

## Islamic Communication Approach in Managing Cross-Cultural Challenges Among Residents and Migrants in Aceh

Rusli<sup>1</sup>, Asnaiyati<sup>2</sup>, Angraini Ramli<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institut Agama Islam Negeri Langsa, Indonesia; rusli@iainlangsa.ac.id

<sup>2</sup> Institut Agama Islam Negeri Langsa, Indonesia; asnaiyati@iainlangsa.ac.id

<sup>3</sup> International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia; ramli.angraini@live.iium.edu.my

Received: 16/10/2024

Revised: 14/12/2024

Accepted: 30/12/2024

### Abstract

Cross-cultural communication often presents significant challenges in multicultural rural areas, such as Aceh Timur, where residents and migrants interact within the same community. These challenges frequently give rise to misunderstandings and social tensions stemming from differences in cultural norms and language barriers. This study explores the primary obstacles to effective communication, examines their impact on social harmony, and proposes strategies to enhance mutual understanding and foster peaceful coexistence. The research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing methods such as in-depth interviews and participant observation. Interviews are used to gather direct perspectives from respondents, while participant observation helps to understand social interactions in their natural context. Data analysis reveals recurring themes and underlying factors that shape communication dynamics. From an Islamic communication perspective, shared religious values are a strong foundation for mutual respect and understanding. However, differences in cultural traditions, social norms, and language use often challenge implementing Islamic principles such as tolerance (*tasamuh*) and unity (*wahdah*). Misaligned expectations regarding social etiquette frequently lead to misunderstandings, conflicts in resolving disputes, and communication difficulties tied to language diversity. Nevertheless, initiatives rooted in Islamic communication ethics—such as cultural exchange programs emphasizing *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) and inclusive forums modeled on *shura* (mutual consultation)—have proven effective in strengthening relationships and reducing tensions. This study highlights the importance of integrating Islamic principles into community-led efforts to address cross-cultural communication issues.

### Keywords

Cross-cultural communication; Islam; Muslim Community

### Corresponding Author

Rusli

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Langsa, Indonesia; rusli@iainlangsa.ac.id

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, intercultural interactions have become increasingly complex, particularly in regions with multicultural communities. One such region is Buket Tufah in East Aceh, which comprises residents with strong cultural traditions and migrants with diverse cultural values.



© 2024 by the authors. Open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY NC) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Buket Tufah is a village in Darul Falah Subdistrict, East Aceh Regency. Initially, it was a hamlet within Ulee Gajah Village in the same subdistrict. In the 1930s, the hamlet was separated from Ulee Gajah Village due to its relatively large area compared to other villages. Following this separation, it officially became a village. Currently, it consists of 45 households with a total population of 155 people, divided into two hamlets: Sentosa Hamlet, which has 87 residents, and Meudang Ara Hamlet, with 79 residents. The villagers have unique customs and traditions that distinguish them from neighboring communities. One notable tradition is the restriction on who can run for official positions, such as the village head, secretary, treasurer, and hamlet leaders, as only native residents are eligible (Dewi et al., 2022).

The residents of Buket Tufah consist of various ethnic groups, including Javanese, Acehnese, Malay, Batak, and Bugis, which create unique dynamics in communication and add cultural richness to daily interactions. In this context, intercultural communication is vital in fostering social harmony and preventing conflict (Pohan et al., 2024; Fahzaria et al., 2024). However, cultural, values, and language differences often challenge establishing mutual understanding. Buket Tufah Village, located in East Aceh, is a tangible example of how intercultural interactions can present challenges and opportunities for fostering social cohesion within a Muslim community. This issue is particularly relevant as the success of intercultural communication directly impacts the social and economic well-being of the community, including the stability and development of the village (Ting-Toomey, 1994).

Although intercultural communication holds the potential to promote social inclusion, its implementation is not always seamless in practice. (Zhang, 2024). Differences in cultural expressions, norms, communication styles, and social expectations often lead to misunderstandings between local residents and migrants. (Naim, 2024). This situation can lead to social tensions, discrimination, and even open conflict if not addressed properly. The primary issue in Buket Tufah Village, East Aceh, is the lack of understanding and adaptation to cultural differences. Residents sometimes feel that the presence of migrants threatens their culture, while migrants find it challenging to adjust to the unwritten social norms of the local community. Consequently, social segregation emerges, hindering healthy interactions. This issue requires an approach that addresses its root causes and provides contextual and sustainable solutions (Hofstede et al., 2010).

A literature review indicates that intercultural communication issues have become a major focus in global research. For instance, studies by Gudykunst and Kim (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003) emphasize the importance of intercultural communication competence in addressing cultural differences. Hofstede's research (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003) on cultural dimensions provides insights into how cultural variations influence communication behaviors.

Ting-Toomey's work (Ting-Toomey, 1994) on face negotiation theory explores the dynamics of

respect and social relationships in intercultural interactions, particularly relevant in multicultural communities. Recent studies, such as those by Hassan Bedel Khalif (Bedel Khalif, 2023) have shifted the focus to the role of media in conflict resolution and management in Somalia, especially in contexts involving diverse actors such as warlords, moderate Islamists, extremists like Al-Shabab, and the federal government. His research highlights how local stations in Somalia actively promote peace journalism, effectively reducing tensions in various regions. This approach contrasts with many other studies that focus on media's role in exacerbating conflicts or sensationalizing news. By emphasizing peace journalism, Khalif's work introduces a new dimension to understanding how media can be harnessed to foster understanding and tolerance among conflicting groups.

Wang Siqin's research (Wang et al., 2023) focuses on analyzing changes in ethnic diversity in Australia from 2001 to 2021 using spatial and temporal approaches. The study concentrates on two main aspects: first, the changes in the levels of ethnic diversity in Australia over two decades, measured using Shannon's diversity index across five national census datasets (2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021) at various spatial scales, such as the smallest census units, major cities, rural areas, and states. Second, it explores the relationship between levels of ethnic diversity and the characteristics of migrants' residential environments, including demographic, socio-economic, and housing features, as well as how these factors have evolved. This body of research provides a strong theoretical foundation for understanding intercultural communication challenges in Buket Tufah Village. However, previous studies have predominantly focused on global, urban, or formal institutional contexts, leaving a gap in examining how intercultural communication dynamics unfold in rural Muslim communities, particularly in Aceh, a region with distinctive cultural and religious characteristics. Moreover, practical approaches rooted in local and religious values have rarely been integrated with modern intercultural communication theories. In contrast, this study specifically explores intercultural interactions in the rural context of East Aceh, paying close attention to how local traditions and shared religious values serve as foundations or challenges in fostering social harmony. Additionally, the research aims to provide more contextually relevant recommendations for policy-making and community development in similar regions.

Research on communication models in post-conflict societies in Aceh, particularly in villages like Buket Tufah, is crucial, as post-conflict communities often face significant challenges in rebuilding fractured social relationships. This research can help explore how communication can be used to repair the relationships between individuals and groups divided during the conflict and encourage reconciliation among different ethnic groups. This study offers a novel contribution by exploring intercultural communication interactions within rural Muslim communities, a context that has received limited attention in previous literature. Furthermore, it integrates local cultural approaches

with global communication theories to develop contextually relevant strategies. The significance of this research lies in its practical contribution to providing solutions for local communities to address intercultural communication challenges while strengthening social cohesion and harmony in culturally diverse environments. The findings of this study are expected to serve as a reference for policymakers and community leaders in designing programs that support social sustainability in multicultural villages.

## **2. METHODS**

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design to explore and describe the dynamics of intercultural communication between local residents and migrants in Buket Tufah Village, Darul Falah Subdistrict, East Aceh Regency. This study adopts a case study approach, focusing primarily on social interactions and communication between two culturally distinct groups within a local context. An anthropological lens is also employed to better understand cultural differences, social norms, and values that influence communication between the local community and migrants (Creswell, 2009). This study's primary data sources consist of primary and secondary data (Patton, 2014). The primary data were collected through in-depth **interviews** with both residents and migrants living in Buket Tufah Village, conducted individually and in groups, to understand their experiences in intercultural interactions.

In-depth interviews are crucial for this research in Buket Tufah, East Aceh, as they provide a deeper insight into the residents' local dynamics and communication practices. The village is home to a diverse mix of ethnic groups, including Javanese, Acehnese, Malay, Batak, and Bugis, and in-depth interviews allow for a closer look at how these groups interact and communicate. By speaking directly with individuals, the researcher can uncover personal experiences, local customs, and the unique challenges of living in such a culturally varied community. These interviews also offer an opportunity to explore how residents view issues like identity, social roles, and community bonds. The personal, open-ended nature of in-depth interviews allows for a more nuanced understanding of communication in Buket Tufah, which may not be captured through surveys or other research methods. Secondary data were obtained through documentation, which included information on migration history, village demographic data, and relevant literature on intercultural communication theories within a broader context, particularly in East Aceh.

The data collection methods used in this study include in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis (Yin, 2003). In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the residents' direct perspectives on their interactions with other cultural groups. At the same time, participatory observation allowed the researcher to observe how intercultural communication

naturally occurs in everyday life.

The collected data will be analyzed using thematic analysis, where interview and observation data will be categorized based on themes relevant to intercultural communication. The process will be carried out to identify communication patterns emerging between the local community and migrants, which will then be interpreted within the social and cultural context of Buket Tufah Village. The results of this analysis will be presented in a narrative form, depicting the dynamics of intercultural communication and the challenges and opportunities faced by both groups in their interactions, contributing to a deeper understanding of intercultural communication in rural areas (Silverman, 2016).

### **3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **3.1. Building Harmonious Interactions: Exploring Communication Practices in East Aceh Communities**

The communication patterns within a society reflect the way of life and values its members uphold. Daily, communities use verbal and nonverbal communication to build relationships and resolve issues (Riyanto\* & Handari, 2024). Verbal communication, such as face-to-face conversations, discussions, or speeches, conveys messages clearly and openly. Meanwhile, nonverbal communication, through body movements, facial expressions, or tone of voice, often serves as a marker of emotions that reinforces the message's meaning (McDuffie, 2021); (Boer et al., 2013). These communication patterns are strongly influenced by the customs and norms prevailing in society (Siregar et al., 2024) (Vioresa & Lumban, 2024; Dharmayanti et al., 2024).

As time progresses, communication patterns in society continue to evolve in response to technological advancements and social dynamics (Sevignani, 2024) (Tkalac Verčič et al., 2024); the presence of social media, instant messaging applications, and other digital platforms has made it easier for people to communicate without the constraints of time and distance (Coll-Rubio & Carbonell, 2024)).

The community in East Aceh has a communication pattern shaped by its multicultural society. This region has various occupations that reflect its unique economic and social structure. The largest group consists of housewives, totaling 45 individuals. This indicates that domestic roles still dominate society, even though they are not directly oriented towards economic income. Additionally, the agricultural sector plays a significant role, with 21 people working as farmers and 11 as plantation workers. Nearly 40% of the population relies on this sector, highlighting the importance of agricultural and plantation activities in supporting the community's economy.

In addition to domestic and agricultural work, other groups represent the formal sector and independent businesses. A total of 11 people work as civil servants, reflecting the presence of stable-income jobs with respected social status. Meanwhile, 19 individuals have chosen to become entrepreneurs, indicating a diversity of independent businesses such as trade and local services. These data illustrate a heterogeneous economic structure, where traditional occupations still dominate, but modern elements are also emerging. To foster progress, efforts should be made to develop the agricultural sector through technology, empower housewives who wish to contribute further, and provide skill training to expand opportunities in the formal sector and entrepreneurship.

The interviews conducted by the researcher provide an overview of the types of communication used in the Buket Tufah Village, Darul Falah District, East Aceh Regency community. The communication practices in this village are divided into two main types: interpersonal communication and group communication. Interpersonal communication occurs between two individuals, while group communication is more complex and involves more than two people. However, this village's most commonly used form of communication is small-group communication, which involves three to several individuals. Large-group communication involving more than five people is only conducted during specific events, such as religious sermons or study sessions to commemorate religious holidays, like the Prophet Muhammad's birthday celebration. This indicates that while both forms of communication exist, small-group communication is more dominant in the community's daily life.

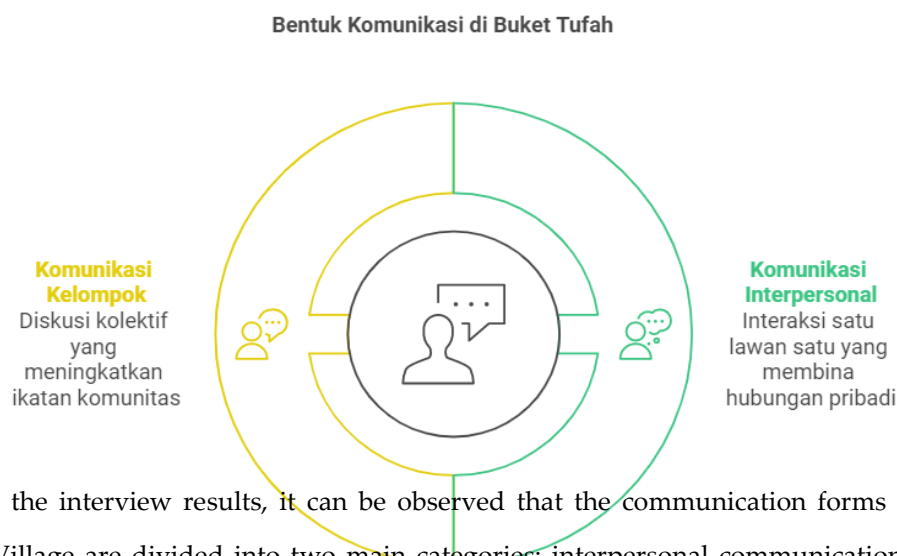
In further interviews, it was explained that in daily interactions, the community of this village generally uses two forms of communication: interpersonal and group communication. The most common form of interpersonal communication is conversation between two individuals. On the other hand, group communication occurs when more than two individuals are involved in a conversation. While small-group communication is frequently practiced, there are also instances of large-group communication involving five to twenty people, particularly during specific events such as regular study sessions at the study hall, where the congregation discusses the content of religious texts explained by the religious leader (Tengku).

In addition, regarding the language used, most of the community in Buket Tufah Village communicates in Acehnese, in line with their ethnic background. However, Indonesian is also used, although it is generally more limited by the younger generation or children attending school. According to interviews with informants, Acehnese is more dominant because it is the mother tongue for most of the village's population. At the same time, the use of Indonesian is rarer and confined to certain groups. In everyday communication, Acehnese is spoken with the distinct accent of East Aceh, reinforcing local identity. Based on the interviews, several communication barriers were identified in social interactions within the Buket Tufah community. The main challenge lies in the execution of joint

activities, such as the commemoration of Maulid and cooperation events, where although interpersonal interactions are generally good, the execution of these events is often suboptimal. For example, at a cooperation event, only about six people attended, indicating a lack of participation from the community. Additionally, misunderstandings between locals and migrants were recorded, stemming from a lack of communication and reluctance to listen to each other's opinions, which led to conflicts. This illustrates that while interpersonal interactions may be smooth, effective communication in executing activities is often hindered.

Furthermore, communication barriers are also influenced by the egos of individuals (Rasyid et al., 2020). The local community and migrants do not listen to each other, which causes tension and a lack of unity. Although there are some personal differences, the culture in this village remains preserved without significant distinctions between the local community and migrants. Both groups adhere to the cultural practices inherited from their ancestors, including events such as weddings and the Peusijek tradition, which involve wearing traditional Acehese attire and using seven types of trees.

Figure 1. The Communication Forms of the Buket Tufah Community in East Aceh



Based on the interview results, it can be observed that the communication forms practiced in Buket Tufah Village are divided into two main categories: interpersonal communication and group communication. Group communication is divided into two types: small-group communication, involving three to five individuals, and large-group communication, involving more than five people. The form most frequently used by the villagers is small-group communication, which occurs in more informal social contexts, such as when gathering at a resident's home to discuss specific topics. Although large-group communication does occur, it is primarily used during formal events such as religious study sessions and sermons. In this context, the community tends to use small-group communication more often, fostering closer social relationships between individuals.

The communication barriers found in Buket Tufah Village can be categorized into several factors, including high ego on both sides, a lack of willingness to listen to each other, and disunity in implementing joint activities (M. Nur, personal communication, 2024). Additionally, there is a sense of discomfort felt by the migrant community, who feel marginalized in important village decisions. The local community, on the other hand, is concerned that migrants may dominate the village in terms of positions and social influence. Despite these challenges, there are no significant cultural differences between the local community and the migrants, as both groups continue to uphold and follow the cultural traditions inherited from their ancestors.

### **3.2 The Communication Patterns of the Buket Tufah Community in East Aceh: An Islamic Communication Approach**

Interpersonal communication often occurs between individuals, while group communication involves more than two people. In daily life, small-group communication is more dominant, with participants typically ranging from three to five individuals. Large-group communication involving more than five people only takes place during specific events, such as regular study sessions or religious holiday commemorations. While both forms of communication exist, small-group communication is more frequently used in everyday life.

In analyzing this phenomenon through intercultural communication theory, we can relate it to convergence theory and cultural communication theory. Convergence theory, developed by William Gudykunst, explains how individuals from different cultures seek to reduce differences and increase mutual understanding. Despite frequent misunderstandings between the locals and the migrants, both groups try to adapt to each other to engage in more harmonious social interactions. Meanwhile, cultural communication theory emphasizes the importance of culture in the communication process. In Buket Tufah Village, despite the differences between the local community and the migrants, both groups follow the same culture, namely the Acehese inherited from their ancestors. This demonstrates that, despite differences in origin, the shared culture serves as a common foundation for communication.

In terms of communication models, the community uses two main models in this village. The linear communication model is evident in formal communication, such as during lectures or religious study sessions held by religious leaders, where the message is transmitted from the speaker to the congregation with minimal direct interaction. Communication is mostly one-way, although there may be opportunities for questions, the speaker delivers most of the message. On the other hand, the interactive communication model is more commonly found in small-group communication. When individuals gather, they exchange opinions or discuss existing issues, where feedback becomes an



important part of the communication process. This indicates that interactive communication occurs more frequently in informal social contexts and involves active participation from all parties involved.

In a multicultural community like Buket Tufah Village, effective intercultural communication is essential for strengthening relationships between groups with different cultural backgrounds. Buket Tufah, East Aceh, is where various cultures meet, with a community consisting of Acehnese, Javanese, Malay, Batak, and Bugis ethnicities. The Acehnese community is strongly influenced by Islamic values, with traditions such as the Saman dance and customary deliberations. The Javanese prioritize manners in communication, with strong traditions of gamelan music and batik. The Malay people uphold the values of cooperation and politeness, with wedding customs as a significant tradition. The Batak are known for their direct communication style and traditional ceremonies such as the siraman darah, emphasizing the importance of extended family. The Bugis, with their maritime culture and entrepreneurial spirit, value hard work, mutual respect, and traditional clothing such as the baju bodo. These cultural differences create a rich social dynamic in Buket Tufah, where mutual respect and cooperation between ethnic groups are key to living together harmoniously.

One aspect that needs attention is respect for cultural diversity. The local community, despite the differences between the locals and migrants, can strengthen their intercultural relationships by appreciating the existing cultural differences. This can be achieved by recognizing and respecting the cultural values of each group. In this way, the local community and migrants can create better communication and reduce tensions arising from these differences. Furthermore, clear and open communication is also crucial to avoid misunderstandings. For intercultural communication to be more effective, both parties need to convey their messages openly and listen carefully to each other.

In effective intercultural communication, adapting and flexibility are also essential (Widiyanarti et al., 2024). Migrant communities need to adapt to the norms and values established in the village, while the local community must also be open to the differences brought by the migrants (Yusup et al., 2024). This adaptation is crucial for ensuring smooth communication and maintaining strong relationships between the different community groups (Muhtarom et al., 2024). One of the common challenges faced in multicultural societies is conflict resolution. Conflicts often arise due to differences in perspectives or misunderstandings, but it is crucial to address conflicts constructively. In this regard, it is important for the community to openly discuss existing issues, seek collective solutions, and avoid attitudes that prioritize personal ego. Despite their differences, this approach will foster more harmonious relationships among community members. (Putri et al., 2024).

The use of appropriate communication media is also a crucial factor in creating effective intercultural communication. In the community of Buket Tufah Village, media such as village meetings, religious study sessions, or even social media can serve as channels to unite the community

and reduce misunderstandings (A. Mardhiah, personal communication, 2024). Using the appropriate media can convey messages more effectively, and the community can better understand one another, regardless of their cultural backgrounds (Macnamara & Zerfass, 2012). The use of these media is important for strengthening communication within the community and educating the public on the importance of effective intercultural communication.

To deepen the analysis of intercultural communication in Buket Tufah Village, we can further explore the dynamics of the relationship between the local community and migrants from a broader intercultural communication theory perspective. Intercultural communication is communication between individuals or groups with different cultural backgrounds (Rahmah et al., 2024). In the context of Buket Tufah Village, the community is divided into two main groups: the local residents who have lived in the village for a long time and the migrants who have recently settled. The culture of the Acehnese community, deeply intertwined with Islamic values such as the Maulid tradition, *mezike*, *gotong royong*, and *salawet*, has been able to bridge the differences between communities of various ethnicities and cultures. Although unified by the same Acehnese culture, the daily life of this village community holds complex dynamics that highlight the importance of understanding and applying intercultural communication theory to reduce friction and improve the quality of social interactions between them.

It is important to emphasize that although the same culture binds both groups, they bring different experiences and values, which can influence how they communicate and interact. One relevant intercultural communication theory is the Cultural Tension Theory, proposed by William Gudykunst (Gudykunst, 20). This theory suggests that tension often arises in intercultural interactions, especially when individuals or groups feel that others do not value or understand their cultural differences. In this context, although the people of Buket Tufah share the same cultural background, the differences between the local community and the migrants often create tensions in communication mismatches, differing perspectives, or even decision-making processes.

As revealed in interviews, the local community in Buket Tufah tends to prioritize the traditional values passed down by their ancestors. They adhere to norms and customs that have become integral to their social identity. Meanwhile, the migrants, although they embrace the local culture in many ways, still bring their distinct cultural backgrounds, which may not always align with the norms or practices accepted by the local community. This can lead to misunderstandings, as the communication between the two groups does not always serve to align their perceptions. For instance, during events like community work or village meetings, tensions often arise due to differing communication styles, although both are technically group communication.

One aspect of intercultural communication that can analyze this dynamic is the concept of high-context and low-context communication, developed by Edward T. Hall. High-context communication relies more on cues, social relationships, and context than direct, explicit messages (Broeder, 2021). Conversely, low-context communication relies more on the explicit and direct delivery of messages (Würtlz, 2005). In the community of Buket Tufah, the local residents tend to prioritize high-context communication, where pre-existing relationships heavily influence everyday social interactions. This is evident in how they communicate during traditional events such as weddings or religious gatherings, where social nuances and the context of relationships between individuals are emphasized. On the other hand, migrants to the village may be more accustomed to low-context communication, which is more direct and focused on delivering clear and straightforward information. This difference can cause misunderstandings, as individuals involved in social interactions may not always grasp the message conveyed through high-context communication without considering the social context involved.

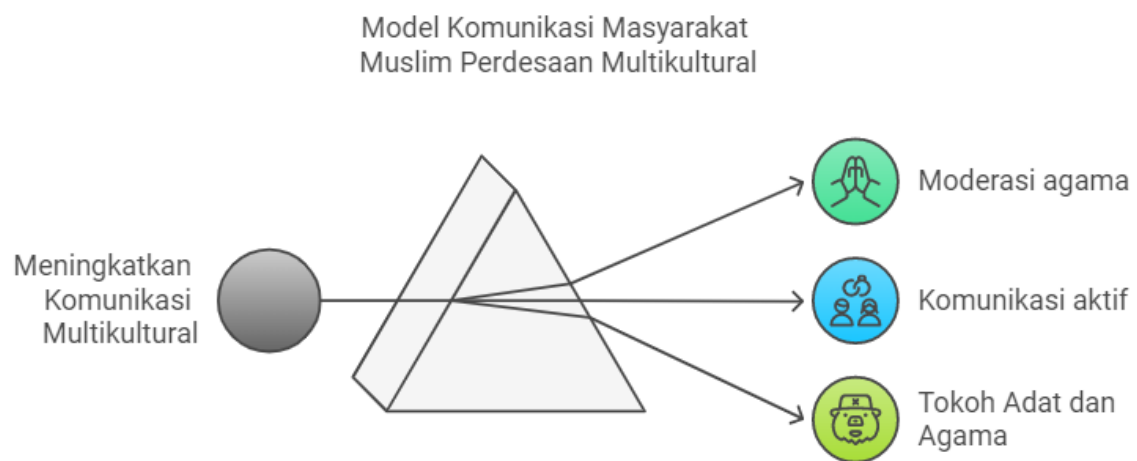
Furthermore, intercultural adaptation theory can also provide insights into how the community of Buket Tufah interacts. This theory focuses on how individuals or groups adjust their behaviors when interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds (Young & Scharntner, 2014). In Buket Tufah Village, both the local community and migrants must adapt to one another to maintain harmonious social relations. The local community, despite feeling entitled to hold key positions in society, such as the Geusyik role, must also accept that migrants bring positive potential, such as new skills or experiences, which can contribute to the development of the village. Conversely, migrants must show respect and understanding for the traditions and customs of the village, such as participating in communal activities and not feeling superior in terms of status or position. In this regard, effective intercultural communication involves a two-way adaptation process, where both parties adjust their behaviors to reduce cultural distance and create more harmonious relationships.

Effective intercultural communication in Buket Tufah Village also requires a more inclusive and participatory approach. As with any community event, whether a village meeting or a traditional ceremony, it is important for all community members to feel that their voices are valued, including those of the migrants. If the local community dominates the conversation or decision-making in every event, the migrants will feel marginalized, which in turn exacerbates tensions between the two groups. By actively involving all parties and ensuring that each individual has an equal opportunity to participate, communication can flow more smoothly, and intergroup relations can become more harmonious. This participation will also strengthen mutual respect and reduce the feeling that one group attempts to dominate the other.

Overall, effective intercultural communication in Buket Tufah Village requires a deep understanding of the cultural values that underpin social interactions in the community. Despite the challenges arising from the cultural background differences between the residents and migrants, inclusive, adaptive, and empathetic communication can help alleviate tensions and foster better relationships between the two groups. In the long run, it is crucial for the community to continuously develop their intercultural communication skills to build a more harmonious environment and reduce potential conflicts that could damage their social relationships.

The effective communication model for the multicultural Muslim community in Buket Tufah Village, applying the Religious Active Communication model, offers a framework that considers the differing aspects of religion, culture, and customs. This model can be illustrated as follows;

Figure 2: Communication Model of the Muslim Community in Buket Tufah Village, East Aceh (Zulkarnain et al., 2023)



The figure illustrates the Communication Model of the Multicultural Rural Muslim Community, which aims to strengthen social relationships within cultural and religious diversity. This model includes three key elements: religious moderation, active communication, and the role of traditional and religious leaders. *First*, religious moderation is the foundation, emphasizing a balanced religious attitude that steers clear of extremism, fostering tolerance and harmony in a diverse community. This approach enables the creation of a shared awareness of the importance of coexisting despite differences in belief. *Second*, active communication is crucial for building open dialogue and sustained interaction. By involving various parties, active communication helps deepen understanding of differences and provides a pathway for peacefully resolving conflicts through deliberation. *Third*, traditional and religious leaders are vital in maintaining social stability. They act as custodians of traditional and religious values and mediators who can unite various groups within the community. Their presence helps bridge cultural and belief differences, ensuring that social relations remain intact.

These three elements are interconnected and work synergistically, as depicted in the pyramid-shaped structure. This approach fosters effective and respectful communication while strengthening social bonds within a multicultural society. Through this model, it is hoped that Muslim communities in diverse rural areas can live in harmony, uphold unity, and respect differences as a shared strength.

In addressing a multicultural society, several principles are needed to build effective communication in Aceh's strong Muslim society based on Islamic teachings, fostering attitudes of moderation and mutual respect. These principles include *tasamuh* (tolerance) and *wahdah* (unity). The principle of *tasamuh* teaches the importance of tolerance in dealing with cultural, traditional, and belief differences within the community. In this model, religious moderation is a tangible implementation of *tasamuh*. A moderate religious attitude helps prevent extremism and encourages respect for existing differences. By valuing diversity, communities can live peacefully, side by side, without conflicts arising from differing viewpoints. The principle of *tasamuh* is also reflected in active communication, where open dialogue and deliberation serve as tools to understand and resolve issues collectively, with respect and understanding.

The principle of *wahdah* complements the concept of *tasamuh* by emphasizing the importance of maintaining unity despite differences. In this model, traditional and religious leaders play a crucial role as unifiers, bridging differences within the community. They are moral exemplars and mediators who help resolve conflicts wisely. The principle of *wahdah* encourages the community to unite under a shared vision: building harmonious and supportive relationships. Active communication also serves as a means to strengthen *wahdah* through dialogue that prioritizes collaboration and a spirit of togetherness. By applying both principles, *tasamuh* and *wahdah*, for unity, this communication model can create a peaceful and harmonious environment, where differences are seen as a shared asset that strengthens the community. These principles align with Islamic teachings and provide practical solutions to the challenges of living in a multicultural society.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Intercultural communication in Buket Tufah Village demonstrates that although the community shares the same cultural background, namely the Acehese culture, differences in the ways of interaction between the residents and the migrants still create challenges in communication. The main obstacle faced is the tension that arises from differences in communication styles and cultural understandings, which can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts in certain situations, such as during joint activities and decision-making at the village level.

Applying intercultural communication theories, such as the cultural tension theory and intercultural adaptation theory, provides an understanding that differences in values and communication practices must be well-managed to foster harmonious relationships. The local

community tends to prioritize high-context communication, and the migrants, who often emphasize low-context communication, frequently struggle to understand each other, exacerbating communication issues. However, emerging conflicts can be minimized by introducing a more inclusive and empathetic intercultural communication approach, where both parties actively listen and appreciate differences. The adaptation process undertaken by both groups, the locals and the migrants, is crucial in creating more open and constructive communication.

Effective intercultural communication in Bukit Tufah Village can be achieved by fostering a deeper understanding of each group's cultural values, promoting open dialogue, and ensuring active participation from all parties in every social activity. In this way, communication will flow more smoothly, misunderstandings can be minimized, and more harmonious relationships can be established among the multicultural community in the village.

## REFERENCES

- Bedel Khalif, H. (2023). The Role of the Media in Conflict Resolution and Management in Somalia. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, 12(8), 40–46. <https://doi.org/10.21275/SR23722160333>
- Boer, M. D., Toni, I., & Willems, R. M. (2013). What drives successful verbal communication? *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2013.00622>
- Broeder, P. (2021). Informed Communication in High Context and Low Context Cultures. *Journal of Education, Innovation, and Communication*, 3(1), 13–24. <https://doi.org/10.34097/jeicom-3-1-june21-1>
- Coll-Rubio, P., & Carbonell, J. M. (2024). Growth Communication Strategies in the Digital Age. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 68(1), 43–55. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00027642221132798>
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2. ed., [Nachdr.]). Sage.
- Dewi, E. S., Abdulai, I., Bracho-Mujica, G., & Rötter, R. P. (2022). Salinity Constraints for Small-Scale Agriculture and Impact on Adaptation in North Aceh, Indonesia. *Agronomy*, 12(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.3390/agronomy12020341>
- Dharmayanti, I. D. A. K. R., D.e, R., & Ananda, I. N. (2024). Pola Komunikasi Dalam Sangkepan Desa Adat Penglipuran Kecamatan Bangli Kabupaten Bangli. *Anubhava: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi HIIndu*, 4(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.25078/anubhava.v4i1.2822>
- Fahzaria, N. A., Suwarsi, S., Fadhila, S. A., & Pebriyanto, W. (2024). Management of Cross-cultural Communication Barriers for Indonesian Migrant Workers in South Korea. *Komunikator*, 16(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.18196/jkm.21112>

- Gudykunst, W. B. (Ed.). (20). *Cross-cultural and intercultural communication* (Repr.). Sage.
- Gudykunst, W. B., & Kim, Y. Y. (2003). *Communicating with strangers: An approach to intercultural communication* (Fourth edition, international edition). McGrawHill.
- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival* (Revised and expanded third edition). McGraw-Hill.
- Macnamara, J., & Zerfass, A. (2012). Social Media Communication in Organizations: The Challenges of Balancing Openness, Strategy, and Management. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 6(4), 287–308. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2012.711402>
- McDuffie, A. (2021). Verbal Communication. In F. R. Volkmar (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Autism Spectrum Disorders* (pp. 5029–5029). Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91280-6\\_1709](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91280-6_1709)
- Muhtarom, D. A., Widiyanarti, T., Junistian, F., Karyana, Y. P., Saronta, S., & Baihaq, A. A.-R. (2024). Peran Komunikasi Antar Budaya dalam Meningkatkan Pemahaman dan Toleransi Antar Bangsa. *Interaction Communication Studies Journal*, 1(3), 12–12. <https://doi.org/10.47134/interaction.v1i3.3289>
- Naim, M. A. N. M. A. (2024). A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Indonesian and Western Cultures in Live Performance. *Jurnal Ilmiah Penelitian Multidisiplin*, 1(1), Article 1.
- Nur, M. (2024). *Interview with the Village Head* [Personal communication].
- Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*. SAGE Publications.
- Pohan, R. A., Atmoko, A., Ramadhani, E., Marimbun, M., Chalidaziah, W., & Nengsih, N. (2024). Cross-cultural communication strategies in handling COVID-19: Experiences from Indonesia. *Journal of Public Health*, 46(3), e538–e539. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdae079>
- Putri, K. W., Widiyanarti, T., Putri, K. A. W., Naila, S. S., Mukhlisin, A. S., Purwanto, E., & Rahmah, A. (2024). Mengatasi Hambatan Komunikasi Antar Budaya. *Indonesian Culture and Religion Issues*, 1(4), 9–9. <https://doi.org/10.47134/diksima.v1i4.100>
- Rahmah, A., Widiyanarti, T., Ahadiyyah, A., Fauzan, A., Chaniago, A. N., Ayala, E. R., & Azahra, K. A. (2024). Adaptasi dalam Komunikasi Antarbudaya: Membangun Jembatan antara Tradisi dan Modernitas. *Indonesian Culture and Religion Issues*, 1(4), 14–14. <https://doi.org/10.47134/diksima.v1i4.96>
- Rasyid, E., Tunggal, A. P. P. W., & Rosyidi, M. I. (2020). Model Komunikasi Organisasi Perangkat Daerah Provinsi Sulawesi Barat Dalam Perencanaan Program Penanggulangan Kemiskinan Marasa. *Jurnal Riset Komunikasi*, 3(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.24329/jurkom.v3i1.86>

- Riyanto\*, A., & Handari, S. (2024). Pola Komunikasi Generasi Z pada Digital Jurnalistik. *JIM: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Pendidikan Sejarah*, 9(4), Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.24815/jimps.v9i4.32909>
- Sevignani, S. (2024). Communicative Activity: Social Theoretical Foundations for Critical Materialist Media and Communication Sociology in the Digital Age. *Critical Sociology*, 50(4–5), 707–725. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08969205241230246>
- Silverman, D. (2016). *Interpreting Qualitative Data* (London: Sage, 2016), 42–45. SAGE Publications.
- Siregar, R., Ismail, & Siregar, A. R. (2024). Model Komunikasi Ketua Adat Dalam Tata Acara Pernikahan Di Desa Janjimanahan Kecamatan Dolok Sigompulon. *At-Tadzkir: Jurnal Penelitian dan Ilmu Komunikasi*, 1(2), Article 2.
- Ting-Toomey, S. (Ed.). (1994). *The Challenge of facework: Cross-cultural and interpersonal issues*. State University of New York Press.
- Tkalac Verčič, A., Verčič, D., Čož, S., & Špoljarić, A. (2024). A systematic review of digital internal communication. *Public Relations Review*, 50(1), 102400. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2023.102400>
- Vioreza, N., & Lumban, C. (2024). Nilai Sosial dalam Upacara Adat Mangokal Holi Suku Batak Toba. *PUSAKA: Journal of Educational Review*, 1(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.56773/pjer.v1i2.33>
- Wang, S., Cai, W., Sun, Q. (Chayn), Martin, C., Tewari, S., Hurley, J., Amati, M., Duckham, M., & Choy, S. (2023). Landscape of multiculturalism in Australia: Tracking ethnic diversity and its relation with neighbourhood features in 2001–2021. *Applied Geography*, 160, 103114. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apgeog.2023.103114>
- Widiyanarti, T., Rullah, A. D., Fitriyani, D., Silfa, F. R., Nurfajri, I., & Ayuningtyas, W. D. (2024). Teknologi dan Komunikasi Antar Budaya: Peluang dan Tantangan di Dunia Digital. *Interaction Communication Studies Journal*, 1(3), 11–11. <https://doi.org/10.47134/interaction.v1i3.3372>
- Würtz, E. (2005). Intercultural Communication on Websites: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Websites from High-Context Cultures and Low-Context Cultures. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11(1), 274–299. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2006.tb00313.x>
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. SAGE.
- Young, T. J., & Schartner, A. (2014). The effects of cross-cultural communication education on international students' adjustment and adaptation. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 35(6), 547–562. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2014.884099>
- Yusup, M., Syattar, M., & Saoqillah, A. (2024). Pola Komunikasi Antar Budaya dalam Menjaga Keharmonisan Antar Etnis. *AT-TAWASUL*, 3(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.51192/ja.v3i2.1141>
- Zhang, J. (2024). Status and Problems of Chinese Brand Cross-Cultural Communication. In J. Zhang



(Ed.), *Cross-Cultural Communication of Chinese Brands* (pp. 35–53). Springer Nature.  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-1371-4\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-1371-4_2)

Zulkarnain, Z., Mukhiar, S. N. S., Muhajir, M., Gandhi, A. M., & Fitria, S. (2023). Sharia in Public Space: Communication Models in The Adoption of Islamic Sharia in Urban Muslim Society in Langsa, Aceh. *Akademika : Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 28(2), Article 2.  
<https://doi.org/10.32332/akademika.v28i2.7468>