

# Intercultural Communication Line Group Social Media of The Islamic Group 'Let's Hijrah'

## An Ethnography Virtual Study on Intercultural Communication LINE Group of An Islamic Community 'Let's Hijrah'

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**Abstract.** Intercultural communication occurs among people in every level of society, especially those who are involved in a group or community, and creating new values of culture. The culture developed within the group might be different from one community to another community. Gradually, the 'new' culture affected the process of intercultural communication among each member of the group. Such were the situation experienced by an Islamic Community which called itself 'Let's Hijrah'. Members of the group were originated from various areas. They interact with each other using LINE group application-- a social media. Based on this phenomena, the researchers are interested to discuss the 'Intercultural Communication LINE Group Social Media of The Islamic Group 'Let's Hijrah'. The research tries to find out the intercultural communication process among members of 'Let's Hijrah' Islamic community which occurred through LINE Group. The study employed an ethnography virtual, with depth interview, documentation study, and observation as methods for data gathering. Results showed that the intercultural communication process in the teen Islamic community LINE group 'Let's Hijrah' were consisted of verbal and non-verbal aspects. Meanwhile, factors that creates conflicts in the intercultural communication process had something to do with different perceptions and stereotypes acquired by each member.

*Keywords:* Communication, Intercultural, Islamic Community, Let's Hijrah

### Introduction

Intercultural communication occurs among people in every level of society, especially those who are involved in a group or community. It can create new values of cultures in that community. The cultures that develop can be different from one place to another place. Unconsciously by members of the group, the 'new culture' do affect intercultural communication process between them. This is

why this phenomenon is unique and interesting to be researched further.

A community reflected its culture. A community also reflected how each individu or member of this community identify themselves throughout common values among them. Moreover, it can identify their ethics, economic levels, religion, politics standpoint, even their lifestyle. As social human being, every person seeks their existence and that is why they need each other. In fact, they are in thirst of being

accepted in a group or community in a society. The 'sense of belonging' that has become one of the essence of a human being is significant. It became a satisfaction of every each individu that they belong in a group or community (Prasanti & Indriani, 2016).

In Digital Era, groups or community have develop themselves in a digital place where they can easily communicate with each other facilitated by digital technology. Blackberry Messenger or BBM group, Yahoo, Whatsapp and Line group are very popular as a social media for discussion among group member.

Interestingly, each group members within social cluster favored different platform of social media. For teenagers, LINE group is far more popular than others due to its variety of 'stickers' express a whole lot of emotions. It was seen as a non-verbal way in expressing something to each other. Some of these stickers are free, a few are priced, but still they are affordable and very creative.

Social Media were proven to be resourceful in spreading out useful information. Many groups utilize it for many purposes, including this teen Islamic group 'Let's Hijrah'. The purpose of 'Let's Hijrah' is regaining the glory of Islam especially among the teens. Using the LINE apps, 'The Dais' (leaders of the group) can easily spread Islamic information through photos and writings.

Let's Hijrah Community was first founded by a teenager boy (ER), 17 years old. He created this group in February 2017 and by April 2017, the group has grown to 200 members. It became the goal of the group to invite teenagers to become a better individual based on Islamic ways. Of course, to reach this goal, a discussion and intensive communication through the LINE apps was at work.

This research investigates the intercultural communication process evolves in teen Islamic community 'Let's Hijrah' by using LINE group application. As have been mentioned before, culture values appears in every level of society and influence the way they communicate each other. The researchers are interested to analyze the communication, along with culture and values produced by the group as facilitated by LINE application.

## Research Focus

This research focuses on:

1. The intercultural communication within members of Islamic community 'Let's Hijrah' as

facilitated by LINE group of social media.

2. Cause of conflicts that occur in the intercultural communication process of Islamic community 'Let's Hijrah' as facilitated by LINE group of social media.

## Literature Review

Communication theme is not new, through if we relate it with the concept of 'intercultural' it becomes more interesting. The concept 'intercultural' was first introduced by an anthropologist named Edward T. Hall in the year 1959 in his book 'The Silent Language'. A year later, David K. Berlo explained about the intercultural differences in a communication process through his book 'The Process of Communication (an Introduction to Theory and Practice)'. His writing offered a communication process model. He explained that communication will succeed if human beings acknowledge the SMCR factors, which are source, messages, channel, and receiver (Liliweri, 2001:1).

Every communication action is a result of a cultural concept. Berlo assumed that the culture itself teaches people on how to act on a situation or condition. Therefore, culture has significant contribution in affecting someone's style of communication, including how to understand a 'meaning' which is based on perceiving through different culture background (Liliweri, 2001: 2).

There are two concepts in intercultural communication: (1) The concept of 'culture'; and (2) The concept of 'communication'. Both concepts relate one another, whereas culture influences how people communicate and vice versa (Martin dan Thomas, 2007: 92). Those two concepts, in other words, can not be separated from each other because both influences one another. Culture doesn't only decide who communicates with whom, what they talk about and how they talk about it, but it also decide on how people interpret messages, the meanings implied in those messages and the condition when the meanings are sent. In reality, every act of human depends on the culture where the person grow, which means that culture becomes the base of how people communicate. If there are various cultures within a group, then the communication practice will be various as well (Mulyana, 2010: 20).

## Method

The method used in this research is a qualitative method. A qualitative approach is a research used in a natural condition where the researchers are the keys. Data collection techniques are combination between descriptive results, the analysis is carried out inductively, and the research underlines rather to the meanings than to the generalizations (Sedarmayanti dan Hidayat, 2011: 33).

The research also uses an ethnography virtual study to observe a social phenomena along with the culture that occurs in a cyber space. For ethnography virtual research, cyberspace enable researcher to approach objects and phenomenas in Internet world (Nasrullah, 2014: 171-172). The paradigm being employed for source of analysis is Constructivism. In this case, researchers viewed that 'meme', as an important instruments used by social media users to express their opinion, has meanings and social reality it entails. Moreover, Constructivism Paradigm describes that each individual interprets and acts based on concepts within his/her own mind (Ardianto and Q-Anees, 2009: 151).

To collect the data, this research utilized depth interviews, documentation study and observation techniques. Four informants were chosen through purposive sampling techniques. Interviews have been conducted both on- and offline to support comprehensive data regarding intercultural communication among members of Let's Hijrah Community in LINE group. To add the depth of analysis, this research was equipped by Interaction Symbolic Theory.

## Result And Discussion: The Verbal and Nonverbal Aspects of LINE Conversation

A social media group that upholds Islamic themes, if used properly might be a very useful tool in spreading Islamic information throughout the community, especially for each of group members. It is also a great tool for the Dais to spread Islamic values through pictures and writings.

This research focused on an Islamic teen group whose purpose is rebuilding the glory of Islam, especially among teenagers. This group is called 'Let's Hijrah'. It was founded by a 17 years old teenage boy initial ER in February 2017. The group has grown into 200 members in April 2017. As mentioned before, the purpose of this group is to explain the concept of 'Hijrah', and inviting teenagers to enact the idea of

'Hijrah'. 'Hijrah' as explained by ER, means a situation when someone transforms him/herself to become a better person according to the strict way of Islam solely based on Al-Quran and Al-Hadith as guidance. ER as founder also created a symbol that represented the group.

There are two things that are shown from the results: the first thing is the process of intercultural communication among the members of Let's Hijrah group in the LINE as seen from verbal and non verbal aspects. The verbal aspects appeared in the group related with various terms or language used among the members of the community. Eventhough majority of members were come from Bandung, the difficulties in using verbal languages seemed to appear especially when the members discussed the validity of a Hadith.

The words like "ane" and "ente" had been heavily exchanged and be understood, eventhough those terms are generated from Arabic. The word 'ane' is from the 'ana'--an Arabic term means 'saya' or 'I'. 'Ana' was then pronounced as 'ane', following the dialect of Betawi/Jakarta. The word 'ente' is also from Betawi/Jakarta that means 'kamu' or 'you'. It has quite similar way in saying it from the word 'Anta' which is an Arabic word. So these words, 'ane' and 'ente', are merging from two languages, that are Arabic and Betawi/Jakarta. To add the complexity of the origin of two words, an article from wahyudi-hawasi.blogspot.co.id stated that Ust. Rahmat Abdullah prefers to call Jakarta as Jayakarta than Betawi. History said that Betawi (Batavia) was was given bu the Dutch Colonialisme.

Members of 'Let's Hijrah' group are trying to understand each other through various terms. Thiis is shown throughout their conversation in the LINE group. ER, the founder admits that in some cases, there have been some difficulties in understanding a term, which could sometimes lead to little frictions among the members. However, it doesn't long continue. In most cases, it can easily be solved if other members participated in the heated arguments and and clarified the terms being disputed based on Al Qur'an and Al Hadiths.

The non-verbal aspects are used frequently in this group. Members of the group used 'stickers' provided by the apps for users. These stickers represent various kinds of expressions, like agreement, disagreement, happiness, sadness, dissapointment, and other-- even an expression that showed feelings of 'annoyed' or 'irritated'. These symbols are widely understood among members of this Islamic teen community.

It clearly proved that most members acquired a mutual understanding for each other.



Picture 1. An excerpt of Intercultural Communication Process among Members of an Islamic Teen Community 'Let's Hijrah'.

Another result of this research describe the reasons why conflicts appear in this intercultural communication process among members of the LINE froup Let's Hijrah. ER explained some factors that were responsible for these conflicts. The first is different perceptions among members. These are generated from different experience, different reference, and in other cases, different backgrounds. Once someone throws out an issue, it will ignite different opinions which sometimes lead on conflicts. However, these conflicts do not take place in their daily life. It only occurs in the social media group. Once they meet each other in physical setting (means outside the social media) they don't really talk about it (the heated arguments) and mostly forgets about the previous conflicts as well. The second is 'stereotyping', a practice commonly found in intercultural communication. ER explained that 'sterotyping' occurs when each member has their own way in thinking without seeing what is right and what is wrong. They can be quite persistent in their way in thinking to the extent that it influenced the intercultural communication process in the group.

### Analysis: The Meanings Originated from the Relations among Members

Simbolic Interaction Theory became the foundation of the analysis. This theory basically explains how each individual has his/herown reference frame in understanding other human beings. Living together, they create a world of symbols lead to human being's acts and reacts. Therefore, this theory helped us to understand the intercultural communication process that occurs in the LINE group of 'Let's Hijrah', an Islamic teen Community. The theory enable us

to comprehend the obstacles and differences that happens in this group.

The basic concept of Symbolic Interactions theory is 'meaning'. The 'meaning' is created due to relations that exchanged between individuals and its society where he/she lives. In this case, the 'meaning' can influence the way in thinking (mindset), perception, culture, the sterotype, even the way of thinking (collective mindset) that this society or community holds on to.

### Conclusions

There are two that can be concluded throughout this research regarding the intercultural communication process in the teen Islamic community LINE group 'Let's Hijrah':

1. There are verbal and non-verbal aspects being used throughout the intercultural communication process in the teen Islamic community LINE group 'Let's Hijrah'.
2. Factors that creates conflicts in the intercultural communication process in the teen Islamic community LINE group 'Let's Hijrah' are orginated from different perceptions and different sterotypes.

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