

Qur'anic principles of tabligh communication and their relevance to interpersonal communication theory

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Abstract

This study discusses the gap between the normative communication principles of the Qur'an and modern interpersonal communication theory. *Tabligh* is a prophetic duty carried out by preachers to convey the message of Islam to humanity, both individually and collectively. This study is a qualitative literature review using thematic interpretation methods. Primary data were obtained by compiling Qur'anic verses related to the principles of *tabligh*, while secondary data consisted of various literature on interpersonal communication and da'wah studies. The data were analyzed using content analysis, examining the meaning of Qur'anic verses related to the principles of *tabligh* and communication. This study yielded the following findings. *First*, the Qur'an contains several principles of *tabligh* (Islamic teaching) and communication that are relevant to interpersonal communication theory, including *qaulan husnan* (good words), *qaulan sadidan* (true words), *qaulan layyinan* (gentle words), *qaulan balighan* (effective words), *qaulan ma'rufan* (good words), and *qaulan kariman* (noble words). This indicates that the Qur'an places honesty, empathy, politeness, kindness, and effectiveness as fundamental principles in conveying the message of Islamic propagation (*tabligh*). The concept of *tabligh* in the Qur'an thus reflects not only the activity of conveying Islamic teachings but also ethical and humanistic interpersonal communication practices. This study can contribute to the development of Islamic communication studies and strengthen the relevance of Qur'anic values in the practice of *tabligh* and communication in society.

Abstrak

Studi ini membahas kesenjangan antara prinsip-prinsip komunikasi normatif dalam Al-Qur'an dan teori komunikasi interpersonal modern. *Tabligh* merupakan tugas kenabian yang dijalankan oleh para pendakwah untuk menyampaikan pesan Islam kepada umat manusia, baik secara individual maupun kolektif. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan menggunakan studi kepustakaan dan metode tafsir tematik. Data primer diperoleh dengan menghimpun ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an yang

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berkaitan dengan prinsip-prinsip *tabligh*, sedangkan data sekunder terdiri atas berbagai literatur mengenai komunikasi interpersonal dan kajian dakwah. Data dianalisis menggunakan analisis isi dengan mengkaji makna ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an yang berkaitan dengan prinsip-prinsip *tabligh* dan komunikasi. Penelitian ini menghasilkan beberapa temuan. *Pertama*, Al-Qur'an memuat sejumlah prinsip *tabligh* (penyampaian ajaran Islam) dan komunikasi yang relevan dengan teori komunikasi interpersonal, meliputi *qaulan husnan* (perkataan yang baik), *qaulan sadidan* (perkataan yang benar), *qaulan layyinan* (perkataan yang lemah lembut), *qaulan balighan* (perkataan yang efektif), *qaulan ma'rufan* (perkataan yang baik), dan *qaulan kariman* (perkataan yang mulia). Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa Al-Qur'an menempatkan kejujuran, empati, kesantunan, kebaikan, dan efektivitas sebagai prinsip-prinsip fundamental dalam menyampaikan pesan *tabligh*. Dengan demikian, konsep *tabligh* dalam Al-Qur'an tidak hanya mencerminkan aktivitas penyampaian ajaran Islam, tetapi juga praktik komunikasi interpersonal yang etis dan humanis. Penelitian ini dapat memberikan kontribusi bagi pengembangan kajian komunikasi Islam serta memperkuat relevansi nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an dalam praktik *tabligh* dan komunikasi di masyarakat.

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INTRODUCTION

Islam, through the Qur'an, has introduced itself as a religion that contains guidance for mankind on the right path, as well as a religion of preaching (al-Qaradhawi, 2007). This means that the guidance and truth contained in Islam should not only be known and practiced by those who understand and embrace it, but they are also obligated to convey (*tabligh*) and disseminate that truth to others widely. A Muslim should not be selfish in pursuing goodness and piety alone, but should also be able to invite others to become good and pious through Islam. Therefore, *tabligh* in the Qur'an is referred to as a prophetic obligation, which is now the duty and obligation of scholars to continue after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) (Ali, 2014).

Tabligh in the Qur'an is often referred to as a sacred duty to convey the Divine message to humanity as clearly and widely as possible, so that they can understand its message properly and correctly and use it as guidance in their lives. Therefore, correct and humanistic communication in *tabligh* is crucial to achieving the goal of *tabligh*, namely, the proper delivery and understanding of the religious message by the communicant (Nasrullah & Khotimah, 2023).

In this context, the Quran itself teaches several principles of good, correct, and effective communication for Muslims. When analysed, these principles are not only normative but also contain communication principles that are highly relevant to

interpersonal communication theory. Interpersonal communication itself is usually defined as the process of exchanging messages directly between two or more people, allowing for immediate feedback (Anggraini, 2022). In the context of *tabligh*, interpersonal communication is often used by preachers and *da'i* in conveying religious messages to individuals and groups.

Recent studies have increasingly examined *tabligh* from various communication perspectives. Most existing research has focused on communication practices in digital da'wah, public speaking, media strategies, and interpersonal communication in specific preaching contexts. For example, studies have investigated the role of interpersonal communication in Islamic broadcasting and digital preaching (Muhadi et al., 2026; Harahap et al., 2024), communication patterns among preachers (Khotimah et al., 2026; Soraya et al., 2026), as well as the challenges of da'wah in social media environments (Kholili et al., 2024; Abrori et al., 2026). These studies demonstrate that communication has become an important dimension of contemporary *tabligh*, particularly in responding to the changing media landscape and audience behaviour. However, their primary concern has generally been the implementation of communication in preaching practices rather than the conceptual and normative foundations of communication embedded in the Qur'an itself.

Furthermore, although the body of Islamic communication research has continued to expand, recent bibliometric evidence indicates that the discipline remains relatively fragmented and is dominated by applied studies (Choirin et al., 2026), while theoretical integration between Qur'anic concepts and established communication theories is still limited. In particular, few studies have systematically examined how Qur'anic principles of *tabligh* correspond to the principles of interpersonal communication developed in contemporary communication scholarship. Consequently, the relationship between normative Islamic teachings and interpersonal communication theory has not yet been adequately conceptualised. Addressing this gap, the present study explores the Qur'anic principles of *tabligh* and analyses their relevance to interpersonal communication theory. By doing so, this study contributes not only to Qur'anic studies but also to the theoretical development of Islamic communication through a dialogue between Islamic normative sources and modern communication theory.

Referring to the Qur'an, it emphasizes the importance of truthfulness, kindness, gentleness, and effectiveness in communicating and conveying religious messages across several verses. These values demonstrate strong relevance to contemporary interpersonal communication, which similarly emphasizes mutual understanding, empathy, respect, and effective message exchange. Examining this relevance is important because it highlights how *tabligh* and Islamic da'wah can operate in a more open,

contextual, and audience-oriented manner. In other words, *tabligh* is not merely concerned with transmitting religious teachings but also with fostering meaningful relationships with the audience (*mad'u*) through appropriate communication strategies. Based on this perspective, the present study aims to explore the principles of *tabligh* in the Qur'an and analyze their relevance to interpersonal communication theory. By establishing this conceptual linkage, the study seeks to enrich the integration of Islamic communication and mainstream communication scholarship, thereby contributing to the development of a more inclusive and theoretically grounded model of communication.

METHODS

This study is a qualitative study using library research and thematic interpretation methods. This study was conducted by compiling verses on *tabligh* (Islamic teachings) and their interpretations, drawing on tafsir books and scientific literature on interpersonal communication. The primary data for this study are Quranic verses on *tabligh*, while supporting data are books, scientific journals, and literature related to interpersonal communication. In this study, five Qur'anic verses were selected because they explicitly represent these communication principles and provide a normative foundation for analyzing the relevance of *tabligh* to contemporary interpersonal communication theory.

No.	Qur'anic verses	Principle of <i>tabligh</i>
1	Surah Al-Ahzab (33): 70	<i>Qaulan sadīdan</i> (Truthful speech)
2	Surah Ṭā Hā (20): 44	<i>Qaulan layyīnan</i> (Gentle speech)
3	Surah An-Nisā' (4): 63	<i>Qaulan balīghan</i> (Effective and persuasive speech)
4	Surah Al-Isrā' (17): 28	<i>Qaulan maysūran</i> (Pleasant and appropriate speech)
5	Surah Al-Isrā' (17): 23	<i>Qaulan karīman</i> (Respectful speech)

This data was collected through documentation, namely, collecting various verses related to the principles of *tabligh* and their interpretations, as well as other literature relevant to the study topic. To ensure the credibility of the analysis, the interpretation of each selected verse was not based solely on its literal meaning but was examined through classical and contemporary tafsir literature. This approach enabled the study to capture both the normative meaning of the Qur'anic text and its communicative implications within the broader context of Islamic teachings. The interpretation process focused on identifying the essential communication values embedded in each verse, which subsequently served as the analytical categories of the study.

The data analysis method used is content analysis, which involves identifying Quranic verses on the principles of *tabligh*, examining their meanings based on interpretations in tafsir books, and linking the concepts identified to interpersonal communication theory. The identified Qur'anic communication principles were then compared with key concepts in interpersonal communication theory through a thematic analysis. The analysis focused on identifying conceptual similarities and differences between the Qur'anic principles of *tabligh* and contemporary interpersonal communication concepts. This comparative approach allowed the study to formulate a conceptual framework that demonstrates the relevance of Qur'anic communication principles to modern interpersonal communication without reducing their normative religious character.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The concept of interpersonal communication

Etymologically, the term interpersonal communication is composed of the syllables communication, inter, and personal. Communication itself can be defined as the process of exchanging information between individuals through a system of symbols, signs, or behavior (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2007). Inter means a bond between two or more individuals (Arbi, 2019). The term "personal" refers to something personal or individual. Terminologically, intrapersonal communication can be understood as the process of sending and receiving messages between a sender and a recipient, either directly or indirectly (Irawan, 2017; Suranto, 2011).

Interpersonal communication is communication that occurs between two or more people face to face, where each of them is very likely to catch the responses and reactions of the other directly, both verbally and nonverbally (Mulyana, 2013). This interpersonal communication, when carried out by two people, is called dyadic communication. Dyadic communication refers to the general context of interpersonal communication, where each communication partner in their interaction focuses solely on the other person (Solomon & Theiss, 2013).

Another definition of interpersonal communication states that interpersonal communication is the ability to interact with other people, either through writing or verbal conversation (Solomon & Theiss, 2013). In practice, this interpersonal communication pattern can occur both individually and in groups, where the communicator is characterized by being able to handle different people in different situations and make the other person feel comfortable. Elements of communication, such as gestures, including eye contact, body movements, and hand gestures, are also

considered part of interpersonal communication. The primary functions of interpersonal communication are listening, speaking, and conflict resolution. (Solomon & Theiss, 2013).

Interpersonal communication can be verbal, such as talking between two or more people, or nonverbal, in various situations. Interpersonal communication can be face-to-face to achieve a specific goal. Interpersonal communication, by its nature, is divided into two types: dyadic communication and collective or small-group communication (Mark L. & Daly, John A., 2002).

Dyadic communication refers to a face-to-face communication process between two people. Small group communication is a face-to-face communication process that occurs between three or more people, where each participant interacts with the others (Cangara, 2012). Many people view small group communication as a type of interpersonal communication for several reasons. *First*, because each participant is involved in the face-to-face communication process. *Second*, because the conversation occurs in chunks, allowing each participant to speak equally. *Third*, because the source and receiver of the communication are not easily identified, each participant can act as both a source and a receiver (Cangara, 2012).

The characteristics of interpersonal communication focus on the process of individual interaction, not just verbal interaction. It also emphasizes behavior and skills in interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication also pays attention to verbal and nonverbal messages and responses, as well as to the objective investigation of communication experiences between people or individuals (Ramaraju, 2012).

Interpersonal communication is seen as beneficial for providing constructive criticism, managing conflict, providing support, and other forms of communication. Therefore, interpersonal communication skills are crucial in the context of religious social interactions and other social interactions, such as preaching, talking to new neighbors, coordinating with friends, or negotiating with others. Interpersonal communication can also be used to build positive and successful relationships at home, school, work, and in public, as it has become a part of everyday life (Solomon & Theiss, 2013).

Interpersonal communication, in particular, refers to communication that occurs between people by creating personal bonds between them. This interpersonal communication can strengthen relationships between individuals, and therefore, the actions of one person can influence the actions of the other participants (Solomon & Theiss, 2013). The desired goal of interpersonal communication can be achieved only if a person can convince others to cooperate with him. Whether he can achieve this interpersonal goal depends largely on his ability to change the minds or behavior of others through his communication (Solomon & Theiss, 2013). Thus, interpersonal

communication can be defined as the process of conveying messages, generally between two or more people, and resulting in feedback interactions, either directly or indirectly, to change, improve, or influence others for a specific purpose.

In the context of effective communication, interpersonal communication skills are essential for interacting with others, both individually and in groups. These interpersonal skills can be utilized during face-to-face communication and interactions with others (Sarnoto, 2002). Meanwhile, the function of social communication can be realized through the existence of self-concept and self-existence for survival, fostering relationships, and achieving happiness (Hefni, 2017). Interpersonal communication can be seen as an individual's ability to dialogue and act as a good and effective communicator in planning through IQ, arrangement through RQ/spiritual quotient/SQ, its implementation through *nafs* quotient/Nafs Q, and its evaluation through EQ6 intelligence (Arbi, 2019).

In the view of Rakhmat (2001), when viewed from the perspective of communication psychology, intrapersonal communication is an information processing process that includes sensation, perception, memory, and thinking (Rahmiana, 2019). In an Islamic context, intrapersonal communication can be seen as one of the essences and roots of Islamic communication, particularly in relation to the role of family communication, which aims to build a harmonious family in accordance with Islamic norms and teachings. In this context, parents play a crucial role in internalizing Islamic values in their families through da'wah communication within the family. This intrapersonal communication can certainly occur if da'wah or *tabligh* becomes a calling and a self-awareness to implement Islamic teachings.

Regarding interpersonal communication, there are at least four theories. *First*, the message design logic theory states that each individual generally has diverse and distinct thoughts about communication. Therefore, diverse messages will be created. In this regard, there are three message design logics: (1) expressive message logic. This pattern is generally used with an emphasis on self-expression. Communication is seen as conveying personal thoughts and feelings to others. Values such as openness, honesty, and clarity are crucial. Communicators often pay little attention to context and appropriateness (Rahmiana, 2019). In logic (2), conventional design logic, individuals will use this pattern because they view communication as a set of rules. They are highly concerned with conformity to what is considered correct. Logic pattern (3), rhetorical message design logic, asserts that individuals will use this pattern because they view communication as a way to create situations and negotiate diverse goals. Their focus lies on flexibility, satisfaction, and communication skills. This pattern is generally used to

draw attention to the communication carried out by others as a way to understand their perspectives.

Second, communication accommodation theory asserts that an informative platform is one used to understand cultural differences and similarities related to language and speech. The focus of communication accommodation theory lies in how and why people modify and change their communication behavior in various settings. This theory observes that when communicating, individuals strive to reduce or increase differences between themselves and others. They will attempt to communicate as others do, or demonstrate different communication styles (Rahmiana, 2019).

Third, uncertainty reduction theory explains and predicts when, why, and how people use communication to reduce their doubts when interacting with others. In this context, there are at least two assumptions in this theory, namely (1) that the main purpose of communication is to reduce human uncertainty about the surrounding environment; (2) that everyone will experience uncertainty, which results in discomfort (Rahmiana, 2019). Thus, communication here becomes a tool to reduce this uncertainty. This uncertainty encompasses behavioral and cognitive uncertainty. Behavioral uncertainty refers to uncertainty about how to act appropriately. Cognitive uncertainty, on the other hand, is more about uncertainty about how to think about someone or something.

Fourth, expectancy violation theory explains various individual behaviors when their personal space is violated. This personal space can also refer to psychological and emotional domains. The core of expectancy violation theory is the assumption that humans need personal space and affiliation. When people perceive that certain needs have been compromised, this theory predicts that they will try to do something about it. They may move toward it or, conversely, resist it. In this context, there are at least three concepts: (1) expectancy, which refers to what an individual anticipates in a situation based on three factors: context, relationship, and the characteristics of the communicator; (2) violation valence, which is the positive or negative evaluation formed regarding the unanticipated behavior; and (3) the communicator's appreciation valence, which is the evaluation made about the individual who committed the violation (Rahmiana, 2019).

The concept of *tabligh* in the Quran

Linguistically, *tabligh* comes from the word *ballagha*, which means to convey or pass on a message to others according to the intended purpose. In the context of da'wah, *tabligh* refers to the activity of conveying Islamic teachings to others with the goal of ensuring that the message is understood and practiced correctly (Farida et al., 2020).

In al-Ma'idah: 67, Allah commanded the Messenger to convey all the revelations of the message that was revealed to him, namely the Al-Qur'an. He was forbidden to hide any of the treatises, and strengthened his mind so that he would not be afraid of being hated by people. If he does not convey or hides part of the treatise, it means that he really did not convey the task of the treatise. Allah has promised to protect and preserve it from slander and human evil, so that no one can prevent him from conveying the revelation of Allah's message. In line with the meaning of this verse, the history of Hasan Al-Basri states that the Messenger of Allah once said: "*Indeed Allah sent me with a message, but I refused to carry it, and knew that people would lie to me. He (Allah) gave me a promise that I would convey His message, or He would torture me*" (al-Zuhaili, 2011).

Tabligh, in the context of this verse, is interpreted as the activity of conveying the message of Allah's religion to humans widely so that they can be heard and understood correctly. *Tabligh* is the duty and obligation of the Messengers and clerics after the door to prophecy is closed. The aim is for humanity to know the truths in the Islamic message as a guide to life in the world. That is the prophetic task given by Allah to the Prophets and scholars after the last prophethood of Muhammad.

The duties and obligations of the *tabligh* are stated in al-Nur: 54. This verse explains Allah's command to the Prophet Muhammad to tell his people to obey Allah in His *shari'a* and commands, and also obey His Messenger in following the teachings and way of life towards Allah. If they actually turn away from this obedience, then in reality the Messenger is only burdened with the task of conveying his message, and the task of his people is to obey all the teachings that he commands, and if they want to obey, they will certainly receive guidance. This is because the task assigned to the Messenger was only to convey Allah's message as clearly as possible to the people (Nawawi-al-Jawi, n.d.). There was no obligation for the Messenger other than to convey God's message to mankind as clearly as possible (QS. An-Nur: 54). The essence and mission of prophecy is the delivery of a clear message to humanity. This principle then became the basis for da'wah activities in Islam.

Principles of Qur'anic *tabligh*

The Qur'an, in several verses, teaches several principles of good, correct, and effective verbal communication in the context of *tabligh* and *da'wah*. This is because good *tabligh* is carried out through humanistic, effective, and persuasive communication. The Qur'an teaches the importance of communicating with audiences in a good, correct, polite, direct, and convincing manner. These principles of *tabligh* are at least stated in Surah Al-Ahzab: 70, Surah Taha: 44, Surah Al-Nisa': 63, Surah Al-Isra': 5, and Surah Al-Isra': 23.

The principle of correct speech (qaulan sadidan)

The principle of communicating with correct speech is stated in Surah Al-Ahzab: 70. In this verse, Allah teaches believers to always fear Allah in every situation and condition they experience, both physically and spiritually. One of the manifestations of devotion is the ability to always speak the right words. Correct words are words that are in line with the truth of religious messages and are convincing, such as reading, *dhikr*, *amar ma'ruf, nahi munkar*, studying knowledge, and teaching it. Included among the right words are speaking softly and politely in speaking to other people, and words that contain good lessons, advice, and guidance for everything that is deemed beneficial. Ibn Taimiyyah stated that this verse commands believers to be devoted to Allah and speak the right words, namely, words that are true in Islam, without addition or subtraction, such as justice and honesty (al-Qaisi, 1432).

The principle of truthfulness in this statement emphasizes the importance of honesty and truthfulness in communication. This means that lying or deceit is unconventional in communication. In the context of *tabligh* (Islamic outreach), a preacher or *da'i* must convey messages honestly and not manipulate information in religious messages. What is true must be said to be true, and what is false must also be said to be false.

In interpersonal communication theory, honesty is a crucial element and factor in building trust between the communicator and the recipient, or between the preacher and the audience. Without trust, the message will be difficult for the audience to accept and believe.

The principle of soft speech (qaulan layyinan)

Allah, in Thaha: 44, ordered Prophet Moses and Prophet Harun to preach to Pharaoh using soft words so that he could receive a lesson and repent to Allah. This verse shows that even with an unjust ruler like Pharaoh, *tabligh* communication and *da'wah* must still be carried out with gentleness, and not with violence. This is done so that the communication can be heard and received well by *mad'u* (al-Husain, 1989).

In this verse, Allah ordered Moses and Harun to speak softly and politely to Pharaoh when preaching to him, because gentleness and politeness can have a good impact on the person being preached to, such as being willing to answer the preaching well. Meanwhile, harsh behavior and harsh words can cause *mad'u* to run away and increase their disbelief. Soft words are words that do not contain elements of violence or rudeness in them, with the aim of approaching and embracing *mad'u* so that he will accept the *da'wah*. This gentle and polite behavior in the words of the *da'wah* is intended so that

Pharaoh or *mad'u* in general will listen to the words of the *tabligh* or da'wah so that they can understand the good lessons from them and feel afraid of Allah (al-Husain, 1989).

From an interpersonal communication perspective, a gentle and polite approach can create a conducive atmosphere, making it easier for the other person to hear and accept the message. The other person also shows empathy and sympathy for the preacher, encouraging them to at least listen to the message and to respond appropriately to it.

Principles of effective speech (qaulan balighan)

In al-Nisa: 63, Allah commands to turn away from hypocrites who have bad intentions against Muslims. Turning away here is meant so that Muslims do not pay attention to them and face everything they do and make up. They must be explained the laws of Allah by being invited to submit to Him, warned about the threats and consequences of disobedience to Him, and given good advice and lessons through convincing words that leave an impression and are effective on their souls. They need to be advised secretly, so that such communication is more successful in achieving the goal.

Al-Zuhaili said that this verse relates to the attitude of hypocrites, where Allah knows their deceit, spiteful behavior, and anticipation of evil that befalls believers. In responding to their behavior, the Prophet Muhammad was ordered to turn away from them and continue to give them advice and speak to them with persuasive words that left an impression on their hearts so that they would reflect and think about the good and change their attitudes for the better (Al-Zuhaili, 2012).

This verse serves as evidence that even if a sinner or disobedient person is avoided, they must still be given advice secretly and firmly through persuasive and effective words that leave a lasting impression on their hearts. Harsh and harsh words are still discouraged, as they will certainly have no impact on them and could even exacerbate their hostility and hostility.

The principle of effective speech or communication of da'wah (*qaulan balighan*) teaches that da'wah communication or *tabligh* communication must be conducted persuasively and effectively so that the message touches the hearts and minds of the audience, enabling them to understand and follow what is taught in the message. In interpersonal communication theory, communication effectiveness is greatly influenced by the communicator's ability to craft a clear, structured, and relevant message. The extent to which a preacher or *da'i* can craft a message in easily understood and clear language, using persuasive intonation, is highly likely to determine whether the message will be easily understood and understood by the congregation.

The principle of good speech (qaulan ma'rufan)

In Surah An-Nisa: 5, Allah teaches that communication, *tabligh* (Islamic outreach) and *da'wah* (Islamic da'wah) must be conducted using polite and courteous language and speech, both in terms of the method and the substance of the message. The use of good language can maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships and avoid conflict in communication, just as good content can also maintain harmony and peace among those who communicate.

This verse was revealed regarding guardians for the ignorant (idiots) to guard their wealth and develop it properly in accordance with established sharia. From the proceeds of this development, guardians are commanded to provide for them according to their daily needs. Furthermore, guardians are commanded to treat them kindly and ethically, speak gently to them, not harshly, and treat them like their own children with love and affection, making them feel respected (Al-Zuhaili, 2012).

The command to speak good words (*ma'ruf*) is an order for every guardian to say to an orphan with the words that this property is your property, and I am only the guardian, and when you are an adult, the property will be returned to you. However, if the orphan is considered stupid, then the guardian is advised to advise him, educate him, and make him happy, not to waste or squander his wealth, and also make him aware that the consequences of this behavior are poverty and so on. With this kind of treatment, sometimes they can become smarter in managing their wealth (al-Maraghi, 2015).

This pattern of *ma'ruf* communication, in the context of *tabligh* or *da'wah*, is communication that is both appropriate in terms of the content of the message and the language used, so that it is appropriate to the context and intellectual level of the listener, so that the communication is easily understood and contextual (*muqtadha al-hal*). Communication conducted using language that is above the intellectual level and context of the listener, or far below, can certainly be considered improper communication (*ma'ruf*), because such communication results in the listener not being able to properly grasp the message and making them less interested in the communication.

The principle of noble speech (qaulan kariman)

The principle of noble speech referred to here is polite speech that conveys the impression of respect and honoring the recipient. This principle of speech can be seen at least in QS. Al-Isra': 23. In QS. Al-Isra: 23, Muslims are commanded to worship only Allah and also be kind to their parents, and when they reach old age and are decrepit, they are not allowed to be harsh to them, even by saying "*huss*," let alone rebuking them. They are advised to speak to their parents, especially, and to others in general, with noble words and avoid words that have the nuance of rebuking or arguing (al-Husain, 1989).

These noble words are in line with polite, gentle, and good words in da'wah and *tabligh* communication, which are very important for *da'i* and *muballigh* to carry out. What is meant by noble words is words that are soft, polite, beautiful, and easy to use, using refined and honorable language, along with good manners and a sense of shame (al-Husain, 1989).

This principle of *qaulan kariman* demonstrates the importance of respecting the interlocutor in communication and in interpersonal communication. Mutual respect is a crucial factor in building harmonious communication relationships. Communication conducted with words that convey respect and appreciation for the recipient or *mad'u* will certainly elicit a corresponding response. They will also reciprocate the message, whether in the context of religious outreach or otherwise, so that this communication can proceed smoothly and reciprocally. Indeed, Islamic outreach and da'wah are carried out, one of the goals of which is to elicit a positive response from the recipient or *mad'u*, and this can be achieved through noble words.

The relevance of Qur'anic *tabligh* communication to interpersonal communication theory

Islam, as a revealed religion, not only contains a set of normative teachings governing humanity's relationship with God, but also contains guidelines governing human relationships with others. These teachings were revealed as guidance for life so that humans can live a good and righteous life, both in this world and the hereafter. Therefore, God entrusted the prophets and messengers, followed by the {Citation}scholars as their successors, with the task of conveying these teachings to humanity. In the Qur'an, the activity of conveying Islamic teachings is known as *tabligh*. *Tabligh* is not simply defined as the process of conveying religious information, but rather as a communication effort aimed at introducing, explaining, and instilling an understanding of Islamic teachings so that they can be accepted, believed, and practiced by the community.

In this context, *tabligh* has a very strong communication dimension because its success is measured not only by the message being conveyed, but also by the extent to which it influences the thinking, beliefs, attitudes, and behavior of the congregation. In other words, *tabligh* goes beyond the informative aspect; it also contains persuasive and transformative dimensions. This goal makes the activity of preaching a complex communication challenge for the prophets, apostles, and preachers after them. This challenge arises because a communicator must not only master the content of the message to be conveyed, but must also be able to build acceptance, trust, and a willingness among the recipients to listen and follow the message.

This awareness of the importance of communication in preaching is reflected in the various communication principles taught in the Qur'an. These principles demonstrate that the success of preaching is determined not only by the truth of the message's substance but also by the method of delivery. The Qur'an teaches several communication principles that serve as guidelines for preachers in interacting with their audiences: *qaulan sadīdan* (truthful speech), *qaulan layyīnan* (gentle speech), *qaulan balīghan* (effective and persuasive speech), *qaulan ma'rūfan* (good speech), and *qaulan karīman* (noble speech). These five principles demonstrate that communication, from a Quranic perspective, is not only oriented toward conveying a message but also toward establishing a positive relationship between the communicator and the recipient so that the goals of da'wah can be effectively achieved.

When analyzed from the perspective of interpersonal communication theory, these principles of Qur'anic *tabligh* communication strongly align with the indicators of interpersonal communication proposed by Joseph DeVito. According to DeVito, effective interpersonal communication is characterized by five main indicators: openness, empathy, supportiveness, positivity, and equality (DeVito, 2018). These five indicators are essential prerequisites for effective communication because they enable the formation of harmonious relationships, mutual trust, and mutual respect between the communicator and recipient.

Openness in interpersonal communication is seen as the primary foundation for the honest and transparent exchange of information. Openness is not only related to the communicator's willingness to convey information as it is, but also includes a willingness to take responsibility for the information conveyed and open space for honest interaction between both parties (Islami, 2025). Empathy relates to a person's ability to understand, feel, and put themselves in another person's shoes so as to be able to understand the emotional state and perspective of the person they are talking to. Support refers to the ability to create a non-threatening and non-defensive communication atmosphere so that the communicant feels safe to engage in the communication process. Meanwhile, a positive attitude reflects the communicator's ability to build a conducive atmosphere, provide respect to the communicant, and encourage active participation in communication (Islami, 2025). Equality indicates the recognition that each party involved in communication has equal value, dignity, and important contributions to the communication process (Hamdan & Attika, 2024; Irfal, 2021).

When these five indicators of interpersonal communication are compared with the principles of Qur'anic *tabligh* communication, a very close conceptual relationship is evident. The principle of *qaulan sadīdan* is relevant to openness, *qaulan layyīnan* is related to empathy, *qaulan balīghan* reflects supportiveness, *qaulan ma'rūfan* indicates

positiveness, and *qaulan karīman* represents equality. This alignment demonstrates that the communication principles taught by the Qur'an not only have a normative-religious dimension but also have theoretical relevance to modern interpersonal communication concepts.

First, the principle of *qaulan sadīdan* emphasizes the importance of honesty and truth in communication. The Qur'an directs that communication be based on facts and truth, free from elements of lies, manipulation, or falsehood (al-Qaisi, 1432). From an interpersonal communication perspective, honesty is a crucial factor in establishing trust in communication relationships. Trust is the social capital that enables the communicant to receive messages without excessive suspicion and resistance. Therefore, the higher the level of honesty of a communicator, the greater the chance of the message being received and believed by the recipient.

The relationship between *qaulan sadīdan* and openness becomes clear when openness is understood as a willingness to convey information honestly and transparently. In the context of da'wah, a *da'i's* honesty not only enhances personal credibility but also strengthens the legitimacy of the message he conveys. This aligns with the view that honesty is a crucial factor in building trust between the communicator and the recipient (Badawi, 2021; Rahmiana, 2019). Thus, *qaulan sadīdan* serves not only as an ethical guideline in communication but also as a communication strategy that plays a role in building trust and the effectiveness of da'wah.

Second, the principle of *qaulan layyīnan* emphasizes the use of gentle and polite language in communication (al-Husain, 1989). Psychologically, the use of gentle language serves to reduce resistance and tension that may arise in the communication process. When recipients feel respected and treated politely, they tend to be more open to listening and considering the message being conveyed. Conversely, the use of harsh or confrontational language often fosters a defensive attitude that actually hinders the reception of the message.

In interpersonal communication theory, this condition is closely related to the concept of empathy. Empathy enables the communicator to understand the emotional state of the recipient and adjust the communication style to avoid rejection. Thus, *qaulan layyīnan* not only reflects linguistic politeness but also demonstrates the communicator's ability to understand the recipient's psychological needs. This analysis demonstrates that gentleness in communication is a crucial instrument for building emotional closeness and strengthening the effectiveness of conveying the message of da'wah.

Third, the principle of *qaulan balīghan* emphasizes the importance of delivering clear, firm, effective, and persuasive messages (Al-Zuhaili, 2012). This emphasis on effectiveness demonstrates that communication in Islam prioritizes not only the accuracy

of the message's content but also the extent to which it is understood and influences the audience. Messages delivered clearly and in a structured manner are easier to understand, reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings.

From an interpersonal communication perspective, communication effectiveness is greatly influenced by the communicator's ability to craft messages that are appropriate to the needs and characteristics of the audience. Relevant and easily understood messages create a communication atmosphere that supports the process of changing the recipient's attitudes and behavior. Therefore, *qaulan balighan* can be understood as a form of supportive communication that not only conveys information but also helps the recipient understand and internalize the message they receive. This relationship demonstrates that communication effectiveness is a crucial factor in the success of da'wah and interpersonal communication in general (Solomon & Theiss, 2013).

Fourth, the principle of good manners teaches the use of words that are appropriate to the recipient's circumstances (al-Maraghi, 2015). This principle demonstrates that communication effectiveness is greatly influenced by the communicator's ability to understand the social, cultural, and intellectual context of the audience. Messages that are appropriate to the recipient's circumstances will be more easily understood and accepted because they are relevant to their experiences and needs.

From an interpersonal communication perspective, the ability to adapt a message to the characteristics of the audience reflects a positive attitude toward the recipient. This positive attitude is evident in the communicator's efforts to respect the recipient's abilities, background, and circumstances. Conversely, using language that is not appropriate to the recipient's level of understanding can create communication barriers and reduce the message's effectiveness. Therefore, good manners demonstrate that successful communication depends not only on the content of the message but also on its appropriateness to the circumstances of the intended audience.

Fifth, the principle of good manners emphasizes the importance of respecting and honoring the recipient in communication (al-Husain, 1989). Respect for the recipient demonstrates recognition of the dignity and worth of each individual. In the context of interpersonal communication, mutual respect is a key factor in creating harmonious and sustainable relationships.

The link between *qaulan kariman* and the principle of equality is evident in the recognition that every individual has the right to be respected and heard. Equality in communication does not mean eliminating differences in social status or role, but rather recognizing each individual as a party with a significant contribution to the communication process (Hamdan & Attika, 2024; Irfal, 2021). When communicants feel respected, they tend to respond more positively and be more open to the messages they

receive. Thus, *qaulan kariman* serves as a communication mechanism that strengthens interpersonal relationships while increasing the effectiveness of da'wah.

Based on this analysis, it can be understood that the principles of Qur'anic *tabligh* communication strongly align with modern interpersonal communication theory. This alignment demonstrates that the Qur'an not only teaches ethical values in communication but also offers principles that theoretically support effective communication. Openness, empathy, support, positive attitudes, and equality, indicators of effective interpersonal communication, are represented in the concepts of *qaulan sadidan*, *qaulan layyinan*, *qaulan balighan*, *qaulan ma'rufan*, and *qaulan kariman*.

Furthermore, the goal of *tabligh* communication to change the beliefs, attitudes, and outlook of the *mad'u* (initiative) demonstrates a similar orientation to interpersonal communication, which aims to influence the attitudes, opinions, beliefs, and behavior of the recipient. Because interpersonal communication allows for direct interaction and reciprocal feedback, this form of communication is considered the most effective in the process of persuasion and behavior change. Therefore, the relevance between Qur'anic *tabligh* communication and interpersonal communication theory lies not only in the similarity of their communication principles but also in their shared ultimate goal: to create positive change in the recipient through an effective, persuasive, and humanistic communication process (Islami, 2025).

The following diagram illustrates the relevance of Qur'anic *tabligh* communication principles to interpersonal communication theory (see Figure 1).

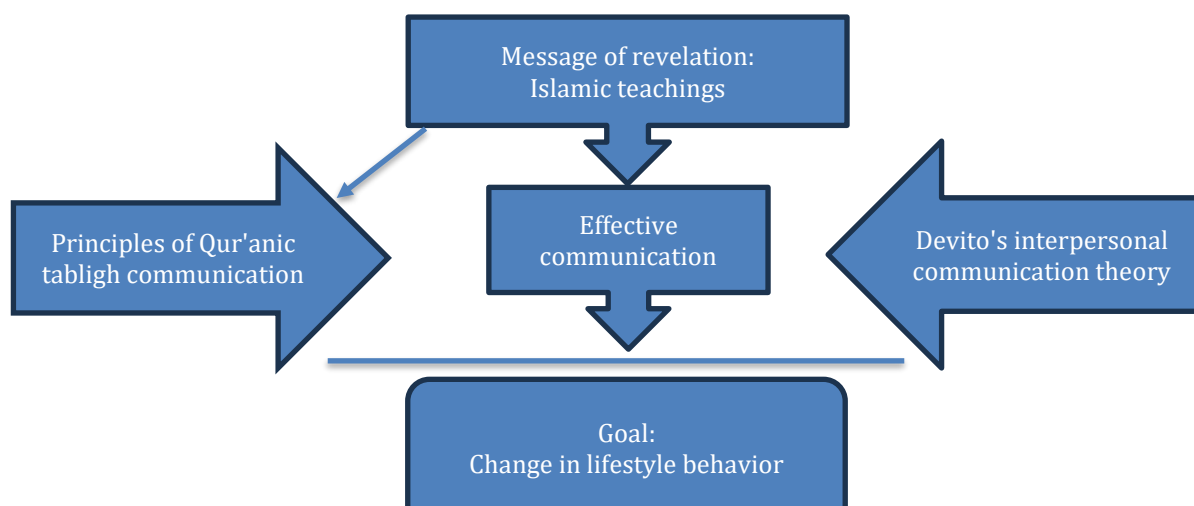


Figure 1. Conceptual relationship between the principles of *tabligh* and interpersonal communication theory

Source: Developed by the authors.

This study contributes to the development of Islamic communication scholarship by demonstrating that the Qur'anic principles of *tabligh* are not merely normative religious teachings but also constitute a coherent framework of interpersonal communication. While previous studies have predominantly examined *tabligh* from practical, rhetorical, or media-oriented perspectives, this study establishes a conceptual dialogue between Qur'anic communication principles and contemporary interpersonal communication theory. By mapping *qaulan sadīdan*, *qaulan layyīnan*, *qaulan balīghan*, *qaulan ma'rūfan*, and *qaulan karīman* onto the dimensions of openness, empathy, supportiveness, positivity, and equality, the study provides a theoretical model that bridges Islamic normative values with mainstream communication scholarship.

Beyond its theoretical contribution, this study also offers practical implications for contemporary *da'wah* practices. The findings suggest that effective *tabligh* should be understood not only as the accurate transmission of religious messages but also as the cultivation of meaningful interpersonal relationships between the *dā'ī* and the *mad'u*. Integrating Qur'anic communication principles with interpersonal communication theory encourages a more humanistic, dialogical, and audience-centred approach to Islamic preaching. This framework may serve as a conceptual reference for future studies on Islamic communication and for the development of communication models that are both religiously grounded and responsive to contemporary social contexts.

CONCLUSION

This research study suggests that the Qur'an contains various communication principles that can serve as guidelines for *tabligh* and *da'wah* activities. These principles include truthful and honest speech (*qaulan sadīdan*), polite and gentle speech (*qaulan layyīnan*), persuasive, effective, or firm, and lasting speech (*qaulan balīghan*), good speech (*qaulan ma'rūfan*), and noble speech (*qaulan karīman*).

These principles of *tabligh* communication emphasize the importance of honesty, gentleness, politeness, and effectiveness in conveying messages, along with values of respect and honor for the recipient. When analysed from the perspective of interpersonal communication theory, these principles are strongly relevant to modern interpersonal communication concepts such as openness, empathy, and a positive attitude in communication. Thus, *tabligh* in the Qur'an can be understood as an interpersonal communication process that not only emphasizes effective message delivery but also upholds ethical and humanitarian values to achieve the goal of influencing others.

This study is subject to several limitations. *First*, the analysis is based exclusively on library research and thematic interpretation of selected Qur'anic verses, without empirical validation of how these communication principles are implemented in

contemporary da'wah practices. *Second*, the study focuses solely on the conceptual relevance of Qur'anic *tabligh* principles to interpersonal communication theory and does not examine their relationship with other communication theories or different cultural contexts. Future research may therefore employ qualitative or quantitative approaches to investigate how these Qur'anic communication principles are practiced by contemporary preachers and perceived by diverse audiences. Comparative studies integrating *tabligh* principles with other communication theories or cross-cultural communication frameworks would also contribute to the further development of Islamic communication scholarship.

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