



COMMUNICATION ETHICS ON SOCIAL MEDIA: AN ANALYSIS OF QUR'ANIC PRINCIPLES FROM SURAH AN-NUR (24:11-15)

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| Received: March 5, 2024 | Reviewed: April-June 2024 | Published: July 13, 2024 |
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ABSTRACT

The contemporary world is vastly different from the past, particularly in the realm of communication and information. Modern advancements have facilitated seamless global communication, effectively shrinking the vast world. The internet, as a new communication medium, has had both beneficial and detrimental impacts on society. This study aims to explore the interpretation of Surah An-Nur 24:11-15, the communication ethics contained within these verses, and their application in social media interactions. Employing a qualitative library research method, data was gathered through an extensive review of relevant literature, with the Qur'an as the primary source. The communication ethics in Surah An-Nur 24:11-15 are encapsulated in three principal values: (1) speaking kindly, (2) honesty, and (3) accuracy of information (tabayyun). These ethical values are crucial for fostering peaceful and harmonious social interactions. This study highlights that these principles serve as essential guidelines for social media users, advocating for responsible and wise usage. By adhering to these values, individuals can enhance their social media interactions in accordance with Islamic teachings. The study underscores the importance of understanding and applying Islamic ethics in social media usage. Consequently, it is recommended that insights from this research be further developed and used as a reference to examine social media communication ethics from an Islamic perspective, employing diverse methodological approaches.

Keywords: Communication Ethics, Social-Media, Surah An-Nur verses 11-15

ABSTRAK

Dunia kontemporer sangat berbeda dengan masa lalu, khususnya dalam bidang komunikasi dan informasi. Kemajuan modern telah membuat komunikasi global menjadi lancar, yang secara efektif mengecilkan dunia yang luas. Internet, sebagai media komunikasi baru, telah memberikan dampak yang menguntungkan dan merugikan bagi masyarakat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi penafsiran QS An-Nur/24:11-15, etika komunikasi yang terkandung dalam ayat-ayat tersebut, dan penerapannya dalam interaksi di media sosial. Dengan menggunakan metode penelitian kepustakaan kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui tinjauan ekstensif terhadap literatur yang relevan, dengan AlQur'an sebagai sumber utama. Etika komunikasi dalam QS An-Nur/24:11-15 terangkum dalam tiga prinsip utama: (1) berbicara dengan kebaikan, (2) kejujuran, dan (3) akurasi informasi (tabayyun). Nilai-nilai etika ini sangat penting untuk membina interaksi sosial yang damai dan harmonis. Studi ini menyoroti bahwa prinsip-prinsip ini berfungsi sebagai pedoman penting bagi pengguna media sosial, yang menganjurkan penggunaan yang bertanggung jawab dan bijaksana. Dengan berpegang pada nilai-nilai ini, individu dapat meningkatkan interaksi media sosial mereka sesuai dengan ajaran Islam. Penelitian ini menggarisbawahi pentingnya memahami dan menerapkan etika Islam dalam penggunaan media sosial. Oleh karena itu, disarankan agar wawasan dari penelitian ini dikembangkan lebih lanjut dan digunakan sebagai referensi untuk mengkaji etika komunikasi media sosial dari perspektif Islam, dengan menggunakan pendekatan metodologis yang beragam.

Kata Kunci: Etika Komunikasi, Sosial Media, QS. An-Nur Ayat 11-15



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DOI: 10.24090/jimrf.v13i2.11932, p. 459-473

INTRODUCTION

Humans, as social beings, cannot be separated from communication. Even in the womb, humans begin to communicate. When a child experiences discomfort in the mother's womb, it responds by moving and kicking (Kinsella, 2022). The mother, in turn, senses these movements and responds with gentle caresses to calm the child. Once born, humans do not live in isolation; they coexist with others, often within large family units. In this communal life, God guides humans to live considerately and connect with others. Thus, beyond the command to communicate with God, humans are also instructed to build relationships with their fellow beings (Harjani, 2017).

Language has served as a tool for human communication since creation, as indicated by Surah Ar-Rahman, verse 4: "He taught him eloquence." The terms "al-bayan" and "al-qaul" are key words used in the Qur'an to signify communication. Without communication, life would be unmanageable, and human civilization could not progress. Communication is a fundamental need that sustains human life. The importance of communication is such that the Qur'an prescribes ethical guidelines for it.

Despite this, many people underestimate the significance of communication, considering it natural and effortless. However, what is conveyed is not always accurately understood by the receiver, nor does it always elicit a positive response or reaction (Ahmed, 2020). Some believe that manner of speech and intonation are inherent traits or genetically inherited from parents. They overlook that these communication

characteristics are developed through learning from the environment. Ethics is crucial not only in behavior but also in communication, whether face-to-face or via media.

Modern life is characterized by the ease of activities, largely due to the advancement of science and technology, which has brought about significant innovations. One such advancement is in the field of communication and information technology. This progress has made the vast world seem small, allowing global communication and information access without the constraints of time and space (Aboulkacem, 2021).

The internet, as a new medium, has rapidly evolved in society, transforming how people communicate (Muhammad, 2018). The internet facilitates interactions like chatting, enabling prolonged communication with individuals or groups in the virtual world. Web applications allow individuals to create personal spaces online, akin to having a personal address on the internet. The latest development in internet technology is social networking media (Nurul, 2015).

Social media has become the most popular communication medium in the modern era, serving various purposes, including business, politics, entertainment, social integration, and even propaganda. It is not just a necessity but a trend that signifies one's understanding of the digital world (Muhammad, 2022). Ethical communication aims to ensure effective communication and foster harmonious relationships between the communicator and the recipient. Harmony arises when both parties develop mutual respect and understanding of each other's

characteristics and ethical principles (Rahmatul, 2022).

Many life-problems stem from communication that lacks ethical consideration. Today, there are evident signs of ethical decline, and it is challenging to pinpoint the exact causes (Nurul, 2015). Social media has become a platform for expressing anger, hatred, insults, cyberbullying, and even issues related to self-existence (Febi, 2022). Ethical violations are rampant, such as publicly exposing someone's flaws to tarnish their reputation. Islam places significant emphasis on communication ethics, as evidenced by the regulations outlined in the Qur'an. The Qur'an provides guidelines on ethical communication in various aspects of life.

Various methods and ethical guidelines for social media communication are detailed in the Qur'an. Futihatul Jannah explains that Islam consistently teaches ethical communication principles in social media, such as Qaulan Ma'rufan, Qaulan Kariman, Qaulan Maysuran, Qaulan Balighan, Qaulan Layyinan, and Qaulan Sadidan. Futihatul's SMa'rT (Salam, Ma'ruf, Tabayyun) concept ensures that received information is not misleading or hoax, preventing issues that disrupt societal harmony (Janah and Yusuf, 2021). Additionally, Rinwanto's research highlights the Qur'an's directive for Muslims to embody honesty, a fundamental trait for Muslims, through the concept of Qaulan Sadidan. Similarly, Maya Sandra's research emphasizes the significant impact of communication on human survival and relationship quality, advocating for ethical communication in social media, avoiding

harsh, provocative, pornographic, or SARA-related language, and refraining from posting false articles or statuses.

Building on previous research, this study identifies a gap in the depth of understanding regarding specific Qur'anic verses and compares interpretations by different scholars on communication ethics in social media. Therefore, communication cannot be separated from the ethical guidelines provided by Allah in the Qur'an. Surah An-Nur, verses 11-15, explicitly warns Muslims to be cautious in disseminating unverified information, highlighting the grave sin of spreading falsehoods in the eyes of Allah. Given the lack of comparative and exploratory discussion in prior research, this study is crucial as it underscores the urgent need for ethical communication in social media.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a literature research methodology, utilizing a variety of sources including books, scriptures, and relevant literature (Sutrisno, 2022). Adopting a qualitative approach, the research analyzes Qur'anic verses and Hadiths related to the topic. Both primary and secondary data sources are examined to explore communication ethics on social media, focusing on Qur'anic Surah An-Nur verses 11-15, which address themes pertinent to the discussion. Data analysis is conducted using a descriptive comparative method, wherein data collected from various sources are described and compared to identify similarities and differences related to the researched themes. The aim of this study is to elucidate the principles of communication

ethics on social media in accordance with the guidelines provided in Qur'anic Surah An-Nur verses 11-15.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ethical Communication Values in QS An-Nur/24:11-15

The general theme of Surah An-Nur revolves around a significant event that imparts valuable lessons on communication ethics. The event narrates an incident where the Prophet's wife was accused of misconduct, a baseless rumor lacking any factual foundation. Consequently, the verses in QS An-Nur/24:11-15 provide guidance on ethical communication, addressing the importance of verification and truthfulness in speech. The relevant verses state:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنْكُمْ لَا تَحْسَبُوهُ شَرًّا
لَّكُم بَلْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَا اكْتَسَبَ مِنَ
الْإِثْمِ وَالَّذِي تَوَلَّى كِبْرَهُ مِنْهُمْ لَهُ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ لَوْلَا إِذْ
سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَأَنفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا
وَقَالُوا هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ لَوْلَا جَاءُوا عَلَيْهِ بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ
فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالشَّهَدَاءِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْكَذِبُونَ
وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
لَمَسَّكُمْ فِي مَا أَفَضْتُمْ فِيهِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ إِذْ تَلَقَّوْنَهُ
بِالسِّنِّتِكُمْ وَتَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ مَا لَيْسَ لَكُم بِهِ عِلْمٌ
وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّئًا وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ

"11. Indeed, those who brought forth the falsehood are a group among you. Do not think it is bad for you; rather, it is good for you. Every one of them will be

recompensed for what they have earned of sin, and he who took upon himself the greater portion thereof will have a great punishment. 12. Why, when you heard it, did not the believing men and believing women think well of their own people and say, "This is an obvious falsehood"? 13. Why did they not produce four witnesses? Since they did not produce witnesses, then in the sight of Allah, they are liars. 14. Had it not been for the favor of Allah upon you and His mercy in this world and the Hereafter, you would have been touched by a great punishment for that which you engaged in (spreading the falsehood). 15. When you received it with your tongues and said with your mouths that of which you had no knowledge and thought it was insignificant, while in the sight of Allah it is tremendous."

The teachings in Surah An-Nur impart significant lessons on ethical communication within society. Based on the analysis conducted, the ethical communication values embedded in Surah An-Nur, verses 11-15, can be elucidated as follows: *Firstly*, Speaking Kindly. Kind speech is a fundamental tenet taught in Islam. Islam provides clear guidance on choosing between speaking kindly or remaining silent. This principle highlights that Islam prioritizes communication founded on benevolent values, implicitly discouraging the use of harmful or negative speech (Ennis-O'Connor 2020).

As articulated in Surah An-Nur, verse 12: "Why did the believers not think good of themselves when you heard it and say, "This is an obvious falsehood?" This verse underscores the importance of maintaining a positive perspective and using kind words when conveying information:

لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَأَنفُسِهِمْ
خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ

“Why did the believers not think well of themselves when they heard that false rumor and say, ‘This is clearly a blatant falsehood’?”

In this verse, Buya Hamka interprets the guidance for believers, both men and women, to think well of their fellow believers. He suggests that believers should regard their brothers and sisters as they do themselves (Hamka, 1989). This means that if a person holds a positive view of themselves in accepting various circumstances, it will naturally lead to good behavior toward others, both in speech and action. The verse implies that in all situations, one should prioritize positive thinking, even when receiving questionable information. Furthermore, the phrase, “when you heard it and said, ‘This is a manifest falsehood,’” as interpreted by Al-Misbah, emphasizes why those people did not declare the information as false, especially considering that among Muslims, they know one another well, and Aisyah was the esteemed wife of the Prophet (M. Quraish Shihab, 2017). This underscores the importance of directing assumptions towards the positive. Consequently, this will result in always speaking kindly in daily interactions.

Given this, every Muslim is required to always speak kindly. When receiving information of uncertain truth, a Muslim should not immediately endorse the news. Instead, the appropriate response is to think well of others and respond with kind words. Surah An-Nur, verse 12, implicitly carries the message of speaking kindly. Although it does not explicitly command speaking kindly, adopting a positive outlook leads to words that reflect goodness, emanating from a sincere heart. Islam urges its followers to

consistently spread kind words in everyday life (Muhamad Shalih, 2012).

Second, Upholding Honesty. Upholding honesty is a noble act that must be practiced in daily life. As conveyed in the Hadith, which commands to act with honesty as follows:

عَلَيْكُمْ بِالصِّدْقِ فَإِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ إِنَّ
الْبِرَّ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ

“‘Always uphold honesty, for honesty leads to goodness, and goodness leads to paradise.’ (Narrated by Abu Dawud No. 437).

According to the hadith, honesty leads to collective well-being. This principle is evident across various aspects of human life, including the field of communication. The relationship between honesty and communication can be considered one of the essential elements in the realm of communication. Honesty is a fundamental aspect of ethical communication values in Islam. This is supported by Surah An-Nur, verse 13, which states:

لَوْلَا جَاءُوا عَلَيْهِ بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالشُّهَدَاءِ
فَأُولَئِكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْكَذِبُونَ

“Why did they not bring forth four witnesses? Because, in the sight of Allah, they are considered liars.”

This verse, as explained in Al-Maraghi’s interpretation, questions why those who spread false news did not bring four witnesses to substantiate their accusations (Al-Maraghi, 1993). Furthermore, the Ministry of Religious Affairs’ interpretation clarifies that this verse reflects Allah’s anger towards the spreaders of false news, questioning why they did not produce four witnesses to validate the slander

against Aisha. Their failure to present four witnesses signifies that they are liars, both in the eyes of Allah and among people.

The phrase 'in the sight of Allah, they are considered liars' indicates that those who spread such news are deemed liars because they cannot substantiate their claims with four witnesses. The incident involving Aisha demonstrates that those who accused her are considered liars by Allah. Because they could not prove their claims, they are essentially lying. From this, it is understood that honesty is generally defined as the alignment between what is reported and the actual truth. Hence, even if the accusers did not know the ultimate truth, they are still regarded as liars.

Based on the message of Surah An-Nur, verse 13, the conveyed lesson is that every Muslim should not report news they cannot verify, as doing so would classify them among the liars. Implicitly, the ethical communication value highlighted here is honesty. This verse encourages Muslims to embody honesty in their lives.

An honest person is trustworthy, does not lie, and is not hypocritical. Islam commands Muslims to be honest with themselves and others. Essentially, honesty means reporting everything according to the actual reality. Honesty is a noble trait or commendable character stemming from sincerity and purity of heart, resulting in alignment between what one says, does, and holds in their heart. Honesty corresponds to 'sidq,' which means truthfulness (Raihanah, 2017).

Thirdly, maintaining information accuracy. As conveyed in Surah Al-Hujurat,

verse 12, it emphasizes the importance of verifying facts before accepting or disseminating them. This principle underscores the necessity for Muslims to avoid suspicion and unwarranted accusations, thus ensuring the credibility and integrity of the information they handle. This practice not only preserves personal and communal trust but also aligns with the ethical standards advocated by Islamic teachings, fostering a culture of honesty and reliability in communication.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ
الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ
أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

"O you who believe, avoid much suspicion, for some suspicion is indeed a sin. Do not spy on one another nor backbite each other. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Surely, you would loathe it. And fear Allah; verily, Allah is the Most Accepting of repentance, the Most Merciful."

The verse emphasizes the importance of avoiding negative assumptions among individuals. Negative assumptions are harmful behaviors that can lead to detrimental outcomes. Therefore, through this verse, Allah (SWT) urges His followers to steer clear of such assumptions by verifying the accuracy of any given information.

Maintaining the accuracy of information is crucial for reinforcing the credibility of the information conveyed. The abundance of information circulating within society can either be deemed trustworthy or still require verification. For those who understand this principle, encountering dubious news

necessitates a process of verification, or tabayyun. According to Allah's (SWT) command in Surah An-Nur, verse 15, which states:

إِذْ تَلَقَوْهُ بِالْأَسْنَتِ كَمَا تَتْلُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ مَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ
عِلْمٌ وَتَحْسِبُونَهُ هَيِّئًا وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ

'Remember when you received the false news, passing it from mouth to mouth, and you spoke with your tongues what you had no knowledge of, considering it a trivial matter, while in the sight of Allah it was a grave issue.'

This verse elucidates the dissemination of false information through various means. Firstly, false news is propagated from person to person, discussed extensively, and spread widely, leaving no household or gathering untouched by the misinformation. Secondly, people engage in discussions about false news without any knowledge of its intricacies. Thirdly, they trivialize the false news as insignificant, despite its severe consequences and the fact that it constitutes a major sin in the eyes of Allah SWT.

The phrase "(remember) when you received the false news from one another's mouths," implies that people accepted and gossiped about it among themselves, amplifying the discussion, even though it was a baseless statement (Sheikh Abdurrahman, 2012). This means that those involved in discussing the allegations against Aisha were those who believed in the information without investigating its accuracy.

This verse illustrates how people readily acknowledge and disseminate news without attempting to verify its truth. They underestimate the gravity of the situation and overlook the detrimental consequences of

their actions. Consequently, the ethical communication value embedded in this verse is an implicit message urging Muslims to practice "tabayyun," or verification of received information. Accuracy of information entails seeking the truth about the information obtained (Hoare et al., 2016).

Therefore, before engaging on social media, users must be aware of the applicable regulations, such as Law No. 19 of 2016 on Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE Law). The ITE Law contains five articles regulating social media ethics, from Articles 27 to 30.

There are two types of criminal acts prohibited under the ITE Law, referring to the following provisions: First, the prohibition of criminal acts targeting IT (computer crime): This includes illegal access, illegal interception, illegal interference, and malicious acts such as hacking, cracking, defacing, phreaking, DoS attacks, spreading malicious code, malware, spyware, Trojan horses, adware, viruses, botnets, phishing, identity theft, and others. Second, the prohibition of criminal acts using IT (computer-related crime): This encompasses the dissemination of illegal content, such as cyber gambling, cyber terrorism, cyber fraud (credit card fraud), cyber sex, cyber attacks on critical infrastructure, cyber blackmail, cyber threats, cyber defamation, and other related offenses.

The 2016 ITE Law aims to provide a sense of security for technology and information users by offering legal protection from various criminal acts, whether verbal, visual, or resulting in physical contact. However, the extensive private domain of

social network users and minimal prevention standards present a challenge in deterring various criminal acts. The 2008 ITE Law established eight criminal provisions, but the 2016 ITE Law introduced amendments to Article 45 and added Articles 45A and 45B, all of which aim to prosecute perpetrators of IT-related crimes (Cyber Crime). One such provision is Article 45(3) of the 2016 ITE Law: “Any person who intentionally and without rights distributes and/or transmits and/or makes accessible Electronic Information and/or Electronic Documents containing insults and/or defamation as referred to in Article 27(3) shall be sentenced to a maximum imprisonment of four (4) years and/or a maximum fine of Rp750,000,000.00 (seven hundred and fifty million rupiah).”

To avoid criminal acts under the ITE Law, social media users must understand the fundamental values (Al-Qiyam Al-Asasiyah) in communication (Niki Alma Febriana Fauzi 2019), including: First, Tauhid (At-Tauhid التوحيد). The principles of Tauhid in information are: (1) Believing that Allah and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are the sources of truth, as obtained through the Holy Qur'an and accepted Hadiths. (2) In the context of Tauhid, the information we produce and disseminate will be held accountable before Allah SWT. Therefore, a process of “check and recheck” (QS. Al-Hujurat: 6) is necessary:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ
تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْحِحُوا عَلَى مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نُدْمِينَ

“O you who believe, if a disreputable person brings you significant news, investigate its truthfulness

thoroughly, lest you harm a community out of ignorance, leading to regret for your actions”.

Second, Al-Akhlaq al-Karimah (Muhammadiyah 2015). Al-Akhlaq al-Karimah represents one of the principal tenets of Islam that underpins the behavior and actions of every Muslim. Indeed, the entirety of Islamic Sharia (Commands/Prohibitions) aims to cultivate individuals of noble character, as emphasized in the Hadith “Innama Buitstu.” In the context of information ethics, behaviors and actions that reflect the values of Al-Akhlaq al-Karimah include honesty, justice, conveyance (Tabligh), trustworthiness (Amanah), intelligence (Fatanah), and moderation.

Honesty implies transparency in both disseminating and receiving information. Justice ensures that everyone has an equal right to convey and receive truthful information, in alignment with religious, social norms, and legal statutes. Tabligh mandates that every individual is responsible for sharing beneficial information according to their capacity and understanding. Fatanah signifies the intelligence and knowledge required to manage and comprehend information effectively. Tawazun denotes neutrality and objectivity in the dissemination and reception of information. The value of moderation is crucial for maintaining balance in conveying information within society. Third, Public Welfare. The principle of public welfare encompasses efficiency, effectiveness, and empathy in the transmission and reception of information. It encourages individuals to abstain from spreading falsehoods (hoaxes) and useless or trivial information.

The Urgency of Communication Ethics in QS An-Nur/24: 11-15

The values of communication ethics hold a crucial and urgent position in life. A peaceful and harmonious social life begins with treating and considering others well. Communication, a potent gift from Allah SWT, can be highly sensitive. Thus, norms or ethics are essential to ensure effective communication with others. Adhering to ethical norms is vital because even an inadvertent mistake can cause hurt feelings and negatively impact the development of good relationships. It is also important to maintain ethical standards to ensure that conversations are comfortable and pleasant for both parties (Achmad, 2020).

Surah An-Nur, verses 11-15, embodies communication ethics that demand attention and application in life. The researcher identifies two key communication ethics values within these verses: positive thinking and caution. These values are fundamental and essential in life. When these values are understood, internalized, and practiced, they foster the emergence of positive communication ethics in life.

Firstly, the Urgency of Speaking Kindly. Speaking kindly in communication with others holds a paramount position. Kind words foster harmonious relationships within society (Busl, 2021). Islam teaches its followers to choose between two options in communication: speaking kindly or remaining silent. As conveyed in a hadith, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him speak good or remain silent." This

statement indicates that Islamic teachings prioritize values of goodness in building communication, or at the very least, advocate for silence when goodness cannot be spoken. Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 83, states:

... وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا ...

"And speak to all people in a good manner."

Surah Al-Isra, verse 53, also elucidates this by stating, *"And say to My servants that they should speak in the best manner (with truth and kindness). Verily, Satan sows discord among them, for Satan is a clear enemy to mankind."*

These two verses command or invite individuals to speak kindly to others, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or other differences. This directive underscores the significance of good speech in life, as it can positively impact collective well-being. People must recognize that well-being and happiness are challenges that can be achieved when one communicates and socializes effectively within their community. The opposite of good speech is harmful or even futile speech. Speaking ill is strictly prohibited in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated in a hadith, "A person's safety depends on their ability to guard their tongue." This implies that deviant speech can lead a person into sin. It must be remembered that the tongue is likened to a knife; if misused, it can harm many people. This is reflected in Surah Al-Ahzab: 58, which states:

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بَغَيْرِ مَا اكْتَسَبُوا
فَقَدْ احْتَمَلُوا بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا

“And those who harm believing men and women without their having committed any wrongdoing, indeed bear upon themselves a calumny and a manifest sin.”

Based on this verse, it is clear that safeguarding the feelings of a fellow Muslim and avoiding causing them pain is a divine command to be upheld. Hurting someone's feelings results in sin in the eyes of Allah. This can be prevented by consistently spreading kind words.

A relevant hadith emphasizes the dangers posed by an uncontrolled tongue. Narrated by Abu Hurairah, it states: “A servant may utter a word thoughtlessly which causes him to fall into the depths of Hell, further than the distance between the east and the west.” This hadith clearly illustrates the consequences for those who speak recklessly without considering the impact of their words on others. Such neglect can lead to a person being condemned to Hell due to the sins of their speech.

Therefore, speaking kindly is a manner approved by Allah and safeguards one from the potential errors and sins that could harm others. This underscores the importance of speaking kindly in daily life. Kind words foster harmony and peace, whereas harmful words can lead to discord and enmity, ultimately resulting in damnation.

Secondly, the Urgency of Being Honest. Honesty is a symbol of Islam and a measure of faith, the foundation of religion, and an indicator of the perfection of those who possess this trait (Martinho, 2017). Honesty holds a significant position in both religious and worldly matters. It is a character attribute that every Muslim is required to possess. The

importance of honesty lies in its ability to bring about prosperity, peace, and security. Honesty cultivates a calm demeanor and clear thinking in an individual, unlike deceit, which leads to anxiety and negative thinking. Therefore, Islam regards honesty as an essential trait that every Muslim must embody. Moreover, honesty fosters trust from others towards the honest individual. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was known for his honesty and earned the trust of his community, which facilitated the rapid spread of Islam. Consequently, an honest person is well-liked, and their affairs are more likely to be accomplished smoothly. This is further emphasized in Surah Al-Ma'idah, verse 119, which states:

قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمُ يَنْفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ
عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

Allah proclaims, “This is the time when the truthful will benefit from their truthfulness. They will be granted gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide eternally.”

This verse elucidates that those who speak truthfully will be rewarded with paradise. They do not engage in falsehood nor adopt attitudes contrary to the truth. These individuals are deserving of Allah's paradise. A hadith states: “Indeed, truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. A man continues to tell the truth until he is recorded with Allah as a truthful person (Siddiq). Lying leads to wickedness, and wickedness leads to Hellfire. A man continues to lie until he is recorded with Allah

as a liar” (Narrated by Bukhari) (Joko Susanto, 2016).

This hadith, in the context of communication, explains that one should communicate truthfully, as it brings goodness and benefit to the speaker and welfare to others. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has taught us to be wary of false speech, as it leads to tangible harm and loss.

Thirdly, the Urgency of Information Accuracy (Tabayyun). Tabayyun represents a noble character that holds a crucial principle in preserving the purity of Islamic teachings and fostering harmony in interactions. Tabayyun also serves as a solution provided by Allah to address issues when information comes before us (Sri Roijah, 2020). Information becomes valuable when it is genuinely accurate. Accuracy implies that the information is true, as it is or valid and can be accepted as truth. The accuracy of information is vital, considering that specific information may pertain to the interests of many people or even concern the honor of others. As stated in QS. Al-Hujurat verse 6:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن
تُضَيِّبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْحَبُوا عَلَى مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ

“O believers, if a corrupt person brings you any news, investigate it thoroughly, so that you do not harm a people out of ignorance, and then become regretful for what you have done.”

The verse teaches that every piece of information received must be scrutinized. Information might require clarification or further verification. This practice is crucial to avoid misunderstandings about any news. Misunderstandings can lead to negative

consequences. The term closely related to information accuracy is “tabayyun.” Tabayyun means to be evident, clear, and transparent. It involves the effort to seek clarity and truth regarding a matter. The accuracy of information is closely tied to tabayyun, as obtaining accurate information necessitates engaging in the activity of tabayyun. Tabayyun is highly beneficial in daily life, particularly within community interactions. The benefits include: (1) Avoiding slander; (2) Eliminating misunderstandings among individuals; (3) Ensuring the validity of the information provided.

Application of Ethical Communication in Surah An-Nur Verses 11-15 for Social Media Usage on the Internet

Fundamentally, social media facilitates various two-way activities in the forms of exchange, collaboration, and interaction through written, visual, and audiovisual mediums (Bain, 2022). Social media enables users to present themselves, interact, collaborate, share, and communicate with other users, thus forming virtual social bonds (Ahmad Setiadi, 2020). The implementation of ethics is inseparable from any form of human interaction, including interactions on social media, which should inherently be part of the socialization process within society.

When discussing communication ethics in the virtual world, it is essential to have a strong foundation in the communication ethics taught in Islam. Ethics or morals can guide communication behavior to be polite, honest, and not harmful to others. This serves as a shield against spreading and providing

false information or hoaxes. Additionally, it helps in discerning and countering hoaxes when receiving messages. Hence, a Muslim must firmly believe that all behaviors in every aspect of life contain elements derived from Islamic teachings (the Qur'an, Hadith, Ijma', and Qiyas). These sources of law guide a Muslim in evaluating what is good and bad in communication. It is not enough to merely know these principles; there must be an effort to apply them in real behavior (Ulyaeni, 2021).

In this context, whether in real-life relationships or social media interactions, applying communication values as ethical guidelines is crucial. While ethical communication values can potentially be controlled in real life, social media users often neglect them. However, social media, being a platform for social interaction, also necessitates the observance of ethical standards.

The application of communication ethics from Surah An-Nur verses 11-15 provides guidance for social media enthusiasts to use these platforms wisely. Everyone should maintain a positive outlook and exercise caution with information that attracts significant attention or is associated with uncertain details. Such information must be approached carefully and critically, rather than being accepted uncritically.

First, the application of speaking kindly. Upholding values of goodness is essential for achieving a peaceful and harmonious life. This includes adopting the principle of speaking kindly as a fundamental behavior in social interactions. Social media, as a tool for social interaction, must also embrace the

values of kind speech in online interactions (Karakas, 2010).

The current reality on social media shows a lack of awareness among users in practicing kind speech, often leading to conflicts and disharmonious relationships. When responding to widely discussed information, it is crucial to provide positive feedback to avoid exacerbating the situation, which could negatively impact certain parties. The key to achieving harmonious relationships, both on social media and in real life, lies in empathy. If we dislike how others speak to us, we should refrain from doing the same to others, as it can hurt their feelings (Chen, 2023).

Social media serves as a platform for communication and sharing ideas. When used to convey positive messages, it can act as a social tool and a place to share insights, thus demonstrating and implementing the value of speaking kindly on social media.

As Muslims who are aware of their obligations, it is imperative to always consider the feelings of others. Hurting others' feelings can lead to disharmony, resulting in division and hostility. Therefore, practicing kindness in both social media and real life is a necessity. Here are the steps to apply the behavior of speaking kindly on social media based on Surah An-Nur, verses 11-15: (a) Uphold the behavior of speaking kindly; (b) Think positively about others; (c) Prioritize positive thoughts and; (d) Learn to empathize with others.

Secondly, the Implementation of Honesty. Honesty, or integrity, refers to being sincere and free from deceit. It is a fundamental virtue essential for progress. Honesty paves

the way to trustworthiness, which means being reliable and credible (Nurul Hidayah, 2013). Speaking the truth is a noble act that should be practiced in daily life. The application of honesty is crucial not only in real life but also on social media platforms. Given that social media can easily be infiltrated with hoaxes, the importance of honesty is magnified. Hoaxes, or false information, are rampant on social media. Therefore, individuals must be aware of the significance of honesty in their activities. When coupled with a deep understanding of honesty, this awareness can foster genuine truthful behavior. The dissemination of false information can harm specific parties and lead to severe consequences for those spreading untruths. Thus, it is imperative for social media users to practice honesty (Chong, 2023). Among the necessary steps for social media users to embody honesty are: (a) Cultivating an awareness of honesty; (b) Understanding the detrimental effects of creating hoaxes; (c) Developing a habit of speaking the truth and; (d) Producing beneficial information.

Third, the Application of Information Accuracy/Tabayyun. Information can be deemed trustworthy once its accuracy has been established. High accuracy in information invites credibility and truthfulness, whereas information with low accuracy is likely to be false. The accuracy of information determines the level of public trust in that information. Therefore, appropriate measures must be taken to ascertain the truthfulness of the information (Diekman 2023).

The action of verifying the accuracy of information can be equated with the concept of tabayyun. Conducting tabayyun on obtained information is necessary to avoid misunderstandings. Social media, as a platform where information proliferates, provides opportunities for certain individuals to disseminate false news. Thus, as social media users, it is imperative to verify the information received (Reese 2021).

Steps to implement the attitude of tabayyun to achieve information accuracy on social media include: (a) Not readily believing information; (b) Carefully examining the information; (c) Refraining from hastily spreading information.

The Fatwa Commission of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), in Fatwa Number 24 of 2017 on Guidelines for Interacting through social media, outlines the process of tabayyun and ways to ensure the truthfulness of information. The tabayyun process involves: (a) Verifying the source (sanad) of the information, including the personality, reputation, credibility, and trustworthiness of the source; (b) Ensuring the truthfulness of the content (matan), including its substance and intent; (c) Confirming the context of time and place in which the information was conveyed.

CONCLUSION

The ethical communication values embedded in Surah An-Nur, verses 11-15, encompass the following principles: (1) Speaking kindly, as articulated in verse 12: "Why did the believers not think good of themselves when you heard it and say, 'This is an obvious falsehood?'" This verse

emphasizes the importance of maintaining a positive perspective when receiving information, encouraging Muslims to speak kindly. (2) Honesty, as described in verse 13, where those who accuse others without evidence are deemed liars. This underscores the necessity for Muslims to uphold honesty in all aspects of life. (3) Information accuracy (Tabayyun), as explained in verse 15, which criticizes those who spread false information without verification. Tabayyun is essential for ensuring the accuracy of information.

The ethical communication values from Surah An-Nur, verses 11-15—speaking kindly, honesty, and information accuracy—are crucial in daily life. Speaking kindly fosters peace and harmony within communities. Honesty leads to goodness, prosperity, and overall well-being. Information accuracy prevents the spread of false information, ensuring trustworthiness.

Implementing these ethical communication values serves as a guideline for social media users to engage responsibly. Social media, as a platform for expression, should reflect the principles of speaking kindly, maintaining honesty, and verifying information (Tabayyun). By embodying these values, users contribute to a more harmonious and trustworthy online environment.

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