | Not Working | 1 | 1.59 | | 25 | | 39.68 | 9 | 14.29 |
|  | Working | 2 | 3.17 | | 21 | | 33.33 | 5 | 7.94 |
| Family Size | Small Family | 2 | 3.17 | | 21 | | 33.33 | 10 | 15.87 |
|  | Medium Family | 1 | 1.59 | | 19 | | 30.16 | 3 | 4.76 |
|  | Large Family | 0 | 0 | | 6 | | 9.52 | 1 | 1.59 |
| **Total** | | **3** | **4.76** | | **46** | | **73.02** | **14** | **22.22** |

The results of the statistical tests indicate that, for both couples married below and above the ideal age recommended by the National Population and Family Planning Board (BKKBN), the majority exhibited a moderate level of husband–wife interaction. Only a small number of respondents were in the low (3 individuals) and high (14 individuals) interaction categories. This suggests that age at marriage—whether earlier or later than the BKKBN guideline—does not substantially influence the likelihood of maintaining a moderate level of spousal interaction.

Similarly, the statistical analysis shows that both working and non-working wives were predominantly in the moderate interaction category. Of the 63 respondents, 46 (73.02%) reported moderate interaction, comprising 25 non-working wives and 21 working wives. Far fewer respondents fell into the low or high interaction categories. These findings indicate that a wife’s employment status is not a primary determinant of husband–wife interaction quality, as moderate interaction levels were prevalent among both working and non-working wives.

Crosstabulation results further reveal that most couples from both small and medium-sized families reported moderate levels of interaction. This suggests that family size may influence patterns of spousal interaction, with small and medium-sized families more likely to sustain moderate interaction levels compared to large families.

**Psychological Well-being**

The results indicate that the majority of respondents fell into the high category of psychological well-being, totaling 41 individuals (65.1%). This suggests that most respondents experience a strong sense of well-being, characterized by positive psychological functioning and life satisfaction. A further 16 respondents (25.4%) were classified in the medium category, indicating a moderate level of psychological well-being, with certain aspects of mental and emotional health potentially requiring enhancement. Meanwhile, 6 respondents (9.5%) were in the low category, reflecting comparatively lower levels of psychological well-being. These findings underscore the importance of targeted interventions aimed at improving mental health and overall life satisfaction among individuals in this group.

Overall, the results show that more than half of the respondents report a high level of psychological well-being, reflecting generally favorable emotional, mental, and psychological conditions. This suggests that many family members feel safe, stable, and happy in their daily lives, and are able to cope with psychological challenges with adequate resilience. The distribution of responses reveals that over half (52.4%) perceive themselves as having high well-being in terms of family harmony and fulfillment of spousal roles and responsibilities. However, despite the generally high overall level of well-being, certain aspects—such as the role of individuals within the community and the comfort and environmental quality of the home—still indicate lower levels of well-being and warrant further attention.

Table 3. Crosstab of psychological well-being Index Categories by Age at Marriage, Wife's Occupation, and Family Size

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | |  | |  | | **Index Category** | | |  |
| Low | | | Medium | | | High | |
| n | % | | n | | % | n | % |
| Age at Marriage | Below Age According to BKKBN | 5 | 7.94 | | 13 | | 20.63 | 27 | 42.86 |
| Above Age According to BKKBN | 1 | 1.59 | | 3 | | 4.76 | 16 | 24.40 |
| Wife's Occupation | Not Working | 5 | 7.94 | | 11 | | 17.46 | 19 | 30.16 |
|  | Working | 1 | 1.59 | | 5 | | 7.94 | 22 | 24.92 |
| Family Size | Small Family | 3 | 4.76 | | 11 | | 17.46 | 19 | 30.16 |
|  | Medium Family | 3 | 4.76 | | 5 | | 7.94 | 15 | 23.81 |
|  | Large Family | 0 | 0 | | 0 | | 0 | 7 | 11.11 |
| **Home Ownership** | Owned by Others | 1 | 1.59 | | 2 | | 3.17 | 8 | 12.70 |
| Owned by Others | 5 | 7.94 | | 13 | | 20.63 | 33 | 52.38 |
| **Boat Ownership** | Owned by Others | 3 | 4.76 | | 8 | | 12.70 | 24 | 38.10 |
| Privately Owned | 3 | 4.76 | | 8 | | 12.70 | 7 | 11.11 |
| Total | | 6 | 9.52 | | 16 | | 25.40 | 41 | 65.08 |

The statistical test results indicate that the majority of respondents who married below the ideal age set by the National Population and Family Planning Board (BKKBN) were in the high (n = 27) and medium (n = 13) psychological well-being categories. Those who married above the ideal age also contributed to the high well-being group (n = 14), albeit in smaller numbers. Overall, early marriage appears to be more prevalent in the sample; however, both age groups are represented within the high psychological well-being category, suggesting that age at marriage, whether below or above the BKKBN recommendation, is not a decisive determinant of psychological well-being.

The statistical analysis further reveals that within the high psychological well-being category, the distribution between respondents with working wives (n = 22) and non-working wives (n = 19) is relatively balanced. This indicates that the wife’s employment status is not strongly correlated with the husband’s psychological well-being, although there is a slightly higher proportion of working wives in the high well-being group.

In terms of family size, high psychological well-being is more frequently observed among respondents from small (n = 19) and medium-sized families (n = 15), and less common among those from large families (n = 7). This pattern suggests that a smaller number of family members tends to be associated with higher psychological well-being, possibly due to reduced economic and caregiving burdens.

Regarding home ownership, 51 respondents reported owning their homes, the majority of whom were in the high (n = 33) and medium (n = 13) psychological well-being categories, with only a small number in the low category (n = 5). In contrast, respondents living in houses owned by others were more likely to be in the low or medium categories, indicating that home ownership may contribute positively to psychological well-being.

However, a different trend emerges in relation to boat ownership. The majority of respondents in the high psychological well-being category used boats owned by others (n = 24), while fewer came from those who owned their own boats (n = 7). This finding suggests that ownership of productive assets, such as boats, does not necessarily correspond to higher psychological well-being in this context, and that other factors—such as access to resources, maintenance costs, or shared operational arrangements—may play a more critical role.

**The** **Effect of Verbal Affection, Verbal Violence, and Husband-Wife Interaction on Psychological Well-Being**

The statistical test results indicate that husband–wife interaction and the number of family members have a significant positive influence on psychological well-being. In this study, the Adjusted R Square value was 0.161, suggesting that the examined variables explain 16.1% of the variance in psychological well-being. This underscores the role of interpersonal relationships and family dynamics in shaping individual psychological outcomes. The detailed results of the influence tests are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Test of the Effect of Verbal Affection, Verbal Violence, and Husband-Wife Interaction on Psychological Well-Being

| Variable | Family Wellbeing | | Sig |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The sig coefficient is not standardized β | Standardized coefficient β |
| Married Age | -0,007 | -0,002 | 0,987 |
| Number of Family Members | 2.566 | 0,346 | 0,019\* |
| Production | 0,061 | 0,057 | 0,161 |
| Husband's Age | -0,965 | -0,547 | 0,192 |
| Wife's Age | 0,964 | 0,463 | 0,659 |
| Husband and Wife Interaction | 0,734 | 0,380 | 0,003\*\* |
| Verbal Communication of Affection | 0,235 | 0,186 | 0,187 |
| Adjusted R Squared = 0.161  F = 2,705  Sig = 0.017 | | | |

# Dıscussıon

The data shows that the majority of couples, both those married below and above the ideal age The findings reveal that the majority of couples—whether married below or above the ideal age recommended by the National Population and Family Planning Board (BKKBN)—demonstrate moderate levels of husband–wife interaction. This suggests that age at marriage is not a direct determinant of marital interaction quality. Nonetheless, studies such as Fitriani and Lestari (2021) have shown that early marriage can negatively affect household harmony, largely due to limited emotional maturity and psychological readiness at younger ages, which may compromise marital stability.

In terms of the wife’s employment status, both working and non-working wives were predominantly in the moderate interaction category, indicating no significant effect on the quality of marital interaction. However, Ramadhani and Syahputri (2020) note that working wives may face challenges in balancing work responsibilities and family obligations. Without effective time management, these pressures may create a “double burden” that undermines marital harmony.

With respect to family size, small and medium-sized families tended to have moderate levels of husband–wife interaction, whereas larger families more frequently exhibited low interaction levels. This aligns with Pratiwi (2022), who reported a significant negative association between family size and marital interaction quality. A greater number of family members often divides a couple’s attention and energy, thereby reducing the intensity and quality of communication.

Regarding verbal expressions of affection, the study found that most couples—regardless of whether they married below or above the BKKBN’s ideal age—fell into the moderate category. This indicates that marital age does not directly determine the quality of affectionate verbal communication. Wati and Fitriyani (2023) similarly observed that couples marrying at a young age often face communication and emotional expression challenges that may affect household harmony.

In terms of the wife’s occupation, both working and non-working wives demonstrated moderate levels of verbal affection, although non-working wives more frequently fell into the high category. This finding is consistent with Aulia and Wardani (2022), who reported that non-working wives tend to have more time to engage in positive emotional communication with their spouses. Conversely, occupational demands and time constraints can limit verbal communication among working couples.

Family size also influences affectionate communication, with small and medium families more often in the moderate and high categories, while large families were concentrated in the moderate and low categories. Wati and Fitriyani (2023) also highlighted that larger families face greater challenges in sustaining effective spousal communication.

In the socio-economic context, fishing households remain far from prosperous (Andari, 2022). Common constraints include limited assets, weak capital structures, low bargaining power in accessing justice and economic resources, and restricted market and technological access (Cahaya, 2015). Pradnyani and Sanjaya (2024) note that although fishermen have attempted various strategies to improve family welfare, some approaches have been misguided, resulting in dependency on external parties and further weakening their position. This dependency is evident in this study, as nearly half of the respondents reported using fishing boats owned by others.

Fishing communities, still bound by traditional lifestyles, face complex problems compounded by limited resources and persistent uncertainty (Fitriah et al., 2022). One crucial factor for improving their welfare is access to adequate fishing equipment. As Pradnyani and Sanjaya (2024) explain, simple fishing gear restricts fishermen to nearshore waters, limiting their catch potential and, consequently, their income. The use of advanced technology could therefore enhance productivity and improve household earnings.

The present study confirms that husband–wife interaction significantly influences psychological well-being, a finding consistent with Nadhifah et al. (2021), who emphasized the importance of marital relationship quality for physical and mental well-being. However, in the families studied, spousal interaction was often suboptimal due to ineffective communication, including tendencies for one partner to avoid discussion. Effective marital communication fosters mutual understanding, respect, trust, and affection, all of which are essential for family harmony (Syamsuddin et al., 2023).

Although verbal expressions of affection were generally at a moderate level, there remains scope for improvement. In-depth interviews revealed that some couples rarely expressed affection due to ongoing conflicts and tensions. Communication dominated by verbal or physical aggression increases the risk of unhealthy interactions, fostering prejudice, misunderstanding, and mistrust (Lie et al., 2024). Thus, cultivating affectionate communication is critical for strengthening family relationships and promoting psychological well-being. Rizkillah et al. (2025) also found that positive verbal interactions—such as speaking gently and offering compliments—are positively associated with the subjective well-being of fishing families in West Java’s southern coastal areas, even amid economic and environmental pressure.

This study is limited by its relatively small sample size, as it forms part of a broader research project. Consequently, the findings should be considered exploratory and not generalizable. Future studies with larger and more diverse samples are needed to validate these results and provide deeper insights into spousal interaction dynamics.

**Conclusion**

The findings suggest that, in the studied families, the economic role predominantly rests with the husband, as approximately half of the wives do not engage in paid work. Moreover, most couples have only completed basic education (primary school or equivalent), which may constrain opportunities and quality of life. While home ownership is relatively common, more than half of the fishermen rely on boats owned by others, reflecting limited asset ownership.

In terms of family communication, verbal expressions of affection remain moderate, and spousal interactions—though present—often lack optimal quality, sometimes involving raised voices or avoidance behaviors. Nevertheless, psychological well-being among respondents was generally high, indicating resilience and emotional stability despite socio-economic constraints.

Statistical analysis confirmed that husband–wife interaction and family size significantly affect psychological well-being, though they account for only 16.1% of its variance. These results highlight the need to strengthen communication, interaction quality, and social well-being within fishing families. Practical strategies include enhancing effective communication skills, providing wives with creative economic training to supplement household income, and expanding government support for mental health services, financial literacy programs, and access to business capital. Partnerships with non-governmental organizations and marine-sector enterprises can further assist by providing training, mentoring, and cooperative programs to improve both fishing productivity and household welfare.

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