

# Intercultural Communication from an Islamic Perspective

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## Abstract

Cultural and religious plurality has become a necessity for the world community, so it requires a management model that can be accepted by each party. Negligence in the social management of this potential diversity can cause disharmony, and even conflict. Intercultural communication plays an important role in bridging the gap between individuals or groups of different cultures and religions. In the context of Islam, intercultural communication has unique principles and emphasizes the values of equality, mutual understanding, and cross-cultural cooperation. In Islam, intercultural communication is based on the principles of justice, tolerance, equality, cooperation, and *ukhuwwah*. In the context of intercultural communication, Islam also emphasizes the importance of *adab* (ethics) in communicating. Manners play an important role in ensuring that communication runs smoothly and harmoniously, as well as minimizing the risk of misunderstandings or conflicts. These principles are inclusive and relevant to individuals from different cultural and religious backgrounds, creating a strong foundation for better intercultural understanding and cooperation. This article aimed to outline the principles of intercultural communication from an Islamic perspective, with the aim of increasing a deeper understanding of how Islam views and practices intercultural communication. This research used the library research method with a thematic interpretation approach. The main and main source of data in this study is the *Qur'an*, the books of *tafsir* that In conclusion, this article emphasizes that Islam encourages the principles of intercultural communication based on the values of justice, tolerance, equality, empathy, cooperation, and *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood). By understanding and applying these principles, individuals can strengthen intercultural relationships and promote peace and harmony in an increasingly pluralistic society.

**Keywords:** Intercultural Communication, Justice, Tolerance, Equality, Cooperation, Brotherhood

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Diversity of ethnicities, races, and even religions is an inevitable social reality, because it is the *sunnatullah* that has been determined by Allah. The task of man is to put all of this in the framework of the noble values of religion, so that justice, equality, and cooperation become a reality that can be achieved by every nation and all humans.

Cultural diversity is an inevitability of human communities and its existence cannot be denied. Cultural diversity indicates the existence of complementary human dynamics in life, so that interactions between different humans are realized in a very beautiful harmonization (Dedi Kurnia Syah, 2018: 1).

The phenomenon of diversity that occurs in Indonesia is not only in terms of culture, but also in terms of religion and transcendental beliefs, including human life starting from customs, mindsets, and traditional practices among members of the community.

With regard to cultural diversity, it often causes conflicts that are not understood as plurality and harmony. For example, the conflict in Sampang, Madura involving two Sunni-Shia Muslim groups (Asep Saeful Muhtadi, 2019: 1); conflicts caused by the depletion of the sense of tolerance between religious and cultural communities, various cases of conflict such as: in Aceh, Timika (Papua), Ambon (Maluku), Pontianak (West Kalimantan), Sampit-Mataram (NTB), and Poso (Bela Ardila and Agus Salim, 2022: 3). Dedy Mulyana and Jalaluddin Rakhmat have mentioned that the main problem in intercultural communication is errors in social perception caused by cultural differences that affect the perception process (Mulyana & Rakhmat, 2014).

The perspective of inter-cultural communication, inter-ethnic conflicts, and even religions can start from differences in cultural and religious identities that are communicated ethnocentrically. At the very least, each ethnic group does not make a serious effort to establish (inter-cultural) communication, but tends to avoid communication.

From the perspective of Islam, the Man of Allah was created with various backgrounds, both languages, customs, tribes, nations, and religions. The purpose of this diversity is for humans to get to know each other (*ta'aruf*). This diversity is inevitable and really beautiful, like a colorful flower in a large garden.

Every human being is unique, every culture is unique, every ethnic group must have its uniqueness, as well as every religion.

The phenomenon of diversity and the purpose of this diversity are explained by God in His words:

O people, we have created you from a male and a female. Then, we made you into nations and tribes so that you might know one another. Indeed, the most noble among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Knowing. (QS. Al-Hujurat, 49:13).

Naturally, humans tend to communicate with their environment. He strives to convey his thoughts and understanding to others. In the same way, a Muslim who cannot escape his human nature According to Islamic religious beliefs, he must communicate with others so that the people around him will understand his beliefs. The Qur'an shows the position of communication in human life in this context:

Disgrace is inflicted on them wherever they are, unless they (hold) on the rope of Allah and the rope (covenant) with man... (QS. Ali Imran, 3: 112).

This verse shows that Islam uses two types of communication: vertical (with Allah) and horizontal (with fellow humans). Islam, as a heavenly religion, was introduced to humans from the beginning through the process of communication with the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Therefore, communication plays a very important role in the process of understanding the teachings of Islam. Because the role of communication actors in spreading divine values will be constrained, if there is no effective communication. According to this perspective, intercultural communication is basically a process of communication between communicators and communicators who have different cultures. Culture and communication are similar. Based on the above phenomenon, this article intends to offer one solution, namely the need for communication through an intercultural communication approach in an Islamic perspective. This approach is assumed to bridge tensions, so that the problems of different intercultural relations can be resolved, and any problems can be solved by mutual respect and respect between different cultures.

The formulation of the problem of this study is "How are the principles of intercultural communication from an Islamic perspective".

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 The Concept of Intercultural Communication**

#### **2.2.1 Definition of Intercultural Communication**

In discussing the meaning of intercultural communication, there are two variables, namely communication and culture. The word communication etymologically (language) "communication" comes from English and Latin, namely "Communication" and "Communicates" which mean the same thing, in the same sense. The same meaning means that when we communicate with others, it means that we try so that what we convey to others is understood and acceptable. Communication is a process of conveying information (messages, ideas, ideas) from one party to another. Communication is carried out both verbally and non-verbally (Nurani Soyomukti, 2012: 11). To understand the process of communication, Lasswell uses the following expressions: (who), says what, through which channel, to whom, with what effect. Although Lasswell's questions are very simple, they are very helpful in organizing and structuring communication studies. Lasswell himself used these questions to distinguish different types of communication research. (Bungin Burhan, 2007:288-289).

From the above definition, it can be concluded that communication is a dynamic process of conveying information and occurs simultaneously in two directions (transactional) continuously by using certain media so that it is easy to understand to achieve goals in various ways.

Culture or Culture comes from the Sanskrit language, "Buddhayah", the plural form of "Buddhi", which means mind or intellect, mind. In Sanskrit, "culture" means everything that has to do with the intellect, mind, or mind. In Latin, culture comes from the word "colere", which means "to cultivate". In English, "Culture" means "culture". Culture is a way of living together that is passed down from generation to generation. Basically, the term "culture" refers to the principles that result from the interaction between people. These values are directly or indirectly recognized along with the time spent in the interaction. (Rulli Nasrullah, 2018:15). Spencer said that culture is made up of human feelings, thoughts, and beliefs. It includes chains of ideas, values, beliefs, customs, and languages that have been passed down from generation to generation to support a particular lifestyle. Every Culture must have core values that shape the outlook on life and belief systems in which each member of the community is qibla. Basic values are a philosophy of life that guides members in the direction they should go. (Deddy Mulyana and Jalaludin Rahmat, 2014:24).

From the definition above, it can be concluded that culture is a habitual mindset that develops and regulates human behavior that is inherited from generation to generation.

Thus, from the definition of communication and culture, intercultural communication is the process of exchanging thoughts and meanings between people from different cultures. Intercultural communication basically examines how culture affects communication activities: what verbal and nonverbal messages mean according to the cultures concerned, what is worth communicating, how to communicate them (verbal and nonverbal) and when to communicate them. (Deddy Mulyana, 2016: xi).

The term intercultural communication has long been used by communication scientists and researchers. One of the important things that is discussed in intercultural communication is related to the use of communication symbols, one of which is language. In the context of intercultural communication, the use of language is very urgent. Language is considered the most effective symbol in the communication process, but the language factor is also often the cause of the mismatch in the meaning of the message conveyed.

The difference in the value system embraced by each culture and nation has the potential to cause a clash of values and social conflicts in society. Similarly, in the communication process, cultural differences are an important factor in the effectiveness of communication. This is where the concept of intercultural communication was born, which is simply interpreted as a communication process that takes place between people of different cultural and religious backgrounds.

### **2.2.2 Principles of Intercultural Communication**

The study of intercultural communication needs to be studied for at least two important reasons: (1) Humans are ethnocentric. Human perception is subjective. Ethnocentrism is using one's own cultural standards to measure other cultures. Stereotypes are the false equalization of a group of people by ignoring their individual traits. Stereotypes can give rise to self-fulfilling prophecies, which is an event that takes place based on prophecies (with) that it will indeed happen, (2) Communication meets human needs. Effective communication makes people happier, healthier and more successful at work (including as entrepreneurs, managers, business people, executives, and so on (Dedy Mulyana, 2016: 21).

Schramm put forward four conditions for intercultural communication to run effectively. First, we must respect members of other cultures as human beings; second, we should respect other cultures as they are, not as we would like them to; third, respect the right of other cultures to act differently from other ways we act; and fourth, competent cross-cultural communicators must learn to enjoy living with people from other cultures. Furthermore, Schramm stated that the effectiveness of communication depends on the situation and social relationship between communicators and communicators, especially in the scope of reference (frame of reference) and the breadth of experience between them. (Dedy Mulyana, 2016)

Several principles are very important so that the communication process, including intercultural communication, can run effectively. Tubbs and Moss (2015: 240-243) summarize these principles into three important principles.

The first principle is a shared cipher system that of course consists of two aspects—verbal and nonverbal. Without a shared password system, communication would be impossible. There will be varying degrees of difference, but the less similarity the password, the less communication is likely to occur (Tubbs and Moss, 2015:240). Edward T. Hall distinguishes between high-context culture and low-context culture. High-context culture and low-context culture have some important differences in how they encode their messages. Members of high-context cultures are more skilled at reading nonverbal behaviors and in reading environments, and they assume that others will also be able to do the same. (Tubbs and Moss, 2015: 240) So, they talk less than members of low-context cultures, and their communication tends to be indirect and non-explicit. Low-context cultures, on the other hand, emphasize direct and explicit communication.

The second principle, different beliefs and behaviors among the communicating parties is the basis for different assumptions to provide a response. Beliefs and behaviors affect our perception of what others are doing. Therefore, it is not surprising that two people from different cultures then give different meanings to the same behavior. When that happens, the two people behave differently without being able to predict the other party's response, even though this ability to predict is an integral part of being able to communicate effectively.

The third principle is the degree of knowing and accepting the beliefs and behaviors of others. Components, knowledge and acceptance, are not only knowledge about the differences that cause problems, but also the level of acceptance of differences that can cause problems. According to Sarbaugh

(Tubbs and Moss, 2015: 242) the way we judge other cultures by our own cultural values and refuse to consider other cultural norms will determine the effectiveness of the communication that will take place. On the one hand, there are people who at the same time know and accept the beliefs and behaviors of others; On the other hand, there are also people who do not know and do not accept, so the possibility of experiencing a failure in communication is very high.

Furthermore, Tubbs and Moss (2015:242) say that the use of the same cipher system, recognition of differences in beliefs and behaviors, and the cultivation of tolerance towards the beliefs and behaviors of others, all help to create effective communication. In the end, intercultural communication will be effective if we pay special attention to prevent cultural differences from hindering meaningful interactions, but instead become a source to enrich our communication experience. If we want to communicate effectively, we need to understand and appreciate the differences that exist.

### 3. METHOD

The research method used is the library research method with a thematic interpretation approach and hadith of the Prophet PBUH. Other sources are books, journals and others that have relevance.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Islamic Paradigm Towards Culture

The Islamic paradigm is as an Islamic way of looking at the culture that develops in society. Related to intercultural communication, the Islamic paradigm is the communicator's perspective (da'i) in transforming Islamic teachings to people of different cultures and religions with what is understood, with the aim that Islamic teachings can be effectively accepted by the ummah.

#### 4.1.1 The Qur'an speaks to Culture

The Quran is believed by Muslims to be a holy book that contains Divine and Insaniyah values. (Abdul Wahid, 2019: 136). These two values are called spiritual and social values. Islam does not make culture an opponent (clashed), but Islam tries to make it a friend (dialogue), as the Qur'an surah al-A'raf, 7:199 explains:

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

Be forgiving, command (the people) to the righteous, and turn away from fools. (Ministry of Religion, 2019).

According to Quraish Shihab (2020:353), the word 'urf in this verse is the same as ma'ruf, which is something that is known and justified by the community, in other words customs that are supported by sound reason and do not contradict religious teachings. It is a virtue that is well known and agreed upon by the community. Therefore, 'urf is a good tradition, which has existed in society that contains good values that are not substantively contrary to the teachings of Islam.

#### 4.1.2 Al-Hadith speaks of Culture

The main mission of the Prophet sent to earth was as a bearer of rahmatan lil'alam (bringing peace and salvation universally). This is confirmed in a hadith, from Abu Hurairah r.a. said: The Prophet PBUH said, "Indeed, I was sent only to perfect noble ethics". (HR. Ahmad).

According to Abdul Wahid (2019), culture is not value-free because culture contains moral and moral teachings that regulate human relations so that a safe and peaceful society can be created.

The Prophet spoke about culture in the hadith, including:

##### a. Problems of Eid

"It was narrated from Anas r.a. that he said: When the Prophet PBUH arrived in Medina, the people had two feasts, namely Nairuz and Mahrajan, which were used as a day of fun for them. Then the Messenger of Allah said, "Indeed, Allah has replaced the two feasts for you with better ones, namely the days of adha and fitri" (HR. Ahmad no. 12025, Abu Daud no. 1134, al-Nasai in Sunan al-Kubra no. 1755).

The above hadith can be understood that the Prophet has corrected two holidays that are usually done by the Jahiliyah people in Medina, which are used as days of fun through immorality (drunkenness, gambling). Once Islam is present in Medina, the holidays of Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Fitr are used to get closer to Allah.

##### b. The Problem of Tawaf

The tawaf ritual is one of the pillars of Hajj and Umrah in Islam that has existed since the Prophet Ibrahim, but before Islam came along, in Makkah the practice of tawaf by the ignorant people was carried out naked and used to worship idols that they placed in the Kaaba as many as 360 idols. Furthermore, when the Prophet PBUH was sent by Allah with Islam, the practice of tawaf was changed as mentioned in the Narration: "The ritual of the Ignorant Musyrikin in performing tawaf in the Kaaba. According to the historian Ibn Ishaq: "The men performed tawaf naked. While the Women, among them took off all their clothes, except for the armor that was thrown at them and then surrounded... it continued, until Allah sent the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)".

After Islam came, the practice of tawaf in the era of jahiliyah by nakedness and idolatry, in Islam it was ordered to cover the aurah of both men and women. This shows that the ritual of tawaf is not abolished, but fixed, as Allah says Surah al-A'raf, 7:31 which reads:

"O sons and descendants of Adam, wear your beautiful clothes in every mosque and eat and drink, but do not overdo it. Indeed, He does not like people who are excessive." (Ministry of Religion, 2019).

c. The Problem of Shaum Ashura (10 Muharam)

The connection with the shaum of 10 Muharram known by Muslims, begins from the dialogue of the companions with the Prophet as narrated in the hadith: "From Ibn Abbas r.a., that when the Prophet PBUH performed the shaum of Ashura and he ordered the companions to perform the shaum on that day, there were several companions who reported: "O Messenger of Allah, indeed the 10th of Muharram is a day that is glorified by Jews and Christians". Then the Prophet PBUH said: "if it comes next year, God willing, we will shaum on the 9th of Muharram". Ibn Abbas continued, but before meeting Muharram next year, the Prophet PBUH has died". (HR. Muslim no. 1916).

The above hadith can be concluded that, although the Prophet PBUH had not had time to perform the shaum of 9 Muharram (shaum tasu'a), because he died first, the companions agreed that the shaum of Muharram was recommended from the 9th and 10th of Muharram, to distinguish between Jews and Christians. In addition, we understand that the shaum 10 Muharram, which has been practiced by Jews and Christians, is still practiced by the Prophet PBUH, because it is seen as a good culture.

#### 4.2 Principles of intercultural communication in Islam

##### 4.2.1 Justice

In Islamic communication, the principle of justice is very important. Islam, emphasizes the importance of treating everyone in the process of communication in the same way, regardless of religion, race, or ethnicity. (Karmilah, Sobarudin, 2019: 41-56).

In the Qur'an, Allah states that justice is one of the important principles in human relations. Justice in the context of excommunication ensures that the information conveyed is not biased towards one party and does not harm the other. In addition, fairness ensures that all parties obtain equal rights during the communication process. Therefore, the value of justice is very important in Islamic communication and must be maintained so that communication remains of high quality and brings benefits to all parties involved. (A. Badru Rifa'i, 2023: 25.)

The word adil is taken from the Arabic word 'adala-ya'dilu-'adlan, which contains the meaning of straight, equal, or balanced. A just person walks straight, always using the same measure, not double measure (M. Quraish Shihab, 2020: 300).

In the context of upholding justice between two parties, in the Qur'an it is called the word al-Qisth which has similarities with the word al-'adl.

Ar-Raghib Al-Ashfahani explained that al-Qisthu means a fair share, which is the same as an-Nashafu and an-Nashafah. While al-Iqsātu means to give the share of others. And it is an act of inshāfun (justice). It is said that aqsāthu, when he acts justly. Al-Fahaju means balance. Usually, the word al-qisthāsu is used to express justice, as balance is also sometimes used to express justice (Al-Asfahani, 2017).

Al-Qisth in the Qur'an, with its various derivations, is mentioned 25 times. In the form of mashdar (noun) al-Qisth is mentioned 15 times, the isim tafdhil (adjective) form of aqsathu is mentioned 2 times, the form of fi'il mudhari' (verb) tuqsithū is mentioned 2 times, the fi'il amr (command) form of aqsitū is mentioned once, while in the form of isim fail it is mentioned 5 times, each 2 times comes from the form of tsulatsiy namely al-Qasith, in al-Jin verses 14 and 15, while from the form of mazid, namely al-Muqsith 3 times (Baqi, 1999).

The word tuqsithū from the word al-qisth has various meanings, namely: **First**, al-qisth is interpreted as an order to uphold justice (QS. Al-Nisa [4]: 135, QS. Ali Imran [3]: 18, Al-Maidah [5]: 8, Al-A'raf [7]: 29, and Al-Hadid [57]: 25); reward (QS. Jonah (10:4); in perfecting the measure and scales (QS. Al-An'am

[06]: 152, QS. Hud [11]: 85, and QS. Al-Rahman [55]: 9); Adil upholds amar ma'ruf (QS. Ali Imran [3]: 21); and fair in giving decisions (QS. Jonah [10]: 47 and 54). **Second**, tuqsithū is interpreted as fair to orphans (Al-Nisa [4]: 3, 127); and fair to non-Muslims (Al-Maidah [05]: 42, QS. Al-Mumtahanah (60): 8). **Third**, aqsathu is interpreted as fair as a witness (Al-Baqarah [2]: 82; and fair to adopted children (Al-Ahzab [33]: 5). **Fourth**, aqsithu is interpreted as fair in reconciling disputes (Al-Hujurat [49]: 09). And **Fifth**, Al-Qāsithūn, is interpreted as not just, but is interpreted as deviating from religion (Al-Jin [72]: 14-15).

From an Islamic perspective, justice includes understanding and applying justice in cultural relations. In this context, justice is a key principle that is considered important to overcome cultural differences and strengthen intercultural relationships. Therefore, justice is considered as the basis of all actions and decisions, as in the Qur'an Surah Fussilat verse 34,

وَلَا تَسْتَوِ الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ۚ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ

Translation of the Ministry of Religion 2019

34. Good is not the same as evil. Resist (evil) with better behavior so that the person with whom you have enmity immediately becomes like a very loyal friend.

وَلَا تَسْتَوِ الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ۚ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ

English Sahih International

34. And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend. (English Sahih Internasional, Kemenag, 2019).

"Reply with something better than what is felt" (QS. Fussilat, 41:34) and "Judge between you with justice" (Qur'an. Al-Isra, 17:35). Islam reinforces the concept of justice in intercultural discourse by showing that every individual or culture has the right to be defended and respected.

Empathy and good communication are essential in overcoming cultural differences. Islam demands communication and tolerance. "Only Allah knows good and evil from among you" (10:47). We can improve relationships and reduce differences by understanding and paying attention to the needs and beliefs of each culture.

Communication between cultures should also be done with pleasure. In Islam, every culture or individual has the right to be recognized and respected. This can result in a more peaceful atmosphere.

In addition, intercultural communication must be done well and happily. In Islam, it is considered that every individual or culture has the right to be recognized and respected. This can create a more harmonious environment, as Allah explains in QS. Al-Nahl: 90:

Indeed, Allah commands to be just, to do good, and to give help to relatives. He (also) forbids heinous deeds, iniquity, and enmity. He teaches you a lesson so that you will always remember. (Ministry of Religion, 2019).

Justice is a universally recognized principle in Islam. This religion respects the legitimate rights of every individual, as well as protects their freedom, honor, blood, and property through the enforcement of truth and justice among human beings. Justice is a fundamental human value and every individual has the right to obtain it. Fair means impartial, honest, and equal to all parties. The concept of justice also includes the values of honesty, straightforwardness, and impartial sincerity.

#### 4.2.2 Tolerance

The term tolerance comes from the English word tolerance or tolerantia in Latin. In Arabic this term refers to the word tasamuh or tasahul namely; to tolerate, to overlook, excuse, to be indulgent, forbearing, lenient, tolerant, merciful. The word tasamuh; means hilm and tasahul; It is interpreted as indulgence, tolerance, toleration, forbearance, leniency, lenitt, clemency, mercy and kindness. (Adeng Muhtar Ghazali, 2016: 27).

In the context of Islamic teachings in particular, the word tasamuh actually has a deeper meaning than just tolerance that is generally understood. The word tasamuh means to give and take. Tasamuh contains a certain expectation from both parties to give and take from each other within certain limits. Therefore,

in the context of the discourse of tolerance itself, the word *tasamuh* must be interpreted as an effort to restrain oneself, not to violate certain limits, especially related to religious beliefs.

Tolerance is defined as giving freedom to fellow human beings or to every community in carrying out their beliefs by regulating their lives and determining their respective fates, as long as determining and implementing it does not contradict the conditions for the creation of order and peace in social life. In supporting factors, tolerance is an absolute obligation. There is no doubt that Islam also advocates tolerance, mutual help, and a harmonious and dynamic life between mankind regardless of religion, language, and race in each group (Anggraeni and Suhartinah, 2018:65).

According to Tillman, tolerance is defined as a feeling of mutual respect and agreement to achieve peace. Tolerance is the key to living in harmony without degrading or preventing intercultural superiority. (Shoelhi, M., 2015). The value of tolerance is interpreted as an attitude of mutual respect and respect between individuals and groups. Tolerance should be upheld and enshrined in state law. Tolerance can prevent discrimination. Each region has diversity and cultural uniqueness that is different from each other, such as different ethnicities, races, beliefs, skin colors, which make it a characteristic that must be respected.

#### 4.2.3 Equality

The equality of man before Allah is a fundamental principle in Islam. The Qur'an clearly conveys the message that every individual, regardless of race, skin color, or social status, has equal value in the eyes of Allah (Aziz, 2019). In Islam, human equality is not only limited to theoretical concepts, but also requires concrete action to achieve it. The verses of the Quran, including Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْوَاهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted. (English Sahih Internasional, Kemenag 2019)

"O man, verily We have created you from a male and a female. Then, We made you into nations and tribes so that you might know one another. Indeed, the most noble among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Knowing." (Ministry of Religion, 2019).

The verses of the Qur'an are a source of teachings and guidelines for Muslims that contain various important values, including the concept of human equality. In Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13, Allah states that humans were created in various tribes and nations in order to know and understand each other. This verse underlines the importance of equality between human beings, where differences in background should not be a basis for demeaning or considering oneself better than others. This verse teaches mankind to look at others with a fair view and to treat them with respect. This means that no human being is intrinsically superior or superior to another based on ethnic, racial, or social aspects (Rabbani & Kudhori, 2023:104-105). In the social context of Indonesian society which has a diversity of ethnicities, religions, and cultures, this verse reminds the importance of respecting and strengthening equality among different individuals.

In addition, Allah also explains in Surah al-Nisa verse 1:

O man, fear your Lord who created you from one self (Adam) and He created from him his mate (Eve). From both of them Allah multiplied many males and females. Fear Allah in whose name you ask each other and (maintain) family relations. Indeed, Allah is always watching over you. (Ministry of Religion, 2019).

This verse confirms that the Prophets Adam (a.s.) and Eve were not created through the process of biological evolution like other living beings, but were created specifically alone, and then their mates were created from themselves. The mechanism cannot be explained scientifically. Furthermore, only then are His children born from biological processes in pairs according to His will.

The concept of equality is interpreted, among other things, as a view and attitude of life that considers all people to be equal in rights and obligations. The right to practice religion, worship and obligations to state life and socialize with adherents of other religions. The measure of equality is: a. Equal Level, namely:

1) No superiority, 2) Non-discriminatory, and 3) Reciprocal relationship; b. Having the Same Opportunity, namely: 1) Giving freedom to do religious activities for others, 2) Being careful (protecting) the rights of others; and c. Protection, namely: 1) Protection against differences, Protection against insults.

#### 4.2.4 Collaborate

Cooperation is an act of taking and giving and mutually benefiting. This action describes the active involvement of individuals joining with others and providing empathy and sympathy to various dimensions of life, such as social, economic, cultural, and religious life. Another meaning is the reality of social relations in the form of real actions. For example, in the act of helping or mutual cooperation between religious and cultural groups. Koentjaraningrat explained that cooperation can be realized because of the interaction between active units. (Koentjaraningrat, et al., 2003:79). Meanwhile, Ashutosh Varshney sees cooperation in the form of inter-communal ties or networks and that integrate two religious' believers. In this case, Robert Putnam calls this relationship as bridging social capital; then the relationship between believers outside of ties or organizations that are members of the same religion, is bonding social capital.

Furthermore, Varshney divides the network into two forms: a) associative, which is a form of civic bond into business organizations, professional associations, sports clubs, and labor unions; b) quotidian, which is a daily relationship that is formed into a bond that does not require an organization, or in the form of simple and routine life interactions, such as visits between families of different religions, Eating together, participating together in Independence Day ceremonies, allowing their children to play together in the neighborhood. (Varshney, 2009). The interaction implied in the concept of relations (cooperation) in this study is 'social interaction' (including social and religious), which is a network of relationships between two or more people or between two or more groups that are a requirement for social life (Koentjaraningrat et al., 2003: 90). Acts of cooperation occupy the highest variable of harmony because cooperation can be realized when tolerance and equality are in good condition.

#### 4.2.5 Ukhuwwah

Al-Ragib al-Asfahani mentioned that the word akhun (brother). The original form of the word is akhawun, which means the bond (masyarik) of brotherhood or similarity. This phrase is sometimes used against people who have similarities with others in ethnicity, religion, association, friendship or other interactions. From this meaning, there is an important keyword, namely masyarik, the existence of cooperation between each other (al-Asfahani, cet. 1, 2019:39).

M. Quraish Shihab explained that ukhuwah, which is commonly interpreted as "brotherhood", is taken from the root word, which originally meant "to pay attention". This original meaning gives the impression that brotherhood requires the attention of all parties who feel brotherly. He said that it is possible that the attention was initially born because of the similarities between the brothers, so that the meaning then developed, and in the end ukhuwah is interpreted as "every similarity and harmony with other parties, both hereditary similarities, in terms of mother, father, or both, or in terms of breastfeeding".

In majazi, the word ukhuwah (brotherhood) includes the similarity of one of the elements such as ethnicity, religion, profession, and feeling. In Arabic dictionaries, it is found that the word akhun which forms the word ukhuwah is also used with the meaning of a close friend or friend. (Shihab 2013: 486).

The Muslim community is familiar with the term Ukhuwah Islamiyyah. So far, there has been an impression that the term means "brotherhood established by fellow Muslims", or in other words, "brotherhood between fellow Muslims", so that the word "Islamiyyah" is used as the perpetrator of ukhuwah.

According to Shihab, this understanding is not correct, the word Islamiyyah which is coupled with the word ukhuwah is more appropriately understood as an adjectiva (nature), so that ukhuwah Islamiyah means brotherhood that is Islamic or taught by Islam, with two reasons, namely First, the Qur'an and hadith introduce various brotherhoods. Second, for linguistic reasons.

The above description can be concluded that the concept of ukhuwah Islamiyah is actually universal and broad, not limited by religion, state, race, class, ethnicity, or other factors. The existence of humans as social beings clearly encourages the formation of brotherhood. He comes from a family, the smallest institution in society. Until the state was formed, several families formed RTs, RWs, villages, sub-districts, districts, and provinces. The greater and wider of the institution above the family should not undermine

the principle of brotherhood; rather, it must form a strong family structure. So, everyone in a country needs a sense of belonging, love, and affection for each other as evidence of the life of a large family.

The concept of Ukhuwwah in the Qur'an is of five types, namely: (1) Ukhuwah insaniyah (brotherhood among humans) is explained in QS. Al-Hujurat, 49: 13, QS. Al-A'raf, 7: 27 and 35; (2) Ukhuwah nasabiyah shihriyah (brotherhood of nasab and marriage) is explained in QS. Al-Nahl, 16: 72, QS. Al-Furqan, 25:54; (3) Ukhuwah Sha'biyah wathaniyah (brotherhood of tribes and nations) is explained in QS. Al-Hujurat, 49:13; (4) Ukhuwah diniyah (brotherhood among fellow believers) is explained in QS. Al-Kafirun, 109:1-6; (5) Ukhuwah Imaniyah (brotherhood of inter-religious brotherhood) is explained in QS. Al-Hujurat, 49:10, and the prohibition of making fun of other parties QS. Al-Hujurat, 49:11-12. (Hadari, Basri, Abu Bakar, 2023: 27-33).

Ukhuwah Islamiyah focuses on virtue and piety, helping in virtue and piety (QS al-Maidah, 5:2); deliberation (QS al-Shura, 42:38); proactive (QS Ali Imran, 3:104, QS al-Nisa, 4:85), tolerance (QS al-Hujurat, 49:11), and example (QS al-Nisa, 4:85). Therefore, every believer is responsible for realizing brotherhood of faith and religion. Love is inherent between one person and another, so ukhuwah must occur if it is based on the same love as love for the Most Transcendent. Therefore, the Prophet equates it with loving oneself.

In conclusion, that all religions teach about ways and concepts of building unity. The Prophet taught the concept of ukhuwah, which is the concept of brotherhood built on faith and love. The concept of ukhuwah is one of the important pillars that is aligned with the pillars of faith in building a unity of humanity. And this concept is founded on the basis of morality, which is the main purpose of the Prophet's sending to this earth

## 6. CONCLUSION

That it is the nature of God Almighty to make humans unique creatures who must have social relations with each other. God has created humans of various tribes that give birth to various cultures. This is where it is important for humans to understand each other's cultures through a means called communication. Communication is a means and a tool to enter a more civilized process of life. Therefore, without communication, humans will be stopped in building a civilization. Thus, the most important factor in communicating is how we are able to recognize other people's cultures to build a synergy of needs that are equally necessary for all people, so that there is stability and mutual comfort.

In the context of intercultural communication from an Islamic perspective, the Quran is believed by Muslims to be a holy book that contains divine and human values. These two values are called spiritual and social values. Islam does not make culture an opponent (clashed), but Islam tries to make it a friend (dialogued). Islam provides guidance in interacting with different cultures, a communicator must have the principles of justice, tolerance, equality, cooperation, and ukhuwwah, so that each other respects, appreciates, and knows different cultures, races, and religions.

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