

# Communication Patern

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## Communication Patterns of Muslim Communities' After Involvement in the *Pela Gandong* Ritual in Moluccas Immanuel Church, Indonesia

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### Abstract

In this article, the authors discuss the contribution of the target article (Sulaeman et al., *Contemporary Islam*, 16(2), 225–257, 2022) and further studies on the communication patterns of Muslim communities after involvement in the *pela gandong* ritual. The target article qualitatively explores identity transformation, employing the theories of ritual processes and civic pluralism. The authors found differences in the meaning and treatment of communication acceptance after involvement with the surrounding environment. After involvement, the authors are interested in conducting a study of the communication patterns of the Muslim community and with other involved and uninvolved individuals, such as family, friends in the village and outside the village, and fellow members of the *pela gandong* ritual. Detailed exploration is needed to clarify the after-effects of involvement. The authors found that communication patterns related to forms of communication through verbal and nonverbal communication were classified into six categories: (1) spiritual communication, (2) family communication, (3) community communication, (4) cross-religious communication, (5) religious organization communication, and (6) government communication. The authors argue that the Muslim community faces psychological disorders of intrapersonal and interpersonal communication after involvement. This study contributes to the acceptance of different religious contexts, and there is no difference in the social context daily with the application of religious values and local traditions. Strengthening acceptance of treatment is very important for overcoming disharmony that reflects human values such as self-identity. This contribution is very important in the digital era to influence cross-religion by building kinship bonds of social identity.

**Keywords** Communication Patterns · Verbal and Nonverbal Communication · *Pela Gandong* Ritual · Muslim Communities · Phenomenology Perspective

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## Introduction

This article (Sulaeman et al., 2022, 225–257) is a qualitative analysis of the subjective experience of Muslim community involvement in the *pela gandong* ritual, which refers to the transformation of identity as part of Islamic society and kinship ties. The article found that the involvement of the Muslim community was through an invitation with trap, ignorance, compulsion, and the will of God.

The research on ritual process theory (Turner, 1962, 1969, 37–57) and civic pluralism (Eck, 2007, 743–776) qualitatively explores the Muslim community regarding identity transformation. The finding of cross-religious identity transformation on December 2, 2018, has new value and unique findings regarding the subjective experience of the Muslim community involved in the *pela gandong* ritual. The authors will discuss the importance of the research and then develop a broader conceptual contribution regarding cross-religion today.

The cross-religious *pela gandong* ritual proceeds as follows: (1) it begins with a procession in front church for of the waiting for invited guests who have not yet arrived, (2) gathering in the Church yard, (3) cross-religious people walk until they enter the door of the Church accompanied by cross-religious women holding “U” shaped *gandong* cloths, (4) cross-religious people enter and sit inside the Church building and are greeted with of the *lesso* dance by cross-religious girls accompanied by the Muslim community’s tambourine and the Christian community’s *totobuang*, (5) welcoming words from (a) the chairman of the ritual implementation committee, (b) the Regional Government of Moluccas Province, (c) Pastor *Amahusu* Church, and (d) the Ulema Council Indonesia Moluccas, (6) religious communication from the Muslim community, (7) lighting one of the four candles as a sign of entering the week before the birth of Jesus Christ, (8) the first sermon of the Pastor of the *Amahusu* Church, (9) singing hymns, (10) the second sermon of the Pastor of the *Amahusu* Church, (11) cross-religious singing the religious *salawat* of the Prophet Muhammad *Shallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*, and *gandong*, (12) cross-religious eating of *patita*.

However, initially after involvement, the Muslim community considered intrapersonal and interpersonal appearances to be important topics. They were involved in building peace—symbolizing the “peace gong” as a “unifying soul”. Sulaeman et al., (2022, 225–257) found the meaning of ritual symbols in social and cultural contexts. The use of symbols constitutes a “worship label together”. This symbol becomes a polemic in Islamic society, which experiences identity transformation through the exchange of religious communication symbols across religions.

Identity transformation symbolizes involvement that shows the brotherhood of social identity. Community identity is transformed based on experience and knowledge of the “situation”, and each individual is unique. Individual change is in line with the process of changing time and space; for example, identity transformation social includes interpersonal relationships with cross-religious identities after involvement.

After involvement, it interacts socially with the surrounding environment, such as family, friends in the village and outside the village, and fellow members of the

*pela gandong* ritual. They feel there is a lot of difference after involvement, which creates a shaky intrapersonal identity when interacting socially. Even the surrounding environment is still strong in carrying out Islamic teachings and the values of kinship, and they often receive negative responses in the form of prejudice and discrimination from the surrounding environment so that intrapersonal identity becomes alienated. As stated by Toomey, Tenzin & Stella (2020, 331–360), individuals will feel part of the group if the group that they have become its members responds positively. On the other hand, they feel alienated when their desired membership identity receives a negative response. To anticipate the negative response, the Muslim community conducts mindful communication.

Consciousness is possessed when after involvement, it also undergoes a transformation by involving symbols. Through the process of communication patterns, the Muslim community continues to negotiate various meanings after involvement with the construction of subjective meanings of a new identity. This identity is not a fixed attribute but a situational attribute.

Therefore, further study of axiology has novel value by providing knowledge to interpret the intrapersonal and interpersonal meaning of the Muslim community. This article uses a phenomenological method (Schutz's, 1972) to reveal the social reality after involvement that describes how the Muslim community feels, thinks, and acts (Sulaeman and Ridwan, 2021, 497–526; Tasleem et al., 2020, 241–251).

## Literature Review

From Turner's van Gennepian (Kapferer, 2019, 1–2) perspective, rituals are carried out by understanding the communication process and symbolically transforming phenomena (Carey, 2009). From the communication perspective, rituals "symbolically affect human life, which is done in a patterned manner" (Sulaeman et al., 2022, 225–257). The individuals performing rituals symbolize values, relationships, and social institutions in the form of local traditions as the bonds of kinship.

Kinship ties are based on the phenomenology of social action (Merleau, 2007). However, phenomenology is also experienced, and every experience can occur due to communication activities. Experience is something experienced, and it is through this experience that Muslim communities gain knowledge. Knowledge itself is based on awareness underlying meaning. Knowledge is based on awareness that underlies meaningful information (Darawsheh et al., 2022, 591–612; Goldthorpe, 2014, 81–84). Meaning is generated from construction through individual experience (Irta et al., 2022, 1299–1317). Various events after involvement in the *pela gandong* ritual were experienced to increase the knowledge of the Muslim community. An event that contains elements of communication will be an experience in itself for the Muslim community, and the communication experiences considered important will be the most memorable experience and have a special impact on the Muslim community after involvement in the *pela gandong* ritual.

After involvement of the Muslim community, intrapersonal identity will influence the pattern of social communication (Fedotov & Baidyuk, 2023). According to Miller et al., (2021, 251–271), communication patterns are a form of communication

used in certain situations with certain people. Berger and Thomas (1991) explain that this form of communication is used by individuals to create habitual actions, which in the end builds communication patterns and is adapted to individual types based on identity. Identity is the meaning attached to the intrapersonal or the meaning given by others (Beijaard et al., 2004, 107–128; Sulaeman et al., 2020, 426–441).

According to Toomey, Tenzin, and Stella (2020, 112–134), identity means constructing the self-reflection that is seen, built, and communicated in specific cultural interactions. Identity is different in the context of religion related to its meaning and creator. Differences in religious identity based on belief are symbols of recognition of religious differences. Cross-religion has a common social context. Identity continues to be built and reconstructed as individuals communicate with their surrounding environment, negotiate in social situations, internalize social roles, and evaluate their intrapersonal.

The conceptualization of negotiation means a transactional interaction process in which individuals in a cross-cultural situation affirm, define, contrast, or support the image desired by others. Identity negotiations are sometimes carried out unconsciously, and sometimes they are conducted with an awareness of the dynamics of the process, especially concentrated on the “cognitive focusing” process learned through repeated skill exercises. Through the process of communication, the Muslim community continues to negotiate various meanings (Ting-Toomey, 2017).

The Muslim community carries out the identity negotiation process through communication patterns with spiritual intrapersonal, family, community, cross-religious, religious organizations, and the government. The Muslim community carries out verbal and nonverbal communication by upholding the identity of kinship relations and at the same time interacting with Islamic society.

Interaction and communication are individual experiences that develop along with the daily experiences of Muslim communities after involvement. Process of cross-religious communication in an effort to build civic pluralism (Eck, 2007, 743–776) as a social contract, enabling communities of involvement to live together peacefully and at a higher level to cooperate through social context activities.

## Methods

For this article, the authors conducted semistructured interviews (Ridwan et al., 2020, 709–722), participatory observations, and several informal conversational interviews (Boeije, 2010; Dazzani & Silva-Filho, 2022, 884–892; Seidman, 2019; Sulaeman et al., 2022, 225–257; Irta et al., 2022, 1299–1317) of Muslim communities after involvement in the *pela gandong* ritual. Interviews were conducted face-to-face and through live-streaming digital media. The authors of the follow-up study approached the Muslim community through the use of phenomenology, allowing the authors of the continued study to focus on experiences after involvement in intrapersonal and interpersonal communication, such as the spiritual self, family, community, cross-religious identity, Islamic religious organizations, and government.

Further studies investigated subjective experiences after involvement, subjective experiences as a medium of motivation, and the meaning of experiences attached to outcome transcripts. The authors conducted interviews with twenty-one people

involved in rituals. However, the authors conducted interviews with fifteen Muslim communities, and the other six Muslim communities were no longer willing to share their communication experiences after involvement. The results of the interviews with fifteen Muslim communities have revealed names using pseudonyms in this study. However, in the interview transcript, to maintain the authenticity of the name, the authors did not edit the language of the transcript create a pseudonym.

This study is based on a phenomenological approach to the subjective interpretive paradigm with qualitative methods and does not provide a statistically representative indication of the experience of communication after the Muslim community is involved with the surrounding environment. The purpose of this study is to assess experiences, attitudes, and knowledge without burdening the mind by exploring the treatment of acceptance of Muslim communities with other individuals involved and uninvolved in the surrounding environment, both in *Tial* and *Laha* villages and in Ambon City.

Data were analyzed through qualitative data processing (Creswell & Cheryl, 2017; Nurdin et al., 2022, 214–237; Sulaeman and Ridwan, 2021, 497–526). Then, conclusions were drawn regarding the communication experience of Muslim communities after involvement in the *pela gandong* ritual, which was verified with other data for future research.

### The Principles of Ritual *Pela Gandong* Cross-religious

The central principle of cross-religiosity is the agreement on the bond of the kinship identity over human affairs in local traditions. The cross-religious community strives to discover how individuals and groups are compatible with religious teachings and to pursue local traditions' purity as a show of dedication to ancestors to realize harmony in cross-religious life. Because ritual as social drama provides it with a significant social function, it dispels conflict and schisms and mends quarrels (Sulaeman et al., 2022, 385–403; Turner, 1962, 1969, 37–57). The critical cross-religious *pela gandong* beliefs and values include social–community concerns, kinship, diversity, togetherness, and equality, as in Table 1.

**Table 1** The principles of ritual *pela gandong* cross-religious

No	The principles of ritual <i>pela gandong</i> cross-religious	Meaning
1	Community-social concern	Ritual encounters with taking the oath of kindred relations
2	Kinship	The belief systems based on the identity of unity, openness, and courage and a result in shared family responsibility
3	Diversity	Mutual understanding, respect, and acceptance of the cross-religious identity
4	Togetherness	Understanding the human values the human value of togetherness and strengthened kindred relations
5	Equality	Equality in the feeling of the bonding relationship with respect and acceptance of the cross-religious identity

Source: Field data (2022)

Cross-religious *pela gandong* has kinship ties that imply a worldview based on a belief system that shows the clan symbol of self-identity familial relationships. The worldview becomes the identity of unity, openness, courage and having a shared responsibility in the family. The family forms a personality by communicating mutual care, sharing, responsibility, and enjoyment together.

### The Muslim Communities' Identity Transformation

The identity transformation of the Muslim community implies a new assessment of the self and others regarding the experience involvement *pela gandong* ritual has its own mutually sustainable meaning. The experience illustrates the meaning derived from the conscious experience of the community performing the cross-religious ritual, as in Table 2.

Phenomenology assumes that humans are creative creatures, have free will, and have several other subjective properties (Iyadurai, 2011, 505–521; Michael et al., 2014, 337–356; Williamson & Hood Jr, 2011, 543–559). The experience is the Muslim communities' identity transformation through relationships, acceptance treatment, worship labels, self-identity proof, and human kinship.

### Communication Patterns of After Involvement

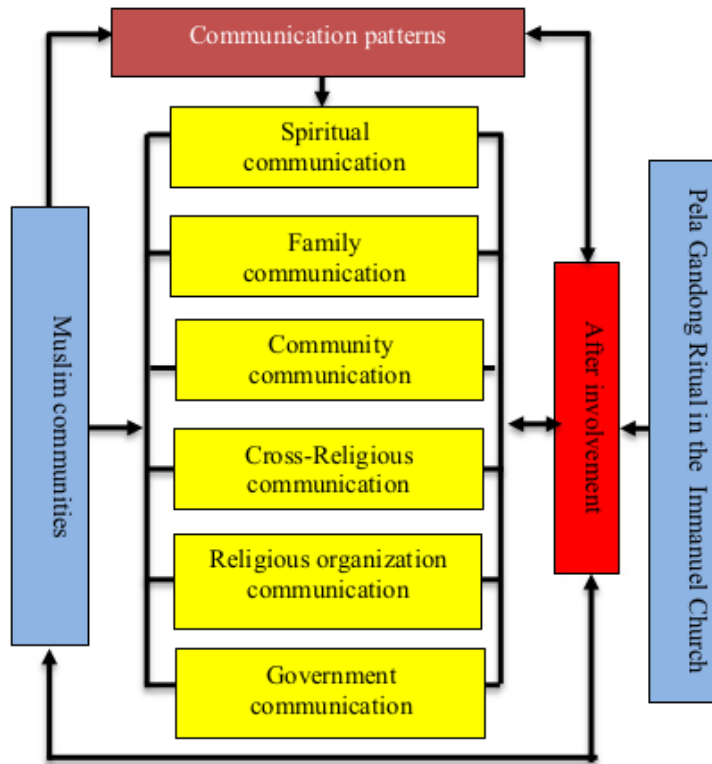
After involvement in the *pela gandong* ritual, the authors of the carry-on study found that communication patterns of Muslim communities were classified into six communication patterns, each of which relates to the other through spiritual, family, community, cross-religious identity, religious organization, and government communication (Fig. 1).

The Muslim community conducts intrapersonal and interpersonal interactions and communication with family and friends from the village and outside the village, and through fellow involvement, uses the same communication patterns understood by each other. This communication pattern is constructed by the Muslim community by interpreting symbols to understand each other's situational rituals as well as negotiating self-identity and constructing actions of communication.

**Table 2** The Muslim communities' identity transformation through *pela gandong* ritual

No	Identity transformation	Meaning
1	Relationships	A traditional life value and an institution of social–community concern and cementing the true ties of the cross-religious relationship
2	Acceptance treatment	The respecting and appreciating of cross-religious relations
3	Worship labels	Symbol of cross-religious identity labels
4	Self-identity proof	A difference can be created by strengthening the cross-religious community's kindred relations
5	Human kinship	Relationship with a shared purpose and no difference that works through accepting and acknowledging that there is a difference

Source: Field data (2022)



**Fig. 1** Model forms of communication patterns of Muslim communities after involvement in ritual at the Moluccas Immanuel Church

## Spiritual Communication

Spiritual communication is identified as intrapersonal communication with God (Syam, 2009). Spiritual communication is based on religious nuances through intrapersonal psychology, such as *salat*, prayer, dhikr, and others. Spiritual communication describes intrapersonal communication (Jun, 2018) by building the transcendental values of God. Intrapersonal communication is interpreted as a dialogue with oneself through mutuality, closeness, empathy, risk, and commitment (Kent and Taylor, 2002, 21–37). Thus, intrapersonal communication is built on thinking activities through cognitive processes that take place within the individual (Wood, 2014, 81–85), such as thinking as a form of individual communication with himself (Mead, 2008). When communicating with God, Muslim communities' conduct spiritual communication through verbal and nonverbal communication. Spiritual communication is a desire to be forgiven, to improve oneself, and to not repeat again, and all of this is done through self-introspection, repentance, and prayer.

## Self-Introspection

Self-introspection includes spiritual communication patterns (Guo-Ming, Chien & Tong 2011, 441–454; Hochheimer et al., 2016). Self-introspection serves to provide a way for the Muslim community to face and solve problems. Self-introspection is



carried out when intrapersonal individuals encounter a problem and wish to solve the problem through the communication process. After involvement, the Muslim community carried out a process of stages of self-introspection through inner conflicts, spiritual anxiety, momentary feelings, and Muslim polemics.

Self-introspection is conducted because the Muslim community experiences inner conflict categorized as rational beliefs, emotional resistance, and disobedience. However, this gave rise to intrapersonal concerns and negative emotions due to self-confrontation after involvement. Emotional resistance exceeds rational beliefs by triggering acts of disobedience that in part leads to rejection and regret. The Muslim community also feels spiritual anxiety arising from concern about embracing Islam after involvement. Then, the Muslim community performs an act of the looking-glass self, looking at themselves in the mirror from the perspective of the Muslim community.

The feeling of thought, in front of the entrance of the church, is a banner that says “worship of the *basudara*”. He is worried about it, why do I want to come here?. (Informant 05, personal interview, June 15, 2021)

Feelings of anxiety, shock, displeasure, wanting to be angry while being led by *gandong* cloth and being picked up by *lesso* dance in the church building. (Informant 01, personal interview, August 25, 2021)

A momentary feeling is also experienced when standing with the Christian community by singing hymns at the Immanuel Church, the church bells rang three times, singing hymns, and I also stood up. (Informant 15, personal interview, December 11, 2021)

The Church bell sounded three times, I felt strange, annoyed that I was told to stand singing hymns, followed by one of the four advent candles being lit. (Informant 10, personal interview, November 17, 2021)

Unifying the religious context through the *pela gandong* ritual, triggering polemics among Islam society with verbal and nonverbal communication messages of anger, emotion, and labeling. Islamic society regards the Muslim community as part of Islamic society and bonds of kinship. In Islamic society, cross-religious people do not have different social contexts but accept each other’s different beliefs in the context of religion.

## Repentance

Repentance, including patterns of spiritual communication through intrapersonal communication. Repent, admit mistakes, create feelings of fear of punishment, and lose self-esteem. For the Muslim community, the feeling of being forgiven of God is determined that there is an intrapersonal awareness that God forgives sins after involvement. Even self-confidence will gain strength to be intrapersonal communication and gain better self-esteem.

The Muslim community performs repentance through spiritual communication as a pattern of intrapersonal communication with God carried out after contemplation, acknowledgement, and regret. By acknowledging involvement feelings of guilt

are reduced. Repentance is done through a process of spiritual communication with confession and regret about repeating involvement.

Isteghfhar, remember to God. No repeating the ritual. There is no place to ask for help and forgiveness except through God the Almighty. (Informant 17, personal interview, June 03, 2021)

Regret, and repent to God, I cannot do it anymore. (Informant 20, personal interview, September 03, 2021)

The Muslim community carries out the repentance process through (1) intrapersonal dialogue as regret, and (2) dialogue with the public by making a statement of apology expressed not to repeat and delivered in front of Islamic society. An apology is repentance as an act categorized in the pattern of spiritual communication through intrapersonal repentance.

### Prayer

Praying is a form of spiritual communication between the Muslim community and God. Prayer becomes a strength to strengthen a weak soul, comfort a troubled heart, and calm restless feelings. The Muslim community suffers from psychological disorders and feels restless after involvement.

Ignorance and entrapment, accusations, ridicule with the label “infidel, *Ama-husu, gandong* dirty”. (Informant 11, personal interview, June 25, 2021)

Feeling restless, confused, and indecisive, why do something like that? Since then, she has continued to pray, asking for forgiveness from God. (Informant 03, personal interview, December 16, 2021)

This involvement uses the concept of civic pluralism (Eck, 2007, 743–776). Mixing the two religious beliefs and intrapersonal communication has an impact. For this reason, spiritual communication through a request for help from God is to be strengthened, comforted and calmed by prayer. Application through worship prayer, spoken while communicating spiritually and hoping to gain world and intrapersonal salvation under the guidance of God and gain strength and patience to face the tests and trials of everyday life. The Muslim community prays; the goal is to obtain His guidance. For this reason, pray after every prayer so that you are still given instructions and do not return to the road by embracing the true teachings of Islam. Prayers ask for protection and gain strength to face trials.

### Family Communication

The family will shape the individual’s personality (Josh & Elizabeth, 2019, 277–288; Hurst et al., 2022, 449–457), who has an idea of his or her own life and that of others (Cabalquinto, 2020, 1608–1624; Rauscher et al., 2020, 180–189). Forming principles that will be demonstrated throughout his life. Personality formation for

adaptation and maintaining cohesiveness (Walsh, 2016, 1–12), family as the first party (Throuvala et al., 2019, 48–62), and understanding the different conditions of family members (Fitzpatrick, 1993) after involvement in the *pela gandong* ritual.

Ritual involvement, not family expectations that want family members to be involved. Based on these expectations, families feel disappointed after the involvement of family members or have feelings of sadness, confusion, and worry. After involvement forms knowledge, the diversity of interaction and communication with the family is categorized in the communication pattern with the family through the affirmation family and the negation family.

### **Affirmation Family**

Families of fellow involvement (affirmation families) are families that provide acceptance treatment to interact and communicate in a manner that is conducive (comfort) to the Muslim community. Prior to involvement in the Immanuel Church, trust was formed by the action of past religious experiences as proof of identity. Then, involvement as proof of intrapersonal identity with understanding and differences, harmony can be created, and social meaning can be created through religious values and kinship culture.

Help each other, if anyone needs help, “*samua basudara gandong*”. (Informant 19, personal interview, December 07, 2021)

Involvement through solicitation with ignorance has been arranged by God, compulsion, and trapping. We are all told to enter the Church. (Informant 04, personal interview, July 08, 2021)

After involvement, acceptance of interaction and communication with family affirmations is evidence of situational identity. People interact and communicate with each other and visit. The goal is to connect the ties of friendship with the affirmative family. In the family’s view of affirmations, continuing friendship, and sharing knowledge about the *pela gandong* ritual.

Adds fortune and prolongs life. Interaction is done by casual chat at family events. (Informant 07, personal interview, June 13, 2021)

After involvement, the families of fellow members always meet to talk about what has been done in the Church. (Informant 08, personal interview, September 13, 2021)

I used to rarely see family, but now we always see each other. Feeling guilty, asking for His forgiveness, being framed to join this event. (Informant 16, personal interview, December 01, 2021)

Likewise, prior to involvement, intrapersonal was shunned by family affirmations. After involvement, the affirmation family returned to being good with the acceptance of comfort treatment and perceived involvement as a trap. Thus, the communication pattern of the Muslim community with an affirmation family provides no difference in the acceptance of treatment, the existence of support, and motivation as a symbol of comfort communication.

## Negation Family

After involvement, the Muslim community interacts and communicates with the noninvolved family (negation family), leading to transformation as part of the Muslim community, and cross-religious communities will give birth to resistance from the negation family.

Conditions such as this affect the pattern of communication with the negation's family. This influence occurs because the negation family supports and does not support. Acceptance of the treatment communicated with the negation family responded differently. The Muslim community tries to find a way out of the internal problems faced in negation families by conducting identity negotiations. When communicating with the negation, the family is categorized through discriminatory communication patterns, and negotiations face discriminatory communication.

First, discriminatory communication patterns appear along with stereotyping and prejudice (Nelson 2015). Discrimination is an effort to maintain religious walls (Fox, 2000, 423–450). If individuals have different beliefs, the majority group will discriminate in an effort to maintain their religious walls. Such a family of negation undermines the trust and confidence of the Muslim community of involvement. The negation family treats the acceptance of the Muslim community with verbal and nonverbal communication through sarcastic communication, anger, discomfort, indifference, and not being visited.

The treatment of negated families involves “satire and anger” and religious symbols through verbal communication, such as having entered “*Amahusu*” as a Muslim community. The negation's family gave acceptance of the treatment with a nonverbal discriminatory communication pattern of “change of action” by no longer visiting the Muslim community's home. The treatment of the negation family acceptance breaks the ties of friendship with the Muslim community. Psychologically, treatment through mental activities with the acceptance of negation family communication plays on the feelings and emotions (Jun, 2018) of the Muslim community.

Second, discomfort with the discrimination in the Muslim community will force him or her to carry out identity negotiations to reduce discrimination through communication and interaction by reducing prejudice and discrimination (Johnson et al., 2010, 119–126). Negotiations deal with discriminatory communication by establishing a comfortable relationship in communicating openly and empathetically. Negotiations were carried out because there were different perspectives regarding the *pela gandong* ritual.

With a different view of the negation family, it increases the discriminatory attitude of the negation family toward the Muslim community. The negation family treats the acceptance of discomfort, such as the treatment of accepting congregational prayers at the mosque, into question. The negation family again questioned their religious identity, whether after the involvement had done self-introspection, repented, and prayed to regret their involvement. The treatment of acceptance of the Muslim community is categorized as building an attitude of intrapersonal comfort with the negation family for the better. Finally, the negation's family made a gathering and visited the home of the Muslim community with the treatment of accepting communication and establishing a comfortable relationship.

The form of negotiation is carried out by the Muslim community, communicating openly with the negation family. Acceptance treatment communicates openly, can melt the heart of the negation family, and accepts the reason of the Muslim community. The Muslim community responded by communicating comfort to the family, negating the treatment of acceptance, and communicating comfort. From the Muslim community's point of view, it took a long time for the new identity to be forgiven due to ignorance about receiving information about his involvement. By communicating openly, the negation family can accept and admit mistakes and have mutual respect.

Negotiating identity by the Muslim community in the face of discriminatory attitudes from negation families takes place through a commitment to reduce prejudice and discrimination. The form of commitment communication is carried out with the negation family through an agreement not to blame each other. They realize and feel remorse for involvement and assume the misrepresentation of information prior to involvement. The attitude of the Muslim community with a commitment to reducing prejudice and discrimination is bearing fruit. The negation family can accept the conditions of the Muslim community. Then, the acceptance treatment communicates with the previously accepted discriminatory attitude and gradually disappears, so that the misunderstanding of the Muslim community and the negation family forms the communication of acceptance of comfort treatment.

## **Community Communication**

In the context of community involvement, communication patterns are formed as a communication process. According to Menurut Berger and Thomas (1991), this form of communication is used by individuals by creating habitual actions, which in the end builds communication patterns tailored to the types of individuals. For this reason, the experience forms a pattern of communication between the Muslim community and the community that is categorized as an inclusive society and an excluding society.

### **Inclusive Society**

After involvement, a polemic of the excluding community was sparked, especially among Muslims. The Muslim community has experience communicating with the society of fellow involvement (inclusive society) with an attitude of openness, which is categorized by the communication message process through maintaining brotherhood, proclamation, neutrality, barriers to receiving information, mutual assistance, and tolerance.

The form of communication with an attitude of maintaining brotherhood shows a moderate attitude that is not in favor of one community. This attitude mediates every problem between communities in the village. After involvement, the attitude of maintaining brotherhood did not change, which was still considered not to discriminate between inclusion and excluding society. This attitude was accepted by the community, such as the excluding community giving speeches

in front of the *baileo*, “shouting, responsible for involvement in the church. However, I still respect his words well. The anger is understandable” (Informant 02, personal interview, August 12, 2021). The excluding community is still treated with acceptance of communication of convenience, even though it treats the Muslim community with communication of discomfort. In an effort to maintain brotherhood communication, the Muslim community is firm and will no longer repeat the *pela gandong* ritual in the future and feel regret.

Likewise, when communicating with an inclusive society, a communication attitude of tolerance becomes an option. The equation of the act of communication has been done, preferring to see it as a reality that must be accepted rather than contradicted. In involvement, initially, there was a difference in acceptance that was different from the reality that occurred in the Immanuel Church. Communicating with acceptance provides mutual comfort and mutual support, and there is no difference with the inclusive society.

### Excluding Society

Communication between the Muslim community and the not involved society (excluding society) has the experience of communicating self-disclosure, categorized by the process of communicating messages through discriminatory communication and negotiating discriminatory communications.

First, discriminatory communication is a process of interaction by creating stereotypes and prejudices. To anticipate this discrimination, the Muslim community affirms its identity by actively participating in creating a new self by reflecting and adapting to its changing self. Discriminatory communication experienced by the Muslim community when communicating with the excluding society is categorized through verbal and nonverbal discrimination. According to Graumann (1998, 41–61), verbal discrimination is social discrimination by using language. Verbal discrimination is part of aggression through rejection and threats. When communicating with excluding people, verbal discrimination is categorized by intimidation, prejudice, and labeling.

Another form of discrimination is prejudice, an attitude of discomfort in receiving treatment from an excluding society, because the Muslim community receives certain bad judgments. Acceptance of prejudiced treatment, such as the excluding society sneering at it through social media with a communication of tolerance for ritual involvement in the Immanuel Church.

Verbal discrimination through nicknames or labeling from the excluding society, as stated by Becker (1968), the nickname given to people is considered to deviate from the rules. The Muslim community gets a label and, according to the label, is an excluding society. The nickname received is a deviation from the involvement, such as the form of the nickname “*Amahusu*, infidel, exchanging religion with custom, *gandong*, dirty, and bathing first”.

Nonverbal discrimination is a form of discrimination using facial expressions, gestures, or sign language. The Muslim community faces nonverbal discrimination when communicating with an excluding society, such as “hurt, different facial

expressions, disappointed, annoyed, and hateful faces". The excluding community in the surrounding environment sees itself as the Muslim community and does not verbally express disappointment with their involvement, but the Muslim community can feel it. The Muslim community sees that the excluding society in the surrounding environment hates it. The face of the excluding society is no longer friendly and no longer respects the Muslim community. It seems that when the Muslim community meets the excluding society, they usually shake hands as a form of nonverbal communication message, which is interpreted as "familiarity and politeness". However, after the involvement, it is no longer like before the involvement. With such discriminatory acceptance of excluding from society, the Muslim community becomes inferior and ashamed.

Second, negotiations face discriminatory communications. Discrimination is another form of internal conflict in an excluding society. Conflict occurs when individuals who are originally related then turn hostile due to differences in views, interests or goals and interpret these differences as an inconvenience. Conflict in the form of discrimination is experienced and unavoidable, and the Muslim community needs to learn to deal with it by negotiating so that it is hoped that at the end of the negotiation process, it will gain understanding, appreciation, and support. Following the viewpoints of Johson (2010, 119–126), Wood (2014, 81–85), Rusbult and Van Lange (1982) the Muslim community's identity negotiation efforts are categorized through serving, avoiding, communicating, and ignoring.

The form of negotiation of the Muslim community in dealing with discriminatory attitudes from the excluding society is to "serve". With such an attitude, conflicts and discriminatory attitudes will end soon. This form of negotiation is in accordance with the concept of "loyalty response" from Rusbult and Van Lange (1982). The Muslim community negotiates by responding loyally, such as responding to intimidation from the excluding community. When reciting Barzanji narrations at the altar of the Immanuel Church, the Muslim community prefers to be loyal by "serving" that reciting Barzanji narrations on the church altar is considered a "trap".

The response of the Muslim community in the face of discriminatory attitudes from the excluding society is carried out by "staying away". In accordance with the concept of "the exit response" from Rusbult and Van Lange (1982), the response is characterized by leaving the relationship or separating intrapersonally. The attitude of negotiating their identity by trying to stay away from the attitude or location of the discrimination so that they feel free from discrimination in the short term.

This form of negotiation includes the Muslim community carrying out an "exit response" when faced with the nickname from the excluding community as "dirty, take a shower first". The excluding society considered his soul to be defiled by calling the Muslim community "washing in the seawater".

The Muslim community responds to the discriminatory attitude of the excluding society by "communicating" directly the problem in dispute and trying to find a solution so that the relationship remains healthy. This attitude is in accordance with Wood (2014, 81–85) "the voice response" or the response is expressed with open attitudes and opinions. The response of the Muslim community when faced with nonverbal discrimination from the excluding society. The Muslim community communicates its involvement to the excluding society.

The Muslim community negotiates by “ignorance” avoiding communicating the problem, expressing disagreement passively or praying for the problem to be resolved, so that the discriminatory individual is expected to change his attitude. The form of negotiation is in accordance with the concept of a “neglect response” from Wood (2014, 81–85). Negotiations of the Muslim community are in accordance with the neglect response method, such as the Muslim community being given the nickname by the excluding society. The Muslim community responds to the attitude of the excluding society by being cold and not retaliating, following the principle of it being better to remain silent.

## **Cross-Religious Communication**

On Sunday, December 2, 2018, the ritual with cross-religious involvement sparked a polemic among Islamic society by focusing on the location and form of the ritual. Responding to the polemic of Islamic society resulted in disharmony in relationship communication. On Wednesday, December 12, 2018, the cross-religious held a “meeting” at the Governor’s official residence. Based on the experience of cross-religious communication, it is categorized through strengthened relationships and statement attitudes.

## **Communication Strengthens Relationships**

Strengthen the relationship between the Muslim-Christian community through togetherness as a form of communication for the acceptance of cross-religious relations. Communication of togetherness is the value of traditions that are used as self-identity to understand, respect, and humble themselves, which are inseparable from the cross-religious lifestyle system. The relations to live mutually understand human values through a life of togetherness. The treatment of togetherness when communicating with the acceptance of comfort that there is no difference even though they are cross-religious and still care about one another by glorifying, respecting, and respecting the other to strengthen the ties of brotherhood.

The kinship relationship with the family lifestyle system is a view of life. The pattern of family life as part of the communication process strengthens brotherly relations through kinship values as a clan symbol. Kinship values will strengthen brotherhood relations and sharing togetherness, which forms a cross-religious intrapersonal personality.

The next form of communication to strengthen brotherly relations is diversity with treatment when communicating with acceptance of comfort that understands that there are differences. Diversity is used as self-identity in the context of different religious beliefs to live side by side in harmony, without mentioning differences.

The last is equality as a form of communication, strengthening fraternal relations between religions, caring, and maintaining brotherly relations by prioritizing acts of communication of social solidarity toward the existence of social context relationships. Regarding relations as a self-image of self, which is a bonding relationship, no one village is superior the other traditional villages. Through cross-religious ties, we are obliged to help each other socially based on human values.



## Cross-Religious Attitude Statement

After involvement, triggering disharmony among Islamic society, on December 12, 2018, cross-religious communication made a statement in the form of a verbal communication message through an “apology” for the involvement of the *pela gandong* ritual, which was carried out on December 2, 2018.

Before the verbal communication message, the statement of attitude with the delivery of apologies, cross-religious first held a joint meeting in the form of a dialogue to address the polemic. Dialogue is built with mutual recognition and understanding to build appreciation and respect for cross-religions. Joint meetings with dialogue full of sincerity through commitment and cooperation took place while maintaining relationships through social-community concerns in the form of brotherly communication with togetherness, kinship, diversity, and equality as traditional values on the basis of agreements that have been initiated by ancestors as an inheritance from the generations.

The cross-religious mutual agreement, on Wednesday 12 December 2018, with a statement of cross-religious attitude in the form of a verbal communication message “apology” read by the chairman of the *pela gandong* ritual implementation committee (Fig. 2), attended by cross-religious leaders, Moluccas MUI chairman, Moluccas PWNu, Bishop Amboina, Muhamadiyah Regional Leader, representatives of Indonesian Buddhists, the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of Moluccas Province, and the Moluccas Protestant Church Synod.

After involvement, the cross-religious conveyed a verbal apology by not repeating it in the future but carrying out ritual communication of social-community concerns by taking oaths to one another by binding themselves into cross-religious brotherhood relations. Verbal cross-religious apologies were carried out through publication in various mass media reports as a form of communication of self-identity awareness to strengthen and maintain brotherly peace as the glue in cross-religious relations.

**Fig. 2** Communication patterns of cross-religious through attitude statement



## Religious Organization Communication

Islamic religious organizations, such as the Moluccas Provincial MUI, have an important role in Muslim communities after involvement. The existence of MUI is a partnership with the government of Central Moluccas Regency, Ambon City, Moluccas Provincial government, and/or the government regional office of religion of Moluccas Provincial. MUI was established to foster, maintain and protect by protecting the journey of Islamic society and the spread of religious polemics through the mass media.

After involvement, discomfort with Islamic society, including developing information in the mass media, triggered polemics within the Moluccas Islamic society. To respond to the mass media reports, on Sunday night, December 2, 2018, the Moluccas MUI invited the Moluccas MUI board, Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, da'wah organizations, *al-Anshor*, and the Muslim community to clarify the involvement of the *pela gandong* ritual.

On Tuesday, December 4, 2018, the Moluccas MUI invited the Ambon City MUI administrators, Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, da'wah institutions, *al-Anshor*, the Ministry of Religion of Moluccas Province, Islamic society, and the Muslim communities involved to explain and clarify the involvement of the *pela gandong* ritual. From the meeting, communication between the Muslim community and religious organizations was categorized through facilitated Islamic society polemics, strengthened intrapersonal relations, cross-religious motivation and harmony, and statement attitudes.

### Muslim Polemics are Facilitated

A polemic is a debate over a social reality, such as the ritual that occurs in the environment of Islamic society. It triggers a polemic among Islamic society and Islamic religious organizations. Through this debate, Moluccas MUI responded to the inspiration of the controversy by facilitating various inconveniences of receiving treatment when communicating with Islamic society, including news information in the mass media that triggered the polemics. MUI Moluccas facilitated debates by Islamic society, Islamic religious organizations, and mass media reporting information through a meeting from December 2 and 4, 2018, by inviting the Muslim community involved to clarify the involvement that sparked polemics within Islamic society (Fig. 3).

The Islamic society revealed that the MUI administrators and their members were individuals who facilitated the meeting by clarifying the *pela gandong* ritual process that sparked the polemic. Clarification of involvement in the acceptance treatment process communicates the inconvenience to Islamic society and Islamic religious organizations, such as administrators and members of MUI, Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, da'wah institutions, *al-Anshor*. The Muslim community has stated intrapersonal involvement because it is cross-religious. Then, through a meeting facilitated by the MUI, the Muslim community experienced a process of receiving treatment for communicating discomfort, such as anger, emotion, irritation, and labeling from Islam society and Islamic religious organizations.

**Fig. 3** Communication patterns of religious organization through the clarification of the Muslim communities explains the involvement of the *pela gandong* ritual



### **Intrapersonal Communication Strengthened**

The involvement of the Muslim community, whose condition is still vulnerable to knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings that bring anxiety, could happen again in the future, which would trigger polemics about the discomfort of cross-religious life. Moreover, in the cross-religious community, kinship influences cross-religious kinship in performing the *pela gandong* ritual, making it easy for the Muslim community to engage in *pela gandong* rituals through other religious contexts.

Various responses from the Moluccas MUI have played a role in maintaining chastity and fortifying the intrapersonal Muslim community of Islamic teachings. Then, the polemics among Islamic society and Islamic religious organizations also play a role in maintaining the *aqidah* of the Muslim community and, of course, the desire of the Muslim community itself to carry out a spiritual communication process through self-introspection, repentance, and praying for forgiveness from God with regret for having been involved in the *pela* ritual held at the Immanuel Church.

### **Cross-Religious Motivation and Harmony**

MUI Moluccas, in addition to being a means of fortifying intrapersonal relationships among Muslims, are also a place for dialogue to solve problems by protecting and maintaining cross-religious life. The cross-religious people have all made mistakes and faced problems that have sparked polemics within Islamic society.

The involvement of the Muslim community triggers a polemic among Islamic society that will damage the order of cross-religious relations, so the Moluccas MUI is tasked with bridging the Muslim community. MUI communicates with the Muslim community and Islamic society circles through meetings with caution. The Muslim community is brought together through dialogue with Islamic society with the hope that MUI can immediately seek to resolve problems to maintain cross-religious life. The cross-religion is a blessing when we understand each other that there are differences in religious contexts and are able to manage them with the social capital of those differences well.

The problem for Islamic society must be pursued by MUI as a protector of problem solving in carrying out the true teachings of Islam. For the Muslim community, wrongdoing is considered an intrapersonal matter. In this problem, there is wisdom behind the act of communication; it is not used as an exclusive relationship that must damage the order of cross-religious life to strengthen harmonious social-society relations based on human values.

### **Communication Attitude Statement**

With the polemic among Islamic society, on December 4, 2018, the Moluccas MUI invited Islamic society, community leaders, religious leaders, and Muslim communities to hold a meeting to hear clarification on the process of involvement in the ritual. The communication process for clarifying the Muslim community by accepting the inconvenience from community leaders, religious leaders, and Muslims that created tension and commotion disturbed the situation at the meeting. After the meeting was held, the next day, Wednesday, December 5, 2018, the Maluku MUI in Ambon City communicated its stance on and responded to the treatment of acceptance of Islamic society with information that was developing through mass media coverage.

The Moluccas MUI in Ambon City communicated about the involvement of the Muslim community, which contained four statements of attitude, including regretting the use of symbols, avoiding activities that cause polemics, following up on incidents, and jointly maintaining security and stability in the Moluccas. The four contents of the statement are a concern and guidance for cross-religious communities to maintain relations to achieve harmony that is in accordance with the communication message through apologizing, admitting mistakes, and promising that in the future it will not happen again.

### **Government Communication**

Identity transformation begins with a change in the individual's perspective on an object. In this situation, the Moluccas Provincial government has a view on the process of religious rituals, namely, starting from involvement and after involvement, a cross-religious apology, a dialogue meeting, and a statement of the attitude of the Moluccas MUI.

The findings show that rituals trigger polemics within Islam society, especially the change in the identity of Muslim community involvement, which will affect the form of communication patterns in the surrounding environment. The form of communication after involvement will lead to changes in actions through spiritual, family, community, cross-religious, and religious organization communication. As stated by Berger and Thomas (1991), the form of communication used by individuals will create habitual actions, and in the end, this habit builds communication patterns tailored to the types of individuals.

The communication patterns led to a change in the form of cross-religious communication with the Moluccas MUI by determining the attitude statement communication regarding the *pela gandong* ritual. On Wednesday, December 12, 2018, the governor as the head of the Moluccas province government held a meeting at his residence, attended by cross-religious leaders, the Moluccas MUI chairman, community leaders, Nahdatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, the Moluccas Protestant Church Synod, Amboina Diocese, *Walubi*, and the head of *Saniri Hatalai* village. The Muslim community has experienced comfort categorized through mediating communication and apology communication.

### Mediation Communication

Mediation communication is an act of individual communication mediating or facilitating other individuals on an object for problem solving. According to Hjarvard (2013), mediation is a process in which tradition and community increasingly depend on logic. Fostering interdependence is another important factor (Hjarvard, 2017; Miski, 2021, 230–254). In this context of communication, the Moluccas provincial government facilitated cross-religious meetings and the Moluccas MUI. The Governor of Moluccas Province carried out communication to mediate the meeting with cross-religious apologies categorized through *bakumpul* communication, communication symbols of identity, and communication of mutual forgiveness (Fig. 4).

*Bakumpul* communication is an act of *bakudapa* (meeting) communication. *Bakudapa* as cross-religious act as a communication message for meeting rituals. The *bakumpul* communication, regardless of the background of belief and or descent of the Muslim and Christian communities through the ties of traditional covenants that have been passed down from ancestors.

The *bakumpul* communication is used as “people of the *basudara*” as an invitation to gather and meet based on the value of brotherhood inherited from ancestors. The values of brotherhood are maintained, nurtured, and strengthened based on kinship, diversity, and equality as cross-religious traditional values through *bakudapa* by performing rituals. The action of ritual communication of *bakudapa* has a

**Fig. 4** Communication patterns of government through *bakumpul* communication with mediation communication actions



positive impact by strengthening kinship and the value of peace into brotherhood togetherness as a symbol of cross-religious identity communication.

The symbol of cross-religious identity is by carrying out collective communication actions, regardless of the background of cross-religious beliefs through brotherly relations and acceptance of harmonious comfort treatment. Cross-religious life is experienced with feelings of security and peace and being cared for, which is built on the basis of mutual understanding. There is a difference in the attitude of treatment, acceptance, inclusiveness, and comfort relations.

With the treatment of acceptance of comfort at first with community gathering by performing social-community care rituals to understand each other's differences, support each other, respect, appreciate, boast and help cross-religious communities in a social context for the common good between villages with the true adhesive bond of the *basudara pela gandong* relationship.

The next form of communication is forgiving the government with cross-religion, which aims to strengthen kinship relations by building togetherness, diversity, equality, and kinship as cross-religious traditional values. The communication of apology is used as a symbol of cross-religious intrapersonal awareness. Communication forgives each other to build harmony, a symbol of kinship. This symbol is sourced from existential awareness through honesty and sincerity cross-religions and governments by managing differences, not creating an attitude of suspicion. Communication forgiveness of each others' cross-religions will truly be born from individuals who have a sincere basis.

With the communication of mutual forgiveness, the anger of Islam society against the *pela gandong* ritual at the Immanuel Church does not have to damage the order of cross-religious life. Forgiveness is the culmination of sacrifices for interfaiths to relinquish their rights when faced with discomfort and will harm the strengthening of kinship relations. For the government, cross-religious kinship is used as the identity of the Moluccas people. The cross-religious kinship performs rituals of *bakudapa*, apologizes if wrong, and accepts one another's strengths and weaknesses.

### Apology Communication

The *pela gandong* ritual at the Immanuel Church sparked a polemic among Islamic society who are cross-religious and disrupted the life of kinship relations, which gave rise to statements of cross-religious attitudes. With this statement, the government was also supported by mediating the cross-religious standards, the chairman of the Moluccas MUI, community leaders, Nahdatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, the Moluccas Protestant Church Synod, Amboina Diocese, *Walubi*, and the head of *Saniri* of *Hatalai* village.

A statement of cross-religious attitude with apologies to society admitted mistakes and promised not to repeat them in the future. This recognition requires a strong understanding and awareness to continue to knit cross-religious relations and cross-religious cooperation in the midst of symptoms of sluggishness and/or stagnation of cross-religious roles to build relationships by seeking *bakudapa* to create spaces for cross-religious encounters.

## Conclusion

Based on this research, the communication pattern used by Muslim communities is verbal and nonverbal, consisting of categories related to spiritual communication, family communication, community communication, cross-religious communication, religious organizational communication, and government communication. This category is used as a way to communicate intrapersonally and interpersonally after ritual involvement as a search for religious meaning that makes it possible to live together peacefully and has proven successful in conveying a message of apology through the “*bakudapa*” ritual.

Through the *pela gandong*, cross-religious people will feel obligated to help each other. If Christians have a need, for example, to build a church, then Muslims will definitely help, and vice versa, if they are building mosques, Christians are involved in helping. Cross-religious communities can unite and strengthen kinship ties. However, the *pela gandong* is a communication medium providing early warning information so that the conflict does not escalate.

In the theological aspect, cross-religious recognizes religious differences. However, on the social aspect, cross-religious maintains kinship ties. So that the *pela gandong* ritual does not happen again in the future, a Fatwa from the Moluccas Indonesian Ulema Council is needed.

The *pela gandong* ritual at the Immanuel Church is proof of the Moluccas’ implementation as a cross-religious peace laboratory that has been declared by the Muslim-Christian community. The peace laboratory was built using the local wisdom values of the Moluccas people to strengthen brotherly relations and build peace to strengthen intercommunity and cross-religious relations in the Moluccas.

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**Data Availability** Qualitative data in this study are kept confidential.

**Code Availability** Not applicable.

## Declarations

**Conflict of Interest** The author declare that we have no conflicts of interest in the authorship or publication of this contribution.

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