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## Persuasive Communication Style in the Qur'an: Analysis Based on the Stages of Revelation

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### Abstract

This article examines the persuasive communication style in the Qur'an, with an emphasis on the dynamics of the stages of revelation, particularly in the context of the *Makkiyah* and *Madaniyah* periods. This research departs from the assumption that the Qur'an is not only a normative text but also a medium of divine communication, with a persuasive strategy adapted to the social conditions of the ummah. Using a thematic interpretation approach (*maudhu'i*) and communication analysis, this study traces the patterns of persuasion used in Qur'anic verses, such as narratives, dialogues, parables, threats (*tarhīb*), good news (*targhīb*), and rational argumentation. Research shows that the Qur'an employs a systematic and adaptive persuasive communication strategy, as reflected in the integration of ethos, pathos, and logos. In the *Makkiyah* phase, the communication of the Qur'an tends to be emotional and spiritual, while in the *Madaniyah* phase, it is more rational and normative. In addition, the concept of *tadarruj* shows that the Qur'an employs a gradual communication strategy to shape social change. This research confirms that the Qur'an can be understood as a contextual and transformative model of persuasive communication and contributes to the development of interdisciplinary Islamic communication studies.

**Keywords:** *Islamic communication, Makkiyah-Madaniyah, persuasive communication, Tadarruj, Qur'an*

### Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji gaya komunikasi persuasif dalam Al-Qur'an dengan menekankan dinamika tahapan wahyu, khususnya dalam konteks periode *Makkiyah* dan *Madaniyah*. Penelitian ini berangkat dari asumsi bahwa Al-

Qur'an tidak hanya merupakan teks normatif, tetapi juga media komunikasi ilahiah yang memiliki strategi persuasif yang disesuaikan dengan kondisi sosial umat. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan tafsir tematik (*maudhu'i*) dan analisis komunikasi, penelitian ini menelusuri pola-pola persuasi yang digunakan dalam ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an, seperti narasi, dialog, perumpamaan, ancaman (*tarhīb*), kabar gembira (*targhīb*), serta argumentasi rasional. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Al-Qur'an menerapkan strategi komunikasi persuasif yang sistematis dan adaptif, sebagaimana tercermin dari integrasi unsur *ethos*, *pathos*, dan *logos*. Pada fase *Makkiyah*, komunikasi Al-Qur'an cenderung bersifat emosional dan spiritual, sedangkan pada fase *Madaniyah* lebih bersifat rasional dan normatif. Selain itu, konsep *tadarruj* menunjukkan bahwa Al-Qur'an menggunakan strategi komunikasi bertahap untuk mendorong perubahan sosial. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa Al-Qur'an dapat dipahami sebagai model komunikasi persuasif yang kontekstual dan transformatif, serta memberikan kontribusi terhadap pengembangan kajian komunikasi Islam yang bersifat interdisipliner.

**Kata Kunci:** komunikasi islam, komunikasi persuasif, Makiyyah-Madaniyah, Tadarruj, Qur'an

## A. Introduction

The Qur'an is a sacred text with a highly complex communicative dimension. It functions not only as a source of normative teachings but also as a medium of communication that conveys divine messages to humans with a systematic and effective strategy (Ibrahim Ostaie, 2024). The communication strategy in the Qur'an emphasizes the use of words that are attractive, easy to understand, noble, constructive, and gentle, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad in delivering revelation (Eni Zulaiha, 2024). From this perspective, the Qur'an can be understood as a form of persuasive communication that aims to gradually shape human beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. This process shows that the Qur'an not only emphasizes the content of the message (contents) but also the way of delivery (method), adapted to the audience's conditions (Mohamad Abdullah Alsaied 2025).

The communication strategy of the Qur'an is seen in the use of attractive, easy-to-understand language, as well as a constructive and persuasive approach, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad in delivering revelation. This shows that the Qur'an contains a strong rhetorical dimension, such as the use of narratives, dialogue, (Jufri Hasani Z 2021) parables, as well as a combination of *Targhib* (good news) and *tarhib* (threat), which makes it relevant to be studied from the perspective of Communication Science and Tafsir Science in an interdisciplinary manner (Rini Angraini, 2025). This interdisciplinary approach opens up new opportunities for the development of people's religious literacy and strengthens religious identity through communication strategies that are inclusive and adaptive to the times (Rini Angraini, 2025).

However, the study of the Qur'an has focused more on legal, theological, and linguistic aspects, while communication approaches remain relatively limited. In the tradition of the study of Ulumul Qur'an, classical scholars have emphasized the importance of the context of revelation, such as the concept of *Makkiyah-Madaniyah* and *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* (M. Quraish Shihab, Nasaruddin Umar 1999). As the basis for understanding the message of the Qur'an, meanwhile, in contemporary studies, the variation in the language style of the Qur'an reflects an adaptive communication strategy according to the conditions of the audience. (Saeed Ullah 2025)(Muhamad Faizin, 2022). On the other hand, persuasive communication theory from Aristotle to modern theory asserts that the relationship between the communicator, the message, and the social context of the audience greatly influences the effectiveness of a message.

Several recent studies have also examined the rhetoric and persuasive style of the Qur'an, but most of them are still descriptive and have not linked them to the dynamics of revelation in a systematic way (Chalik & Wahyuni, 2025). In fact, the process of revelation, lasting approximately 23 years, shows the existence of a gradual communication strategy (*tadarruj*), which is not only related to the content of the teachings but also to the way they are delivered.

In the *Makkiyah* phase, Arab society was still dominated by polytheistic beliefs and resistance to Islamic teachings. (Mohamad Abdullah Alsaied 2025) Therefore, the Qur'anic communication style in this phase tends to use a persuasive approach. (Aksin Wijaya 2009, 125), emotional, (Islamicus et al., 2022) symbolic,

and eschatological (Stepanova, Mohammed, and Hachim, 2025). On the other hand, in the *Madaniyah* phase, Muslim society has developed into a more stable community, so that the messages of the Qur'an focus more on legal, social, and political aspects, adopting a more rational and systematic approach.

In this context, this study departs from the assumption that the stages of revelation affect not only the content of the message but also the persuasive communication strategies used in the Qur'an. In contrast to previous research that tends to examine Qur'anic communication in general, this article offers a more specific approach by analyzing persuasive communication styles based on the stages of revelation (*Makkiyah–Madaniyah*) and integrating them with modern communication theory. Thus, this research offers a new contribution in the form of integration between the study of the Ulumul Qur'an and modern persuasive communication theories through historical-chronological analysis of the verses of *Makkiyah* and *Madaniyah*. In addition, this study places the concept of *tadarruj* as a model of gradual social communication in the Qur'an.

## B. Methods

This research was qualitative research in the field of Tafsir and Qur'anic Science. The primary data source consists of verses of the Qur'an, which are studied according to the classification of the period of revelation, namely the *Makkiyah* and *Madaniyah* phases. This study uses a thematic (*maudhu'i*) and historical-chronological approach by tracing *tartīb al-nuzūl* to identify persuasive communication patterns in each phase of revelation. The research analysis is also enriched with the perspective of persuasive communication theory, especially the concepts of Aristotle's *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*, and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) in modern communication studies.

Data collection was carried out through a documentary study of various classical and contemporary books of tafsir, such as *Tafsir al-Ṭabari*, Ibn Katsir, al-Maraghi, and *Tafsir al-Misbah*, as well as relevant persuasive communication literature. The unit of analysis of this research is verses that contain elements of persuasive communication, both in argumentative, emotional, narrative, dialogical, and symbolic forms.

Data analysis used content analysis techniques through several stages, namely: (1) classification of verses based on the *Makkiyah* and *Madaniyah* periods; (2) identification of persuasive communication forms and strategies; (3) coding of communication themes based on persuasion categories; and (4) interpretation of the meaning of the verse in the socio-historical context of the revelation. To maintain the validity of the data, this study uses triangulation of sources of comparing various books of interpretation and communication literature.

The results of the analysis are presented in a descriptive-analytical manner to illustrate the dynamics of the development of the persuasive communication style of the Qur'an in accordance with the stages of revelation, as well as to show its relevance from the perspective of contemporary Islamic communication.

### C. Results and Discussion

Based on a thematic analysis of the verses of the Qur'an that contain elements of persuasive communication, it was found that the Qur'an uses a variety of systematic and contextual communication strategies. The strategy is not only normative but also rhetorical and psychological, aiming to gradually shape individual and collective consciousness.

#### Typology of Persuasive Communication Style in the Qur'an

The results of the study show that there are several main forms of persuasive communication in the Qur'an, namely:

##### a. Narrative Persuasion (*Qasas Qur'ani*)

One of the dominant forms of persuasive communication in the Qur'an is the use of stories (*Qasas*). This is confirmed in the word of Allah:

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِّأُولَى الْأَلْبَابِ مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَى وَلَكِنْ تَصْدِيقَ  
الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

Translation:

"Really, in their story, there really is a lesson for people of common sense. (The Qur'an) It is not a fabricated story, but a verifier (of the previous books), detailing all things, as a guide, and a blessing for the believers (QS. Yusuf:111).

According to Ibn Kathir, this verse shows that the stories in the Qur'an are not merely stories but contain moral lessons and wisdom intended to guide people to the truth. (Abu al-Fida' Ismail bin Umar bin Katsir al-Qurasyiy al-Dimisyq, 1999). These stories are an effective means of persuasion because they appeal to both the emotional and rational aspects simultaneously (Al-Hafid, 1994). Meanwhile, al-Tabari explained that the function of the story is to strengthen the hearts of the Prophet and his people, as well as to provide historical evidence of the truth of the treatise. Thus, the narrative in the Qur'an serves as an indirect persuasive communication that builds awareness through symbolic experiences.

From a modern perspective, it is emphasized that the story in the Qur'an has high rhetorical power because it presents the message in a lively and contextual form. (Al-Hafid 1994), can even stimulate readers or listeners to continue to follow the events and the perpetrators (Syihabuddin Qalyubi 1997, 66). This shows that narrative is an effective communication strategy across the ages.

##### b. Emotional Persuasion (*Targib and Tarhib*)

The strategy of emotional persuasion is seen in the use of promises and threats, occasionally with a firm command, and other times by declaring it as an obligation. The same is true for prevention, advocacy, and the provision of alternatives (M. Quraish Shihab 1997, 127). For example, in the word of God:

نَبِّئْ عِبَادِي أَنِّي أَنَا الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ \* وَأَنَّ عَذَابِي هُوَ الْعَذَابُ الْأَلِيمُ

Translation:

"Tell My servants that I am the Most Forgiving and the Most Merciful, and that My punishment is a very painful punishment." (QS. al-Hijr [15]: 49–50)

According to al-Qurtubi, this verse shows that humans should remember themselves and others to scare and motivate (Al-Qurtubi, 1987). So there is a balance between hope and fear in guiding humans. This approach is important so that humans not only rely on expectations but also are aware of the consequences of their actions. Wahbah Al-Zuhaili explained that this verse, like other verses with a similar spirit, contains a combination of glad tidings and warnings, hope and punishment. The goal is for humans to always be between hope and anxiety (Al-Zuhaili 2009, Vol. 7, p. 310).

While Quraish Shihab said that the attainment of paradise is solely due to Allah's forgiveness and Allah's mercy, a person enters Hell solely because of His justice (Shihab 2003, Volume 7, 140). So here, Allah gives good news alongside threats, a form of communication that touches the psychological dimension of humans, enabling behavior change to be more deeply motivated.

### c. Rational Persuasion (Argumentative)

The Qur'an, in the delivery of its messages, is not only with an emotional approach but also with a rational approach. It can be read from verses that speak of the oneness of Allah, as Allah says:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ

Translation:

"If there were gods besides Allah in both of them, they would have perished. Most Holy is Allah, the Lord of the Creators of 'Arash, from what they attribute."

Quraish Shihab explains that in this verse it is explained "if there are two Creators, then there will be chaos of creation, because if each Creator wants something that the other does not want, then if both are powerful, creation will be chaotic or will not exist; if one defeats the other, then the loser is not God; and if they both agree, then it is a proof of their needs and weaknesses, so that they are not God, for God cannot need anything or be weak for something (M. Quraish Shihab 1996; 41). From a modern perspective, this approach aligns with the concept of Logos in persuasion theory, where rational argumentation serves as the basis for convincing the audience.

### d. Dialogical Persuasion

One form of communication style of the Qur'an is to convey its messages in a way that is well received by the audience. The Qur'an is often invoked in various conversations using the word "jaws." The dialogue displayed can take the form of a trajectory of thoughts within a person, like the story of the Prophet Ibrahim when his people sought God, as explained in the Qur'an. Al-An'am: 76-78 (Syihabuddin Qalyubi, 1997, p. 82). With this approach, the Qur'an uses dialogical communication

that opens space for thought and does not force acceptance of its teachings of the Qur'an.

#### **e. Symbolic Persuasion (*Amtsāl*)**

The use of parables in the Qur'an has many benefits, including depicting abstract news in concrete form so that it can be felt or held, such as the parable of the elimination of the reward of infak for *riya*, which is described as a smooth stone whose surface is covered with ground. Then the rain came upon him, and all the land was destroyed from the rock, as described in Qs. Al-Baqarah; 264 (Nashruddin Baidan, 2005)(Nashruddin Baidan, 2005 p. 254). So here is the form, *amtsal*. Facilitate the understanding of abstract concepts by presenting them in visual and imaginative forms.

### **Characteristics of Persuasive Communication in the *Makkiyah* Period**

The results of the analysis show that the communication style in the *Makkiyah* period has the following characteristics:

#### **a. Dominance of emotional approaches (*pathos*)**

The verses of *Makkiyah* emphasize a more emotional touch to arouse the spiritual awareness of the audience. This approach is directed at the heart (*Qalb*), not just a ratio, by evoking fear (*khauf*), please (*sa'adah*), and conversion to the power of Allah (Ahmad Zain Sarnoto 2025). This is relevant to the condition of early society, which remains strong in oral and symbolic traditions.

#### **b. Poetic and rhythmic language**

The *Makkiyah* language style tends to be short, concise, rhythmic, and has a high power of musicality (Rahmadini Rahmadin 2012). The sentence structure often uses rhymes (rhythmic prose) that facilitate memorization while strengthening the power of suggestion. The beauty of this language is an effective means of persuasion in the context of Arabic culture that appreciates literature.

#### **c. Focus on monotheism and eschatology**

In the *Makkiyah* period, the communication of the Qur'an was directed to carry out a fundamental transformation of the *worldview* of Arab society, which was still covered by the practice of *shirk* and the orientation of worldly life. The affirmation of monotheism is present not only as a theological doctrine but also as an ideological critique of belief structures that reduce divine authority to idols. Thus, monotheism serves to cultivate awareness of a single absolute authority as the center of life orientation and to reorder human relations with God, others, and nature.

Correspondingly, the emphasis on eschatology—such as the day of resurrection, *hisab*, heaven, and hell—broadens the horizons of human consciousness from the purely earthly to the transcendent. These narratives are not only informative but persuasive, as they present the moral consequences of each action. By linking monotheism and eschatology, the Qur'an builds a solid ethical-spiritual foundation: faith in the One God serves as the basis. In contrast, awareness of the afterlife serves as a mechanism of moral control. This foundation became an important prerequisite before the promulgation of legal and social rules in the next period (*Madaniyah*).

#### **d. Use of oaths and dramatic imagery**

The *Makkiyah* verse often uses oaths (*Qasam*) on behalf of natural phenomena (e.g., sun, night, time) to affirm the truth of the message (Hamzah Tacong, Halimah Basri 2025). In addition, dramatic depictions of the apocalypse, heaven, and hell are also used that are visual and imaginative, thus strengthening the persuasive effect and evoking the audience's existential awareness.

1. Dominance of emotional approaches (*pathos*)
2. Poetic and rhythmic language
3. Focus on monotheism and eschatology
4. Use of oaths and dramatic imagery

This strategy is used because the audience in the *Makkiyah* period is still in the early stages of accepting Islamic teachings. Hence, an emotional approach is more effective in arousing awareness.

### **Characteristics of Persuasive Communication in the *Madaniyah* Period**

In the *Madaniyah* period, Qur'anic communication underwent a shift from an emotional-spiritual approach to a more rational, normative, and institutional pattern (Ulya Hilalatul Hasbi et al. 2024). This is in line with the changing social context of Muslims who have formed a more complex community (*ummah*) and social structure.

#### **a. Dominance of rational and normative approaches (*logos*)**

The verses of *Madaniyah* emphasize more rational arguments (*logos*) in conveying messages (Hardillah, Muh. Khumaidi Ali 2026). The appeal not only touches on the aspect of faith but also provides logical, dialogical, and even polemic reasons, especially in response to Jewish, Christian, and hypocritical groups. In addition, the normative approach comes in the form of legally binding orders, prohibitions, and provisions.

#### **b. More systematic and argumentative language**

The *Madaniyah* language style tends to be longer, more detailed, and more structured. (Ismawan Dwi Cahyono 2024). The delivery of the message is systematically arranged with argumentative explanations, including the use of premises, analogies, and rebuttals (*jadal*). This reflects the need to build a mature collective understanding in a developing society.

#### **c. Focus on legal, social, and political**

If the *Makkiyah* period emphasizes the theological aspect, then the *Madaniyah* period shifts to the regulation of the concrete life of the people. The verses deal with many laws (such as muamalah, jinayah, and worship), social relations (family, society), and political aspects such as leadership, war, and inter-community relations. The *Madaniyah* verses can be understood as a form of normative-regulative discourse that complements the persuasive function of *Makkiyah* verses. (Hardillah, Muh. Khumaidi Ali 2026). This shows that the Qur'an serves as a practical guide in building civilization.

#### **d. The emergence of regulations and social structures**

In this phase, the Qur'an began to formulate regulations that formed a clear and organized social order. Legal norms are not only individual but also collective,

including the justice system, economic distribution (zakat, inheritance), and social ethics (Ahmad Zain Sarnoto 2025). Thus, persuasive communication is no longer just about raising awareness but also about institutionalizing Islamic values in everyday social life.

### **Graduality Pattern (*Tadarruj*) in Persuasive Communication**

One of the important features of Qur'anic communication is the application of the principle of *tadarruj* (graduality), which is the gradual delivery of teachings according to the psychological, intellectual, and social readiness of the audience. This pattern shows that religious transformation is not done instantly, but through a measurable and adaptive process.

#### **a. Stages of teaching delivery**

The teachings of the Qur'an are revealed gradually, starting from the planting of the foundation of the faith, then continuing to moral development, and finally to the establishment of the law. This stage reflects a persuasive strategy that prioritizes building trust before imposing normative obligations. A classic example is the process of banning *khamr*, which is carried out through four phases, from the introduction of negative impacts to total prohibition. (A. Endang Sri Rahayu 2025).

#### **b. Changes in communication style from emotional to rational**

Graduality is also seen in the shift in communication style from emotional dominance (*Makkiyah*) to a rational and normative approach (*Madaniyah*) (Ulya Hilalatul Hasbi et al. 2024). In the early stages, a touching approach is used to arouse an awareness of faith. In contrast, in the later stages, logical arguments and legal provisions are strengthened to organize social life. This change shows that the Qur'an adapts the communication strategy to the maturity level of the ummah.

#### **c. Tailoring messages to social conditions**

The messages of the Qur'an are always contextual, responding to the concrete situation faced by society (Hardillah, Muh. Khumaidi Ali 2026). In the *Makkiyah*, the focus is on addressing those who reject monotheism. At the same time, in *Madaniyah*, the message is directed at the management of a community that already has faith but needs social regulation. Thus, *tadarruj* is not just a matter of time but also about sensitivity to the social, cultural, and historical dynamics of the audience. An example is the process of banning *khamr*, which is carried out in stages, showing that persuasion in the Qur'an takes into account the psychological readiness of the community.

Based on the research findings, the Qur'an presents a persuasive communication model that is not singular but complex and multidimensional. This complexity is seen in the integration of emotional, rational, symbolic, and dialogical aspects that work simultaneously in the process of conveying messages. Therefore, the communication of the Qur'an is not only relevant to theological understanding but also significant for analysis through modern communication theories.

#### **a. Integration with Classical and Modern Persuasion Theory**

If analyzed through the perspective of Aristotle's classical rhetoric, the Qur'anic communication shows a strong integration between the three main

elements of persuasion, namely *Ethos*, *Pathos*, and *Logos*. (Meidy Aisyah 2022). First, *Ethos* in the Qur'an was reflected in divine authority as the source of the message. The position of the Qur'an as a revelation confers absolute legitimacy that not only builds trust (Credibility) but also imparts a sacred dimension, thereby strengthening its power of persuasion (Rokibullah, 2025). This authority is strengthened through the mention of God's attributes, the affirmation of the truth of revelation, and the consistency of the message conveyed to man.

Second, *pathos* was evident in the use of an emotional approach through *Targhib* (the Promise of Reward, Paradise, and Mercy) and *Tarhib* (the threat of torture and moral consequences). This strategy not only evokes hope and fear but also profoundly touches the affective dimension of the human being (StuRat 2025);Rif'atul Khoiriah Malik et al. 2023). The use of stories of previous people, depictions of the Day of Judgment, and dramatic dialogues in the Qur'an further strengthens the emotional involvement of the audience, so that the message is not only understood cognitively but also felt psychologically.

Third, *Logos* was reflected in the rational arguments that the Qur'an constructs, such as the invitation to think (*Afala Ta'qilūn*), the use of analogies, as well as logical reasoning about the creation of the universe, life, and the existence of God (Rokibullah 2025). This argument shows that the Qur'an not only relies on authority and emotion but also provides space for the human mind to accept the truth rationally.

Integration between *Ethos*, *Pathos*, and *Logos* showed that the Qur'an develops a comprehensive and balanced model of persuasive communication. Non-dominance of one aspect exclusively, but all three work synergistically in shaping human beliefs and behaviors (Rokibullah 2025). Furthermore, from the perspective of modern communication science, the Qur'an's communication strategy also reflects an audience-based approach (*Audience-Centered Communication*) (Ulya Hilalatul Hasbi et al. 2024);(M. Alsaied et al. 2025). This can be seen in how the messages of the Qur'an are adjusted to the social, cultural, and psychological conditions of the time in which it was revealed. Within the framework of the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), the strategy shows that the Qur'an employs different persuasion channels according to the audience's level of readiness and the characteristics of the audience. (Kamel El Hedhli and Haithem Zourrig 2023).

In the *Makkiyah* phase, for example, the communication approach emphasizes emotional, spiritual, symbolic, and eschatological aspects to address a society that remains resistant to the teachings of monotheism. This strategy aligns with the Peripheral Route in ELM, a persuasion process that operates through emotional appeals, symbols, narratives, and the rhetorical power of messages to arouse audience awareness. Meanwhile, in the *Madaniyah* phase, the communication approach became more rational, normative, and institutional, along with the formation of a more socially and intellectually stable Muslim community (Ulya Hilalatul Hasbi et al. 2024). This approach reflects the *Central Route* in ELM, which is persuasion built through logical argumentation, rational dialogue, and legal explanations that require more profound cognitive involvement of the audience (Jon D. Morris 2020).

Thus, the communication of the Qur'an not only shows sensitivity to the conditions of the audience but also shows a gradual and adaptive persuasion strategy. This confirms that the Qur'an uses a communication approach that can integrate the emotional and rational dimensions in a balanced manner in the process of social and religious transformation.

### **Contextual Dimension in Qur'anic Communication**

One of the main characteristics of Qur'anic communication was its contextual nature, namely, the messages that are constantly conveyed, taking into account the social, cultural, and psychological situation of the audience at the time of revelation. From the perspective of the Qur'an, this is reflected in the concept of *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* (the causes of the descent of verses) and the classification of *Makkiyah* and *Madaniyah*, which show that each verse is situated in a specific historical context and serves a particular communicative function. The classification of *Makkiyah* and *Madaniyah* reflects the dynamics of the production of meaning (*production of meaning*) in the Qur'an, where the text responds to changing social conditions without losing its normative-transcendent dimension (Abu Zaid 1994).

This contextuality confirms that the Qur'an was not revealed in a vacuum but in response to the social realities faced by Arab society in the time of the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, the communication strategy used is also adaptive. The messages of the Qur'an are conveyed by considering the audience's level of understanding, psychological conditions, and social dynamics of the audience, so that they can reach various levels of society effectively.

In the *Makkiyah* phase, for example, society is in a condition dominated by a polytheistic belief system, an unequal social structure, and resistance to the teachings of monotheism (Ulya Hilalatul Hasbi et al. 2024). In this context, the Qur'an employs a persuasive-emotive approach to communication, emphasizing the strengthening of faith, eschatological awareness, and the critique of unjust social practices. The language style tends to be poetic, symbolic, and emotional, aimed at attracting attention and touching the audience's inner awareness. Within the framework of ELM, this approach can be understood as a form of *Peripheral Route* persuasion. This process emphasizes emotional, symbolic, and rhetorical elements to influence the attitude of an audience that is not fully ready to accept in-depth rational arguments.

On the other hand, during the *Madaniyah* phase, the social conditions of the community underwent significant changes, with the formation of a Muslim community that was more politically and socially stable. In this context, Qur'anic communication shifts towards a more normative and regulative direction, with an emphasis on the formation of legal systems, social ethics, and the governance of social life. Communication styles have become more argumentative and rational, reflecting the needs of audiences that have become more intellectually and institutionally developed. From the perspective of ELM, this approach shows dominance of the *Central Route*, which is persuasion built through logical argumentation, legal reasoning, and rational dialogue that demands a deeper

cognitive involvement of the audience (Sri Syamsiyah Lestari Sjafiie, Suhariyanto 2024).

From the perspective of modern communication science, this approach is in line with the concept of *audience-centered communication*, which is a communication approach that emphasizes the importance of understanding the characteristics, needs, and psychological conditions of the audience in designing effective messages. In this context, the Qur'an shows an adaptive communication pattern because its messages are delivered according to the social situation, level of understanding, and psychological readiness of the people in each phase of revelation.

Within the framework of the Elaboration Likelihood Model, the strategy shows that the Qur'an employs different persuasion paths based on audience characteristics. In a society that remains resistant and unprepared to accept complex arguments, the Qur'an employs more emotional, symbolic, and narrative approaches that align with *the peripheral route to persuasion*. On the contrary, when the audience has evolved intellectually and socially, the Qur'an presents a more rational, normative, and dialogical argument that reflects the *central route* in the persuasion process.

### **Graduality as a Social Communication Strategy**

The concept of *tadarruj* (graduality) in the Qur'an is not only relevant in the context of law-making but can also be understood as a systematic and effective social communication strategy. From the perspective of the Ulumul Qur'an, *tadarruj* shows that revelation is conveyed gradually, in accordance with the social dynamics and psychological readiness of the community (Sukidi 2019). This confirms that the change that the Qur'an wants is not instantaneous, but through a continuous process of internalizing values (Muhamad Yoga Firdaus et al. 2022).

When applied within Communication Science and modern social change, this approach aligns with the principle that the transformation of attitudes and behaviors requires structured stages. Rapid forced change often creates resistance, while a gradual approach allows for deeper and more sustainable acceptance. In this case, the Qur'an shows a high sensitivity to the social conditions of the audience as well as communication strategies oriented towards long-term effectiveness.

From the perspective of ELM, the concept of *tadarruj* shows that attitude change does not always occur through a form of persuasion that is direct and final, but through a gradual process of message elaboration according to the readiness of the audience. ELM explains that individuals can process messages through the *Central Route* or the *Peripheral Route*, depending on their level of involvement, thinking ability, and psychological readiness (Sri Syamsiyah Lestari Sjafiie, Suhariyanto 2024). In this context, the gradual strategy of the Qur'an shows a combination of emotional, symbolic, and rational approaches that are adapted to the development of people's social consciousness.

As a communication strategy, *tadarruj* in the Qur'an contains three main characteristics. *First*, gradual: the delivery of messages according to the audience's level of readiness, both cognitively and emotionally. *Second*, contextual, namely, the

message is conveyed by considering the social, cultural, and historical situation of the community. *Third*, adaptive, namely, flexibility in the communication strategy used, so that it can respond to changes in audience conditions from time to time.

This approach shows that persuasion in the Qur'an rests not only on the power of the message but also on delivery strategies that realistically account for the process of social change. Thus, *tadarruj* can be understood as a form of persuasive communication that is not coercive but rather dialogical and transformative. The implications of this concept are very relevant in modern communication practices, especially in the fields of da'wah, education, and social engineering. The gradual approach allows for the delivery of values in a more humane manner, avoids rejection, and encourages the formation of consciousness born from understanding, rather than just normative pressure. In this context, the Qur'an can be positioned as a model of social communication that is not only normative-theological, but also strategic and applicative in responding to the challenges of contemporary societal change.

One of the most representative examples of the application of *tadarruj* in the Qur'an is the process of prohibiting *khamr* (liquor). These prohibitions are not set directly, but rather through several stages that reflect a gradual and adaptive persuasive communication strategy. *In the first stage*, the Qur'an does not directly prohibit, but introduces ambiguity in the value of *khamr*, as in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 219, which states that there are benefits in it, but the sin is greater. At this stage, the approach is cognitive-reflective, encouraging the audience to think and judge rationally (*logos*). From the perspective of ELM, this stage reflects the use of the central route, as the audience is invited to engage in cognitive elaboration of rationally considering the benefits and harms of *khamr*.

*In the second stage*, restrictions were implemented through QS. An-Nisa [4]: 43, which forbids approaching prayer while drunk. Here, communication strategies begin to be partially regulated through the development of disciplinary awareness without causing significant resistance. This stage shows a combination of *the central and peripheral routes*, as the message not only provides practical rules but also builds emotional and religious awareness of the sanctity of worship. *The third stage*, the total ban, is affirmed in the QS. Al-Ma'idah [5]: 90–91, which mentions *khamr* as an act of satanism that should be shunned. At this stage, communication becomes normative-assertive, reinforced by an emotional approach (*pathos*) through threats and social consequences. From the perspective of ELM, this strategy shows the strengthening of *the peripheral route* through the negative symbolization of *khamr* as destructive behavior that is contrary to the religious and social values of the Muslim community.

If analyzed using the perspective of Communication Science, this process shows the stages of systematic persuasion:

1. *Awareness* - problem recognition
2. *Interest & evaluation* - behavioral restrictions
3. *Adoption* - the implementation of a total ban

The model also shows the integration between *Logos* (rational argument), *Pathos* (emotional touch), and *Ethos* (Revelation Authority), which works in stages

according to the readiness of the audience. From the perspective of the Ulumul Qur'an, this case confirms that *tadarruj* is not just a method of legal legislation, but also an effective social communication strategy in changing people's culture. The tradition of *khamr* consumption that has taken root in Arab society is not erased instantly, but through a gradual and persuasive process of internalizing values. Thus, this example reinforces the argument that Qur'anic communication is gradual (non-confrontational), contextual (understanding the audience's culture), adaptive (adjusting people's psychological readiness), and transformative (changing behavior in an ongoing manner). From the perspective of ELM, the effectiveness of the strategy lies in its ability to combine rational and emotional persuasion channels in a balanced manner so that social change can take place more steadily and profoundly.

This study further proposes a conceptual framework suggesting that the effectiveness of Qur'anic communication derives not only from the content of its message but also from its strategic integration of rational persuasion (*logos*), emotional engagement (*pathos*), and communicator credibility (*ethos*) within a revelatory framework. This conceptualization represents a significant academic contribution to the development of Islamic communication studies by offering an interdisciplinary perspective that connects Qur'anic communication principles with contemporary communication theory.

#### D. Conclusion

This research showed that persuasive communication in the Qur'an is complex, gradual, and contextual, in accordance with the social dynamics of the time of revelation. The difference in characteristics between Makkiyah and Madaniyah verses shows the existence of an adaptive communication strategy, where the Makkiyah phase emphasizes more emotional, spiritual, and symbolic approaches. In contrast, the Madaniyah phase tends to use rational, normative, and institutional approaches. This variation emphasizes that the Qur'an does not convey its message uniformly but considers the psychological, social, and intellectual conditions of the audience in the process of revelation.

This study also found that the concept of *tadarruj* functions not only as a method of legal legislation but also as an effective social communication strategy for shaping gradual changes in people's attitudes and behaviors. Through a gradual approach, the Qur'an can build awareness, reduce resistance, and sustainably encourage the internalization of values. The case of the prohibition of *khamr* shows how the Qur'an applies a systematic persuasion strategy through the stages of awareness, behavioral restrictions, and full acceptance of the prohibition. This shows that the communication of the Qur'an is dialogical, adaptive, and transformative in building social change.

From the perspective of *the Elaboration Likelihood Model*, Qur'anic communication shows the integration between *the central route* and *the peripheral route* in the persuasion process. The dominant emotional, symbolic, and narrative

approach in the Makkiyah phase reflects reliance of peripheral routes. In contrast, rational arguments, legal regulations, and social dialogue in the Madaniyah phase indicate reliance of *central* routes. Thus, this research offers an academic contribution in the form of a persuasive communication model based on the stages of revelation that integrates the perspective of the Ulumul Qur'an and modern communication theory. The novelty of this research lies in the formulation of a classification of persuasive communication of the Qur'an's persuasive communication based on the Makkiyah and Madaniyah phases, as well as the reinterpretation of *the concept of tadarruj* as a gradual, contextual, and audience-centered social communication strategy from the perspective of contemporary communication science.

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