

Exploring Ethical Communication Principles for Outstanding Leadership in Bugis Lontara Tradition: Indonesia's Local Wisdom

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Abstract

This research investigates the key principles of ethical communication as a foundation for exceptional leadership within the cultural context of Bugis wisdom. By drawing on the rich heritage of the Bugis community, the study explores unique aspects of ethical communication that contribute to effective leadership. Data sources included classical Bugis documents: Lontara Latoa, lontara Sukku'na Wajo, and Lontara Pappaseng, as well as various quotes on Bugis wisdom. These texts were analyzed hermeneutically, involving meticulous, comprehensive reading to achieve a deep understanding. The researchers aimed to absorb, empathize with, and contemplate the perspectives presented, developing an integrated understanding of how each part relates to the whole. The findings identify five fundamental principles essential for leadership in Bugis wisdom: noble intent, intelligence, honesty, courage, and steadfastness in principles, with noble intent being the central force encompassing the others. These principles highlight the importance of cultural sensitivity in leadership training, enhancing ethical communication practices, and promoting cultural exchange and collaboration between Bugis culture and organizations in Indonesia and globally. This study underscores the value of integrating cultural perspectives to enrich leadership and communication practices.

Keywords: leadership ethics; principles of ethical communication; outstanding leadership; local wisdom.

1. Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving world, effective communication is becoming increasingly important. In an interconnected world, the capacity to communicate positively and influence others is even more vital (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019; Usman et al., 2024). They are fundamental aspects of leadership, shaping interactions and relationships between leaders and others. However, it should be noted that communication is not only about conveying information but also about transferring data and communicating the leader's vision and mission to the team, stakeholders, and others as a mark of solid leadership communication (Asri et al., 2023). Ethical communication, rooted in principles of integrity, respect, courage, steadfastness in principles, and honesty, is crucial for

leadership today. Ethical communication is essential since it is a form of respect for honesty, transparency, and respect when conveying information (Arafah et al., 2024). In Indonesia, for example, on November 7, 2023, the chairman of the Constitutional Court was unexpectedly dismissed by the Ethics Court for violating the code of ethics. This was due to altering the age eligibility provision for presidential and vice-presidential candidates, allowing President Joko Widodo's son, aged 36, to pursue candidacy for vice presidency despite failing to meet the previous age requirement of 40 years. The decision has drawn criticism for contradicting fundamental principles such as integrity, competence, equality, independence, propriety, and decorum (Said, 2024, p. 203).

Bugis wisdom as local wisdom of Bugis, which has been widely featured in Lontara (Pelras, 1996), contains principles and practices that have been passed down from generation to generation by the Bugis community, an ethnic group from South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Local wisdom is obtained through observation and identified as indigenous knowledge or a local characteristic (Arafah et al., 2020; Takwa et al., 2022a). Rooted deeply in Bugis culture, these principles emphasize the importance of human dignity and honour in all daily life, including principles of ethical leadership communication. They serve not only as a way to value and respect individual interests and rights (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019; Takwa et al., 2022b) but also serve as guidelines for moral behaviour and decision-making and have proven to be highly relevant in the context of leadership in modern times (Yusuf, 2013; Said, 2016, p. 66).

In this regard, local wisdom as a sociocultural value can be recognized by observing the advice of the ancients, beliefs, literature, taboos and so on (Arifin et al., 2022; Manugeran et al., 2023). Several scholars have researched Bugis's wisdom. For example, Rahman et al. (2022) researched social and cultural values in Bugi's local wisdom. These values are often found in Lontara Pappaseng, which serves as a social control tool, upholds community norms, provides education, and guides life (Soefarto & Nerawati, 2023). In addition to the values found in Lontara, researchers like Kamsinah et al. (2023) discovered strategies of politeness in Bugis language passed down by the Kings of Bone and Wajo through the manuscripts of Lontara Latoa and Lontara Sukku'na Wajo. Their findings indicate that dialogue in both Lontara manuscripts is asymmetric or hierarchical (between king and subordinates). The most significant finding in their research is the depiction of the close relationship between the king and his subordinates. The research identified regarding wisdom in leadership includes Alim et al. (2023), among others, discussing the code of ethics of leadership wisdom according to Lontara Latoa.

Research on Bugis wisdom, however, often neglects its philosophical aspects, particularly its local wisdom concerning communication ethics principles. Therefore, this article aims to delve into the communication ethics principles for outstanding leadership in Bugis wisdom and strives to contextualize them in modern leadership practices. Furthermore, this research offers valuable insights that contribute significantly to the broader literature on ethical leadership and communication, particularly within the context of indigenous traditions in Indonesia.

First, the research fills a gap in the literature. One way this research contributes is by filling a gap in the existing literature. Ethical leadership and communication are often studied within Western frameworks, neglecting non-Western cultures' rich traditions and practices. Focusing

on the Bugis Lontara tradition in Indonesia, this research addresses this gap and provides a more comprehensive understanding of ethical leadership principles from a non-Western perspective.

Second, it extends current knowledge. The findings of this research extend our current understanding by highlighting the unique ethical communication principles embedded within the Bugis Lontara tradition. These principles include mutual respect, consensus-building, and harmonious relationships, which need to be more prominently emphasized in mainstream Western leadership literature. By identifying and elucidating these principles, the research expands our understanding of how ethical leadership can be conceptualized and practised across different cultural contexts.

Third, it provides new insights. By delving into the Bugis Lontara tradition, the research offers new insights into how indigenous cultural practices can inform contemporary leadership theories and practices. It provides a fresh perspective on ethical leadership, drawing attention to the wisdom embedded within indigenous traditions that can provide valuable lessons for leaders in diverse contexts). Furthermore, the research may shed light on alternative approaches to leadership that prioritize community well-being, interdependence, and sustainability, which are increasingly relevant in today's globalized world.

Indeed, the empirical findings of this research contribute to the broader literature by filling a gap in existing scholarship, extending our current knowledge of ethical leadership, and providing new insights into the application of indigenous wisdom in leadership contexts. By examining the Bugis Lontara tradition, the research enriches our understanding of ethical communication principles and underscores the importance of embracing diverse cultural perspectives in leadership studies.

2. Review of Related Literature

The principles of ethical leadership communication stem from widely accepted views and values in leadership studies. Contributions from various experts in communication, business ethics, and leadership have enhanced our understanding of these concepts. Aristotle's emphasis on "virtue ethics," focusing on character development and moral and intellectual virtues, including courage and wisdom, remains influential (Gini & Green, 2013; Rabbås, 2015). Bennis (2008), in "On Becoming a Leader," highlights critical aspects such as self-discovery, integrity, adaptability, vision, and courage. These qualities, honesty, adaptability, and clear vision, are essential to effective leadership. Courage and a readiness to take risks are vital traits in ethical leadership communication, enabling leaders to confront challenges confidently (Bennis, 2008).

Renowned business guru emphasizes the importance of ethical leadership communication. Drucker (2006) highlights the significance of social responsibility and ethics in organizational management, stating that moral leadership, grounded in core values, is crucial for long-term success. Goleman (2011) emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence in leadership. Goleman lists critical elements such as motivation, social skills, emotional control, self-awareness, and empathy. According to him, a leader must possess vital emotional and intellectual intelligence and the ability to inspire teams, forge bonds with others, and resolve conflicts

peacefully. Goleman believes that developing one's emotional intelligence is crucial for long-term success.

Furthermore, Kant (1724-1804) regarded moral actions as categorical imperatives. Honesty, courage, and steadfastness in principles are integral to moral obligation, which is the prerequisite to seeking what we believe to be correct and acting in line with it (Siwi et al., 2022). In leadership communication, Kantian principles establish an ethical foundation where honesty is the cornerstone for building trust. Moral courage is the conviction to act according to duty, while steadfastness reflects loyalty to moral principles (Kolomý, 2023).

3. Research Methodology

This study adopts an interpretive paradigm as a foundation for qualitative research methods (Halil et al., 2024), which suggests that individuals interpret reality according to their perspectives (Willis, 2007; Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). The research design involves text analysis based on the hermeneutic approach, influenced by Max Weber's concept of "verstehen," emphasizing understanding through human capabilities (Roller, 2019).

The data used in this research consists of soft data, specifically soft data extracted from classical documents. These documents include excerpts from Lontara Latoa, Lontara Sukku'na Wajo, Lontara Pappaseng, and traditional Bugis quotes from past Bugis scholars. Some excerpts from Lontara Latoa were obtained from Mattulada (1985). The original copy of the Latoa, which includes transliterated text with an Indonesian translation, is available at the Leiden University Library (Mattulada, 1985). A copy of excerpts from Lontara Sukku'na Wajo was taken from Andi Zainal Abidin Farid's collection. The original copies of the Lontara Sukku'na Wajo are preserved by Muhammad Salim and Sudirman Sengkang (Farid, 1985). Excerpts from Lontara Pappaseng and Bugis quotes were compiled from the collection of Punagi (1983). All of these collections were accessed from Mattulada, Farid, and Punagi while the principal writer of this article was working on his doctoral dissertation titled: *Konsep jati diri manusia Bugis dalam Lontara: sebuah telaah falsafi tentang kearifan Bugis* (Self-identity of Buginese in Lontara: A philosophical analysis of the wisdom of Buginese life in 1998 (Said, 2008).

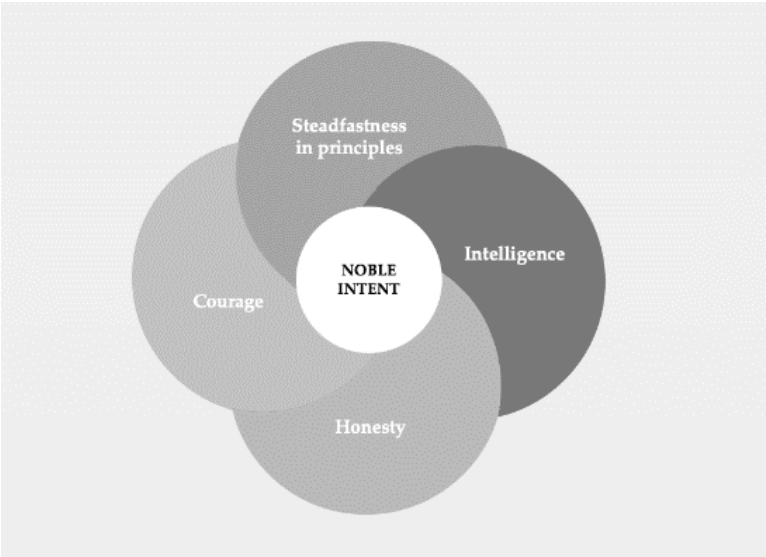
Classical texts are read hermeneutically to gather data in the data collection process. Hermeneutic reading involves a thorough and detailed approach to deeply understanding the text. Researchers immerse themselves in the text, empathizing with and considering the presented perspective and understanding how each part relates to the whole (Neuman, 2014, p. 103). In other words, the hermeneutic reading shapes the researcher's attitude towards the text and creates a starting point that guides all reading, disclosure and interpretations (Sunyoto et al., 2022; Yudith et al., 2024).

We thoroughly examined the Lontara manuscript data using the interactive data analysis of Miles et al. (2014) and Fairclough's (2013) critical discourse analysis. This involved holistic and thematic classification, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. Additionally, reflexive thematic analysis, following Squires' (2023) approach, was applied to qualitative data from the Lontara texts, suitable for capturing intricate narratives. This method, commonly used in qualitative

research, identifies and interprets patterns or themes while acknowledging researcher subjectivity (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Through these methods, we aimed to explore the meanings of exceptional leadership within Bugis wisdom while recognizing our influence on the research process. Our goal was to understand better the complexities surrounding ethical communication principles.

4. Results and Discussion

This research aims to explore the principles of ethical communication in outstanding leadership within Bugis wisdom. The results of the data analysis indicate five fundamental principles forming the foundation of moral communication in outstanding leadership within Bugis wisdom. These five principles are inseparable: noble intent, intelligence, honesty, courage, and steadfastness in principles. However, among these five principles, noble intent stands at the core of all ethical principles. For the Bugis community, intelligence, honesty, courage, and steadfastness in principles must all be based on noble intent. The position of noble intent becomes the central point in every action. Therefore, without noble intent, all forms of behaviour, whether verbal or non-verbal, will not receive the approval of God. The role of noble intent, along with other principles, in the ethical communication of leadership within Bugis wisdom can be depicted in Picture 1.



Picture 1: Ethical communication of leadership in Bugis wisdom

Noble intent (Nia Mapaccing)

The primary principle of ethical communication in Bugis wisdom is noble intent. Leaders must ensure their intentions are solely for the betterment of their community. Noble intent, or "nia

mapaccing," denotes good intentions, thoughts, and a pure heart, contrasting with "nia' maja'" (evil intentions, malicious heart). It implies sincerity, purity, and positive aspirations. Actions driven by noble intent stem from a genuine desire to uphold human dignity and honour, avoiding deceit and conflicts of interest. Pure intentions shield against reprehensible traits and are valued like a shining gem or clear water. Keeping away anything that could tarnish this purity ensures that words and deeds are well-controlled. In a Bugis quote, it is mentioned:

Dua kuala sappo, unganna panasae, belo kanukue

(Two I made into fences, namely jackfruit flowers and nail ornaments).

In Bugis culture, jackfruit flowers, known as "lëmpu," symbolize honesty, while nail ornaments, called "pacci" or "paccing" in the Lontara script, signify purity of intention or a clean heart. For the Bugis, noble intent is paramount in all actions, as it garners divine favour. A leader with a pure heart maintains steadfastness in righteous convictions, enabling clear judgment in fulfilling obligations and responsibilities.

Furthermore, the Lontara Latoa states:

Atutuiwi anngolona atimmu; aja' muammanasaianngi ri ja'e padammu rupa tau nasaba' mattëntui iko matti' narewëki ja'na apa' riturungënni ritu gau' madecenngge riati maja'e nade'sa nariturungëng ati madecenngge ri gau' maja'e. Naiya tau maja' kaleng atie lettü' rimonri ja'na.

(Protect the orientation of your heart; refrain from harbouring malicious intentions towards others, as inevitably you will face repercussions, for virtuous deeds can be tainted by malevolent actions. Those with ill intentions will bear the consequences for generations to come).

The Lontara excerpt stresses the importance of aligning one's heart and mind, emphasizing the need for benevolent intentions towards others. Nurturing a pure heart promises righteousness while harbouring malice leads to adverse consequences. Therefore, there is no justification for malevolent thoughts. To achieve prosperity, individuals must safeguard their hearts from moral divergence. Additionally, the constant struggle between desire and rationality within individuals requires prioritizing reason over desire when making decisions, even if the outcome may not be favourable).

In Bugi's wisdom, a leader must possess noble intent in communication. Noble intentions prevent actions that contravene moral and ethical principles (Lucas & Stob, 2020, pp. 29-30). Such leaders go beyond transactional approaches, addressing root causes and providing practical solutions. Leaders with noble intentions and care for others are more likely to earn respect and followership. This value system fosters mutual benefit and long-term legacy, promoting cooperation over personal interests (Said, 2024, p. 203). Besides, it can also positively affect your personal and even professional engagements (Arafah et al., 2023a; Takwa et al., 2024).

A leader with noble intent in communication exhibits integrity by adhering to moral and ethical principles and consistently embodying honesty and transparency (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). They demonstrate empathy by genuinely caring about the well-being and perspectives of those they lead (Garlitz, 2022). Vision is another key trait, as they possess a clear and inspiring vision for the future that motivates others to pursue common goals (Aktaş, 2024). Humility marks their

demeanour; they remain approachable, value others' input, and acknowledge their limitations (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2023). Accountability is central to their leadership style, as they take responsibility for their actions and decisions, holding themselves and others accountable for their commitments (O'Donoghue & van der Werff, 2022).

Servant leadership defines their approach, prioritizing the needs of their team or community above personal interests and fostering a culture of support and collaboration (Langhof & Guldenberg, 2020). Courage fuels their communication and actions, enabling them to make difficult decisions and take calculated risks guided by their principles and values (Mansur et al., 2020). Adaptability is a hallmark trait, as they remain open to feedback and new ideas, readily adjusting their approach in response to changing circumstances or input (Schulze & Pinkow, 2020). Finally, they exhibit long-term thinking, considering the lasting impact of their communication, actions, and decisions, prioritizing sustainability and the well-being of future generations (Lamu, 2023).

Intelligence (Macca)

The second principle of ethical leadership communication in Bugis wisdom is intelligence. Intelligence may refer to the capacity to quickly learn, understand, or deal with new or challenging circumstances (Arafah et al., 2023b; Kaharuddin et al., 2024). Leaders must communicate intelligently, understanding their context and audience before delivering messages. They use knowledge, understanding, and emotional sensitivity to motivate effectively. Intelligent communication involves adapting styles and strategies to fit the situation and the needs of the groups. Leaders should also possess extensive knowledge, practical skills, and sensitivity to their environment to solve problems swiftly. According to Lontara Pappaseng, only leaders embodying intelligence and honesty can achieve prosperity for society.

Aja nasalaiko acca sibawa lëmpu; naia riasënnge acca, de' gaga masussa napogau; de'to ada masussa nabali ada madeceng malëmmae; matëppëi ri padanna tau. Naia riasënnge lëmpu, makëssing gau'na; patujui nawanawanna, madecenngi ampena; namatau ri Dewata Seuwaee.

(Do not lack intelligence and honesty. Intelligence is finding nothing complicated, answering questions without difficulty, and believing in fellow humans. Honesty means righteous actions, genuine thoughts, and fear of the Almighty God).

The excerpt highlights that an intelligent person can take action, share opinions, offer insights, and solve problems, earning the trust of others. However, intelligence is only complete with honesty. This suggests that honesty and intelligence are intertwined in a leader's life. A truthful leader listens to advice, performs good deeds, and harbours good intentions, with obedience to the Almighty paramount. Furthermore, the importance of intelligence in Bugis wisdom is emphasized in a Bugis quote:

Mui maega pabbisena, nabënngo pallopinna teawa nalurëng.

(Despite having many rowers, I refuse to ride if the helmsman is foolish).

In Bugis culture, a skilled helmsman is crucial for safe navigation, ensuring passengers reach their destination despite challenges like powerful waves. According to Bugis wisdom, the

helmsperson must be intelligent and understand boat intricacies, wind, weather, and celestial navigation. The quote "Mui maega pabbisena" (even with many rowers) metaphorically implies that a leader's success is not about support numbers but his intelligence.

In Bugis's wisdom, intelligence follows noble intent, as leaders must use critical thinking and reasoning to address challenges, communicate ideas, and apply knowledge. Intellectual intelligence alone is insufficient; social and spiritual intelligence are also essential. Influential leaders build meaningful relationships and ground their actions in values linked to divine understanding, aiming for divine approval.

Various experts and practitioners emphasize the link between intelligence and outstanding leadership. Academic literature highlights intelligence's role in ethical leadership communication. Goleman (2011) popularized emotional intelligence, showing its impact on ethical leadership by managing emotions. Gardner (2002) expanded this to include emotional, social, and other facets crucial for leadership. Transformational leadership, by Bass & Riggio (2006), views leaders as change agents needing solid emotional intelligence and ethics. While not the sole factor in leadership success, intelligence significantly enhances ethical leadership communication (Caldwell & Anderson, 2021).

Intelligence is crucial for ethical leadership communication due to multiple reasons. It helps leaders grasp complex issues and moral implications. Emotional intelligence ensures prudent assessment and avoids rash, unethical decisions. Social intelligence enables adaptability in navigating ethical social dynamics. Intelligence fosters flexibility for devising ethical strategies amidst change. Emotional intelligence aids conflict management, promoting fair resolutions. Fueled by emotional intelligence, empathy understands team perspectives, fostering ethical communication and motivation. Intelligence empowers leaders to uphold morals, nurture relationships, and cultivate productivity.

Honesty (Malempu)

The third principle of ethical leadership communication in Bugis wisdom is honesty. Honesty in this context is more than simply telling the truth; it is also a means of emotional management to be authentic, transparent and trustworthy in all exchanges (Arafah et al., 2021; Arafah et al., 2023c). Leaders must communicate openly and truthfully, sharing information without hiding important facts or manipulating it for personal gain. Honesty, referred to as "lëmpu'," embodies integrity, fairness, and truthfulness, which are crucial for building trust and maintaining healthy relationships within the community. Lontara Pappaseng articulates five traits of an honest person as follows:

Sabbinna lëmpu'e limai, narekko salai naengau asalanna, narekko rionroi sala naddampëngiwi tau ripasalanna, narekko risanrekiwi de'napacekoang, narekko rirënnuangi de'napacekoang, narekko majjanciwi narupaiwi jancinna.

(There are five proofs of honesty: admitting one's mistake when at fault; forgiving others for their mistakes; fulfilling responsibilities without disappointment; maintaining trust when entrusted; fulfilling promises made).

The excerpt highlights five crucial traits of an honest leader: admitting and taking responsibility for mistakes, demonstrating forgiveness, upholding trust and conscientiously fulfilling duties, being reliable when entrusted with tasks, and honouring promises to maintain credibility. Failing to fulfil commitments may lead to ostracism, underscoring the importance of accountability and integrity in Bugis leadership.

For the Bugis community, an honest leader is someone who uses himself as a benchmark, as expressed in the Bugis quote:

"Kabbēcci alemu iolo inappa mukabēcci taue" (pinch yourself first before you pinch others).

This aligns with the Golden Rule: "Treat others as you want to be treated." Furthermore, Lontara Latoa mentions:

Makkēdatopi Toriolota, nakko ěngka muelorēng napogau taue rapanna lopi, maelokko tonangiwi, mupatonangiangngi taue, ianaro riasēng malēmpu makkuae.

(The elders also said if you want something to be done collectively, consider it like a boat. If you enjoy riding it, that is what you load others onto; that is what is called honesty).

The excerpt suggests that honesty entails fairness and fulfilling promises, respecting others' rights, and staying true to one's beliefs. It emphasizes the importance of self-honesty, advocating for self-awareness and authenticity rather than self-deception. To be honest with others, one must first be honest with oneself, relinquishing pretence and embracing truthfulness. Lontara Sukku'na Wajo emphasized:

Naia riasēngge lēmpu' tēllunrupai: lēmpu'na puannge ri atanna. Naia lēmpu'na puangnge ri atanna tēnnawalēki ja' gau madecenna atanna decengmu tosa nawalēkēngngi. Tēnnasuroi atanna ri tēnnaulle; Lēmpu'na atae ri puanna. Naia lēmpu'na atae ri puanna, naggangkaulleangngi napajajiangngi passurona puanna ia pura ri soroangēngngi; Mallaingngi akkalaruddusēng alena, bēttuanna malaingngi rapang alena. Naia riasēngge malaiaingngi akkalaruddusēng alena, macēnnippi nyawamu molai napolai toi taue, ri sesena gau' madecengnge.

(The concept of honesty is understood in three ways: God's honesty towards His servants ensures that their goodness is met with goodness, without evil in return. He does not burden them beyond what they can bear; the honesty of a servant towards his Lord entails carrying out duties with sincerity and wholeheartedness as commanded; reflecting on oneself involves making comparisons with oneself. This means that one can only instruct or encourage others to perform tasks sincerely after sincerely performing them oneself, always in truthfulness).

In moral integrity, an individual of honesty often employs himself as a standard to gauge how others should be treated. If he judges a particular treatment as beneficial for himself, it holds similar merit for others. Conversely, if he perceives a specific action or treatment as unfavourable to his well-being, it is likely detrimental to others. Therefore, according to Lontara Pappaseng, one's standards are the guiding principle for interactions with others.

Naia appongenna lēmpu'e duampuwangemmi: Iapa tapoadai kadopi' molai; Iapa tapegau'i kadopi' liwurui, rimunripi taue.

(The foundation of honesty has two aspects: speaking by the determination to act. We must do it ourselves before expecting others to do the same).

Within Bugi's wisdom, honesty encompasses integrity in thought, speech, and action. A truthful leader acknowledges their mistakes and takes accountability for them, upholding credibility and diligently fulfilling their duties. They demonstrate dependability when entrusted with tasks and honour the commitments they make. Additionally, an honest leader reveres God, ensuring all their actions and words align with their conscience. Consequently, all their endeavours are guided by noble intentions.

The importance of honesty in ethical leadership communication is widely recognized among leadership scholars, practitioners, and management literature. Most established leadership models, such as transformational leadership by Burns (2003) and Bass & Riggio (2006), highlight honesty and integrity as fundamental traits of influential leaders. This emphasis on honesty extends to business ethics frameworks like the Triple Bottom Line concept, which stresses integrity for sustainable business practices (Suriyankietkaew & Kantamara, 2019). While approaches may differ, the consensus is clear: honesty fosters ethical communication and excellent organizational leadership.

Indeed, Lucas and Stob (2020, p. 31) assert that nothing is more critical to ethical communication than honesty. Public communication relies on the implicit belief that "words can be trusted and people will be truthful." Without this belief, there is no foundation for communication nor rationale for one person to trust anything another person says.

Courage (Warani)

The fourth principle of ethical leadership communication in Bugis wisdom is courage. Leaders demonstrate courage by fearlessly expressing opinions or ideas, even if controversial or complex, and facing risks or challenges that may arise. Courage in communication enables leaders to lead with integrity, advocating for their values even in challenging situations. It is important to note that this courage is not recklessness; it is moral courage, where individuals uphold beliefs for human dignity. According to Lontara, courageous individuals do not shy away from defending the truth, even if criticized or threatened. Moral courage involves loyalty to one's conscience and readiness to risk conflict. It also entails independence of judgment, a cognitive virtue that leads to action based on one's beliefs, known as moral courage. Lontara Latoa highlighted the significance of courage in the following excerpt:

Tettakkini napolei ada maja', ada madeceng, de' najampangiwi karebae. Naëngkalengai tenna ëngkalinga toi. Tëmmetaui ri pariolo, tëmmetaui ri parimunri. Tëmmetaui mita bali. Waraniwi taro pangkaukëng rimapërrie ri tëmmaperrie riakkuannae waraniwi passu ada matojo, malëmma ri sipato'nae. Waraniwi rette' bicara matërre, bicara mapecca' ri sitongënnae. Waraniwi mappakainge', mappangaja ri tomarajae, ri tobaiccu'e, ri nasagenae. Waraniwi mate.

(Unperturbed by good or bad news, carefully weighing the information, unafraid of being called upon or overlooked, fearless in confronting adversaries, taking decisive action in challenging and routine situations. Speaks assertively and calmly, makes truth-based decisions, offers reminders or advice to authorities and the community, and courageously faces mortality).

Moral courage entails championing truth over wrongdoing. A leader with moral courage resists temptations of status, wealth, and power, remaining steadfast in righteousness. Upholding beliefs strengthens their resolve, inspiring others in times of oppression. Like a rock in the sea, he stands firm against currents, providing stability and inspiration to those in need. Lontara Pappaseng emphasized:

Naia tau pellowrēnnge de' decenna mauseua mua de'to. Naia taureнна tau pellowrēnnge: maega gau bawanna; maega bēllena; maraja ngoai; makurassiri' i.

(There is no benefit for the cowardly. The characteristics of a coward include four aspects: acts arbitrarily, often lies, is too greedy, and lacks a sense of shame).

A leader lacking moral courage is termed cowardly or timid, embodying purely negative traits. Such a leader lacks self-confidence and creativity and relies solely on existing resources due to greed. Despite imaginative ideas, a coward fails to translate them into actions, resulting in deplorable behaviours. Ultimately, such leaders lose their sense of shame, resorting to boastfulness rather than meaningful actions.

In Bugis's wisdom, courage embodies self-control, responsibility, and fearlessness. A courageous person remains composed amid criticism or praise, fulfils duties independently, and confronts challenges boldly. It extends to defending rights, speaking the truth, and facing adversity fearlessly. Lack of courage may lead to social repercussions, as it is linked with honour and masculinity. Upholding dignity, even at life's risk, is paramount. Leaders' courage is paramount, as failure may lead to labels of cowardice or unfit for leadership. Bugis' philosophy views courage as grounded in common sense and noble intentions, known as moral courage. It entails standing firm for principles essential for human dignity, even amidst isolation or criticism. Moral courage involves loyalty to one's conscience and readiness to confront conflict.

Courage is a crucial aspect of ethical leadership communication, as Brown (2012) emphasizes courage and vulnerability in her book "Daring Greatly," which asserts that excellent leaders courageously express themselves. Nelson Mandela, known for his peaceful yet firm leadership, exemplifies courage in addressing injustice (Mansur et al., 2020). Similarly, Winston Churchill's resolute leadership during World War II underscores the importance of courage (Humes, 2012). A respected writer, Maya Angelou, also stressed the significance of courage, stating, "Without courage, we cannot practice any other virtue with consistency" (Lupton, 2016).

Indeed, courage is crucial for ethical leadership communication (Francis, 2018), fulfilling several vital roles. Firstly, it allows leaders to address conflicts and challenges directly, promoting open communication. Secondly, it encourages innovation by embracing risk and fostering creativity. Thirdly, courage ensures leaders maintain integrity and uphold values, fostering trust. Fourthly, it enables leaders to deliver difficult news with empathy and resolve. Fifthly, it aids leaders in navigating change, promoting clear communication and adaptability. Sixthly, by leading by example, courageous leaders inspire their teams. Lastly, courage promotes transparency, fostering trust within teams. Courage is the foundation of ethical leadership communication, nurturing strong relationships and facilitating positive change.

Steadfastness in Principles (Mageteng)

The fifth principle of ethical leadership communication in Bugis wisdom is steadfastness in principles. It emphasizes consistency and firmness in upholding one's beliefs and values, regardless of external pressures or changing circumstances. Leaders demonstrate integrity and courage by remaining faithful to their convictions, even when facing challenges or criticism. Steadfastness in principles signifies an unwavering attitude, where leaders are not easily influenced by temptations or challenges that may compromise their convictions. The characteristics of a steadfast leader in his stance are expressed in Lontara Pappaseng below.

Ēppa' gau' na gëttënge. Seuwani, tēssalai janci enrëngnge tēssorosi ulu ada. Maduanna, tēllukae anu pura enrëngnge tēppinrae assiturusëng. Matēlunna, rekko mabbicarai, parapi'i, rekko mabbiru'i purapi napajajiwi. Maēppa' na puadaa ada kuae topa pogau gau' makkëna tutturëng.

(Four signs of manifesting steadfastness in principles. First, not breaking promises and not violating agreements; second, keeping the results of agreements the same. Third, when speaking, consistently hitting the mark. When taking action, please only stop once it is completed. Fourth, if speaking or performing an action, always have a basis).

In the Bugis community, government leaders must exhibit firmness rooted in reverence for God and understanding national rules. They treat all impartially, prioritizing adherence to agreed-upon rules for peace. Steadfast beliefs ensure promise fulfilment despite the pressure. Loyalty to customs safeguards the populace's welfare, with violations leading to disasters like prolonged droughts. Upholding agreements and laws averts catastrophes, fostering a just society. Symbolized by "breaking the pitcher or plate," violations signal calamity. Honesty and decisiveness in enforcing laws protect the weak, preventing arbitrary actions by those in power.

In Bugis wisdom, leaders are expected to demonstrate unwavering determination in their stance, understanding and revering the laws of the land and a higher power. They treat everyone equally and strictly adhere to agreed-upon laws, known as *adë* (customary law), recognizing that following these rules ensures national peace. Bugis philosophy emphasizes, "Freedom of the Bugis Wajo people, only the law reigns." Additionally, the *Getteng Bicara* of Sidenreng, as presented by Nenek Mallomo, illustrates the importance of upholding the law for collective welfare. When Nenek Mallomo's son used another's plough without permission, resulting in failed harvests and an epidemic, he sentenced his son to death. Despite criticism of the severity of the punishment, Nenek Mallomo emphasized the primacy of law for collective welfare over individual considerations (Said, 2016, p. 55).

The importance of steadfastness in principles in ethical leadership communication is widely recognized by experts in leadership, ethics, and management. Notable figures such as Bennis (2008) emphasize integrity as crucial for solid leadership. Covey (2004) identifies integrity as the foundation of the seven habits of influential leaders. Maxwell (1998) and Drucker (2006) both stress the significance of integrity in leadership, with Maxwell highlighting it as a distinguishing trait of influential leaders. Angelou (2009) underscores loyalty to ethical values, inspiring steadfast leadership. Kouzes and Posner (2002) assert integrity as the primary pillar of trustworthy leadership, further cementing the importance of steadfastness in principles.

Consistency in principles, or integrity, is crucial in ethical leadership communication. It builds trust among team members, ensuring predictable and fair decision-making based on moral

values. This consistency minimizes conflicts of interest, prioritizing the common good and shaping organizational culture. Leaders with integrity navigate challenges ethically, upholding organizational values and maintaining reliability. Ultimately, consistency in principles fosters healthy relationships and long-term success in ethical leadership communication.

The five principles—noble intent, intelligence, honesty, courage, and steadfastness—found in Bugis wisdom guide ethics in leadership communication. Noble intent leaders prioritize integrity, empathy, and the common good. Intelligence aids in understanding complex situations and fostering effective communication. Honesty builds trust through transparency. Courage enables confronting challenges ethically. Steadfastness ensures consistency in ethical values. These principles create a framework for ethical leadership communication, fostering integrity, trust, and strong relationships.

Indeed, the ethical communication principles for leadership in Bugis wisdom remain highly relevant amidst the progress of time, where the emphasized principles in Bugis wisdom become a primary focus in excellent leadership in this modern era. Furthermore, principles aligning with the main characteristics of the leadership of Prophet Muhammad SAW (Allah sent prayer upon him and piece), the prophet in Islam, which include integrity (siddiq), trustworthiness (amanah), intelligence (fathanah), and openness (tabligh), have positioned him as a global model leader (Haron et al., 2022), as written by Hart (1992), who ranks him first among the hundred most influential figures in the world. This is attributed to Prophet Muhammad's ability to inspire others by fostering creativity without imposition, guiding without harm, motivating without pressure, and inviting without coercion. This indicates that the ethical communication principles within Bugis's wisdom can enhance understanding of ethical leadership communication principles.

5. Conclusion

The five main principles—noble intent, intelligence, honesty, courage, and steadfastness in principles—found in Bugis wisdom underpin ethics in leadership communication. A noble intent leader operates with integrity, empathy, and a commitment to the common good. Intelligence enables leaders to grasp complex situations and people, fostering effective communication. Honesty builds trust through transparent communication and openness, encouraging team contribution. Courage empowers leaders to confront challenges and uphold actual values ethically. Lastly, steadfastness in principles ensures consistency and loyalty to ethical values. These principles form a comprehensive framework for ethical leadership communication, fostering integrity, trust, and strong stakeholder relationships.

Indeed, the ethical communication principles for leadership in Bugis wisdom remain highly relevant amidst the progress of time, where the emphasized principles in Bugis wisdom become a primary focus in excellent leadership in this modern era.

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