

ABSTRACT

Students, especially those in a new environment such as Telkom University, often face stress due to loneliness. This condition can disrupt mental health and hinder their ability to interact socially. This study aims to understand how Telkom University students build interpersonal communication as a strategy to overcome stress due to loneliness. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study of four students who experience or have experienced stress due to loneliness. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and observations, then analyzed using interpersonal communication theory and relationship maintenance theory.

The results showed that students used various interpersonal communication strategies to overcome stress due to loneliness. These strategies include: 1) Initiating contact with others, both directly and indirectly; 2) Increasing involvement in relationships through shared activities, sharing stories, and providing support; 3) Building intimacy and trust through openness, honesty, and mutual respect; 4) Overcoming conflicts and disputes with open communication and finding solutions together; 5) Dealing with breakups through self-introspection, seeking social support, and doing fun activities. In addition, students also use relationship maintenance strategies, such as maintaining a positive attitude, openness, providing reassurance, spending time together, using humor, expanding social networks, sharing tasks, and utilizing communication technology.

This study concludes that interpersonal communication plays an important role in helping students cope with stress due to loneliness. By understanding the stages of interpersonal communication and implementing appropriate relationship maintenance strategies, students can build and maintain positive and supportive relationships, which can ultimately improve their mental health and psychological well-being.

Keywords: Interpersonal Communication, Stress, Loneliness, Telkom University Students, Relational Maintenance.