



# JERE AS A RITUAL COMMUNICATION SPACE IN TERNATE'S ISLAMIC COMMUNITY

Rakhmat<sup>1</sup>, Sattu Alang<sup>2</sup>, Abd. Rasyid Masri<sup>3</sup>, Abd. Halik<sup>4</sup>, & Fauzan Hanafi<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1,5</sup>Intitut Agama Islam Negeri Ternate, Indonesia

<sup>2,3,4</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, Indonesia

Correspondence Email [rakhmat@iain-ternate.ac.id](mailto:rakhmat@iain-ternate.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

The Jere ritual is an intriguing phenomenon among the Islamic community of Ternate. This ritual, which has been practised for hundreds of years, holds significant meaning in the religious and cultural life of the Ternate people. This study explores the communication patterns that occur within the Jere pilgrimage ritual. The Jere ritual is a tradition of visiting graves or sacred sites. It has been passed down through generations and carries profound meaning in the cultural and religious life of the Islamic community in Ternate. This study adopts a qualitative approach to explain the aspects of verbal and nonverbal communication that occur during the execution of the ritual. The research also seeks to understand the functions and meanings of the interactions within it. Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews with ritual participants, and document analysis. The study results indicate that the Jere pilgrimage ritual not only serves as a means to strengthen spiritual connections with ancestors but also acts as a medium of communication among community members, reinforcing social solidarity and cultural identity. Additionally, this ritual contains communication symbols that reflect the religious and customary values held in high regard by the people of Ternate. This research can contribute to the study of ritual communication and enrich the understanding of religious practices within local culture. Furthermore, it offers more profound insights into the Jere ritual and, more broadly, into the cultural and religious practices of the Muslim community in Ternate.

**Keywords:** Jere ritual; communication; local indigenous; Islamic community of Ternate

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The long journey of human history is almost inseparable from the various practices in their lives, whether as individuals or as a community.(Rakhmat & Najmuddin, 2022). Rituals have become necessary, whether performed by individuals, families, or communities, on a regular or periodic basis or even on incidental occasions (Suhra & Rosita, 2020). A ritual becomes a sacred moment, marked by the specific determination of time, place, tools, and equipment that are specially prepared, along with the use of particular attire (Syuhudi, 2019). In this context, rituals

serve as a way for humans to express their beliefs and desires through the established guidelines for performing the ritual.

In addition to expressing belief, rituals become a communication event. This is because, in rituals, each person wants to convey a message to others. It also indicates that ritual communication will persist indefinitely since rituals have become a human necessity, even if performed in different forms according to the needs of individuals or communities (Setiyani, 2021). This ritual communication activity allows individuals to exchange and receive emotional commitments and strengthen social group cohesion (Nuzuli, 2022).

The Jere ritual is a pilgrimage performed by the Islamic community of Ternate to the graves of prominent Islamic preachers and saints. This ritual is a form of transcendental communication intended to convey messages to others at specific places and times associated with supernatural and metaphysical matters (Marwah, 2021). Although there are differing views within Islam regarding the practice of visiting graves considered sacred (Subri, 2017), for the Islamic community in Ternate, such pilgrimages are seen as a form of *tawasul* or mediation between humans and Allah.

Regardless of the debate surrounding the permissibility of the Jere ritual or pilgrimages to the graves of Islamic figures, the Jere ritual has become an integral part of the religious practices of the Islamic community in Ternate. As a communication event, the Jere ritual has become a complex phenomenon. This tradition, deeply rooted in the Islamic community of Ternate, holds profound meaning within both social and religious contexts (Harun et al., 2024). This ritual communication event serves as a means of communication and an effort to preserve the community's cultural identity (Kurniati, 2024). This identity gives the Islamic community in Ternate its distinctive characteristics as a religious yet culturally rich society.

The Jere pilgrimage ritual also serves as a means of connecting with ancestors. By visiting sacred sites, the community can strengthen their bonds with ancestors and seek assistance or blessings for their daily lives (Sofyan et al., 2018). The communication events within this ritual function as a way to convey messages and support the shared beliefs among community members. Through participation in the ritual, people can restore and reinforce their common faith (Hannan & Umam, 2023).

The communication patterns in the Jere ritual encompass various aspects, including using distinctive symbols such as sultanate attributes, boats, traditional clothing, customary food, and traditional music. In this process, these symbols function as recognizable signs for the community and serve as tools to build and strengthen social and religious bonds. This study aims to explore the communication activities involved in the Jere pilgrimage ritual performed by the indigenous Ternate community.

Thus, this research can provide deeper insights into how the Jere pilgrimage ritual plays a role in building and maintaining the identity of the Islamic community in Ternate. Additionally, it can help understand how ritual communication can be used to strengthen social and religious bonds within the community.

## 2. METHODS

The approach used in this research is qualitative. This method presents data non-numerically, characterized by its natural setting. The researcher strives to obtain data directly from sources. In this study, the researcher is the key instrument, adopting a descriptive stance that prioritizes the process over the outcome. This qualitative approach tends to analyze data inductively, focusing on constructing meaning. The field research findings are gathered through informants' words or observed behaviours (C. Bogdan, 1982).

Qualitative research is an approach that primarily focuses on describing, explaining, and conducting inductive analysis. This type of research emphasizes processes and meanings based on the perspectives or assessments of the subjects involved. It is conducted in a natural setting that aligns with its authentic state, so qualitative research is often referred to as a naturalistic research method. As a result, the condition of the research subject remains unchanged both during and after the researcher's presence in the field, ensuring that nothing is altered (Sugiarto, 2015)

This research collected data through direct observation and interviews. The informants were selected using purposive sampling, meaning they were deliberately chosen based on the specific objectives of this study (Kaharuddin, 2021).

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **The Concept of Ritual Communication in Ziarah *Jere***

Ritual communication is an integral part of human life at the individual level and within social groups. This is evident from various ritual communication practices, such as seasonal ceremonies that individuals and communities often perform. From birth to death, numerous ritual practices accompany the human life cycle. In addition to these life-cycle rituals, there are also incidental and seasonal rituals that seem inevitable, practised both individually and collectively.

Rituals play a crucial role in illustrating how individuals can concretize abstract aspects of their existence, ranging from life goals and worldviews to beliefs. Rituals have become an effort undertaken by every individual to shape the history of their lives (Said & Rahmah, 2023). From a communication perspective, rituals serve as a means to preserve the existence of a community and act as representations of beliefs within society while also continually sustaining these beliefs to prevent them from fading away (Carey, 2009).

Activities within ritual communication aim to foster solidarity, gather together, build a sense of community, nurture friendships, encourage participation, and cultivate a mutual sense of belonging. This way, everyone feels as if they are part of a community that shares common beliefs and a desire to preserve those beliefs (Pratama, 2020) continuously. Durkheim argues that every ritual ceremony and act of worship performed by individuals serves to strengthen solidarity and eliminate individual interests (Muntianawati, 2023).

Ritual communication can be understood as something related to beliefs and spiritual faith with specific purposes (Artiningsih, 2020). Rituals are cultural behaviours that involve beliefs

or magic, reinforced through tradition (Sifatu & Raemon, 2021). In principle, ritual communication consists of repeated actions, becoming habits with cultural significance. Daily, life is filled with rituals—whether upon waking up, before and after eating or sleeping, when travelling or preparing for routine activities. These repeated practices are what we refer to as rituals.

Ziarah Jere is a form of ritual communication that is integral to the Ternate Muslim community's tradition. This ritual serves as a means for engaging in transcendent communication. Within this tradition, each ritual performed is seen as a communicative act, as it is considered a way of conveying specific meanings (Badj et al., 2021). According to James W. Carey, ritual communication aims not to transmit information but to share and strengthen cultural solidarity (Rozak et al., 2021). Similarly, Radford argues that, from a ritual perspective, communication patterns can be likened to a sacred ceremony in which everyone participates (Fatanti et al., 2019). The collective engagement of the community in performing these ceremonies is the central focus of the ritual itself.

MacQuail explains that ritual communication is also called expressive communication, carried out collectively (Sopacua & Kissya, 2022). Radford further asserts that ritual communication involves certain key elements that must be fulfilled, such as collective participation and shared expression (Fatanti et al., 2019).

Ziarah Jere is a ritual communication that goes beyond simply transmitting messages. Instead, this ritual focuses on building and preserving a meaningful culture that serves as a tool for guiding social interactions among people. Its goal is not to convey information but to affirm shared values. This ritual is not intended to change attitudes or beliefs but to reflect what the community considers important.

The pattern of ritual communication is not merely seen as a process of sending messages from a communicator to a recipient. Instead, it is regarded as a sacred ceremony where every group member plays an active role, much like participating in a holy communion (Mukhammad, 2023). In this context, ritual communication emphasizes fostering unity among group members as they engage in prayers, singing, and other ceremonial activities.

### **Pattern of Ritual Communication in Jere**

As previously mentioned, some scholars believe that the tradition of Ziarah Jere is a pre-Islamic legacy preserved to this day, with modifications to its principles and certain ritual elements to align with Islamic teachings. In the context of the Ternate community, it is evident that this tradition has become deeply rooted and is practised as a significant rite by individuals, families, local communities, and even within the Sultanate of Ternate (Alhaddad & Effendi, 2022).

## Individual Practice of the Ritual

Ziarah *Jere* is often performed individually, with the ritual carried out by a person alone. This individual practice is typically done for personal intentions, particularly those related to worldly matters.

There are no specific rules regarding the places to visit on this pilgrimage. However, specific sites, such as *Jere Kulaba*, *Jere Talangame*, and the tomb of Sultan Baabullah, are commonly visited depending on the pilgrim's specific needs.

The caretaker of *Jere Kulaba* acknowledges that most visitors come seeking solutions to complicated personal matters. They pray at this site, hoping that, through the "blessings" of the *auliya* (saints) buried there, Allah SWT will ease their challenges and resolve their problems.

Several visitors acknowledge their intentions for coming, including seeking good health (healing from illnesses), smooth business dealings, debt relief, and even the hope of being elected to legislative positions. *Jere Kulaba* itself is considered the main *Jere*, serving as the "spiritual centre" for other *Jere* sites in Ternate (Interview with *Jere Kulaba* caretaker, 2024).

The tomb of Sultan Baabullah is one of the most frequently visited sites by individual pilgrims. Despite its distance from the centre of Ternate and its somewhat tricky accessibility, visitors remain undeterred in their desire to visit this tomb. They come to offer prayers and seek a connection with Allah SWT, using Sultan Baabullah, regarded as Ternate's "Shahibul Wilayah" (spiritual guardian), as an intermediary. Many hope they will experience smooth and safe dealings in Ternate (Interview with A. Muhsin, April 18, 2024).

The caretaker of *Jere Talangame* acknowledges that the site is often visited by politicians, officials, and military officers. Their requests vary, such as seeking smooth progress in their political careers, freedom from legal troubles, protection in their current positions, or transfers to more favourable posts. *Jere Talangame* is a popular site among officials due to its reputation as the tomb of one of the sultans or a military commander of the Sultanate of Ternate (Interview with a *Jere Talangame* pilgrim).

Individual pilgrimages can also be carried out by visiting several *jere* sites in Ternate through activities such as *Kolili Kie* or *Fere Kie*, typically related to fulfilling vows or specific personal intentions (Interview with a pilgrim, April 16, 2024).

## Group (Family) Practitioners of the Ziarah *Jere* Ritual

In addition to being performed individually, Ziarah *Jere* is also conducted in groups, typically with family members. These group pilgrimages are not bound to specific locations; they are usually carried out at the *jere* sites closest to their residences. For example, residents of Kayu Merah, Kalumata, Bastiong Karance, Jati, and Ubo-Ubo often visit *Jere Talangame*, *Jere Momole Tabona*, or *Jere Busua*. However, many families also visit multiple *jere* sites in Ternate through the traditions of *Kolili Kie* (circling the mountain) and *Fere Kie* (ascending the mountain).

The intentions behind this pilgrimage vary, but at its core, it is about seeking blessings through prayers offered to Allah SWT, using the *jere* as an intermediary, hoping that family matters may proceed smoothly and be safeguarded from harm. Common family-related requests include smooth proceedings for ongoing or upcoming events (such as weddings,

thanksgiving ceremonies, or the Hajj pilgrimage), protection from domestic troubles, and safety during childbirth (Interview with a pilgrim, April 16, 2024). Some pilgrims often leave water to "stay overnight" at the *jere* and retrieve it the next day. This water is believed to have been blessed by the saints at the *jere*, thus containing spiritual blessings. The water is then either drunk, used for bathing (by family members), or sprinkled on the four corners of the house or gThehat the "blessed" is believed toter can protect oneself, the family, and property from harm and evil, whether from humans or other entities (Interview with a pilgrim, April 16, 2024).

### **Group Pilgrims of the Jere Ritual in the Community**

In addition to individuals and families, *Ziarah Jere* is also performed by community groups. A community typically conducts this pilgrimage, whether an organization or residents at the village or sub-district level (Interview with Ramli, April 16, 2024).

The purpose of this pilgrimage is to pray for the well-being of the group or community. It is also conducted as a form of "buang bala" (warding off misfortune), which in Javanese tradition is known as "ruwatan", or in the Ternate language, referred to as Bobako Wosa Gam.

Some community groups perform *Ziarah Jere* to ensure the success of their collective endeavours, such as abundant harvests or plentiful fishing catches. They also seek protection from various misfortunes, like outbreaks, a series of deaths, or natural disasters. Additionally, pilgrimages by community groups in the old villages (such as Foramadiahi, Tabona, Tabanga, Toboleu, and Tubo) are conducted to visit *jere* that serve as the tombs of their ancestors (the *jere* of the *momole*). These visits are made to pray and connect with their ancestors, hoping they will act as intermediaries for the descent of blessings and grace upon their village (Interview with H. Mohtar, April 15, 2024).

For *santri* (Islamic students), this pilgrimage is intended to pray for the deceased, draw lessons, and seek *tawassul* (intercession) and *tabarruk* (blessings) from the saints and scholars buried at the *jere* sites (Interview with Rahmat, April 18, 2024). This pilgrimage is conducted at specific *jere* sites, most commonly at well-known locations such as *Jere Kulaba*, *Jere Talangame*, *Jere Busua*, the *jere* of the *momole* (venerated ancestors), and those on Mount Gamalama's peak. The *santri* typically visit the revered tombs of respected and famous scholars, such as Habib Muhammad bin Abdurrahman Albaar, Tuan Kota Malibuku Habib Hasyim Bin Muhammad Albaar, Sultan Baabullah, and Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin, among others.

The group's leader usually leads this ritual pilgrimage for community groups. Traditional Ternate communities often guide it by an elder known as *ngofa ma nyira*, *famanyira*, or *fanyira*. In the village of Foramadiahi, the ritual is typically led by a *sowohi* (spiritual leader).

The ritual ornaments for this type of pilgrimage are generally more elaborate than those used in individual or family pilgrimages. In addition to bringing *pondak* (woven pandan leaves) and water to sprinkle on the graves, incense (frankincense) is also usually included. The ritual is performed with *tahlilan* (communal prayer), accompanied by food and drinks, and placed in front of those reciting the prayers. These offerings typically include *dada* (yellow rice shaped like a mountain with an egg on top), *nasi jaha* (rice cooked in bamboo), and other items such as coffee, betel leaves, areca nuts, and cigarettes.

## Pilgrimage by the Sultanate of Ternate

The pilgrimage ritual to the *jere* is performed by individuals, families, or community groups and by the Sultanate of Ternate. The Sultanate conducts these rituals on both small (routine) and large scales, particularly during significant occasions such as before the *Legu Gam* (a traditional public festival), the celebrations of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, the month of *Maulid*, or during other special events as decreed by the Sultan.

Routine pilgrimage is typically conducted on Thursday afternoons before Friday night. It involves visiting the graves of Ternate's former rulers (*kolano*) to pray for the deceased while offering supplications (*tawassu*) for the safety and well-being of the land. This activity is usually carried out by the *Bobato Akherat* (religious officials) under the leadership of *Jou Kalem*, who reports directly to the Sultan. The pilgrimage focuses on honouring the graves within the Sultanate's cemetery grounds, situated behind *Sigi Lamo* (the Sultanate Mosque). It is performed by the imams, preachers (*khatib*), or religious officials (*modin*) under the direction of *Jou Kalem*.

The pilgrimage ceremonies are typically linked to grand events of the Sultanate, often integrated with the *Kololi Kie* (circumnavigating the mountain) and *Fere Kie* (mountain climbing) rituals. During the reign of His Excellency Sultan Haji Muzaffar Syah, *Kololi Kie* and *Fere Kie* became part of the public festival known in the Ternate language as *Legu Gam*. These events are more elaborate than the previous pilgrimage forms, featuring more intricate activities and well-organized rituals scheduled according to the Sultanate's protocol. The timing, location, materials, and personnel involved in these rituals are all determined based on longstanding customary traditions.

During the *Kololi Kie* and *Fere Kie* ceremonies, the Sultan, accompanied by the *bobato* (nobles), all traditional officials, and the *bala kusu se kano-kano* (royal guards), directly participate in performing these rituals (Interview: Hidayatussalam, April 17, 2024).

The pilgrimages conducted by the Sultanate of Ternate are typically driven by broader public and state-related purposes. These rituals are intended to seek blessings so that the spirits of saints and ancestors may serve as intermediaries for the safety of *Moloku Kie Raha* as a whole and Ternate in particular. Additionally, the pilgrimages aim to ensure that the Sultan, his family, and all his people receive protection from Allah SWT, are blessed with long life, and are safeguarded from disasters.

The organization of the *jere* pilgrimage rituals by the Sultanate on special occasions is usually prepared well in advance, involving the broader community on a large scale. These rituals are conducted according to protocols traditionally established by custom.

### The Meaning of the *Jere* Ritual

As a form of communication, the *Jere* ritual is rich in meaning, conveyed through its series of events, symbolic ornaments, and the prayers recited. This ritual carries a dual dimension: It serves as a sacred religious ceremony full of spiritual significance while also building and strengthening social bonds among community members (Manan, 2014). Moreover, the *Jere* pilgrimage ritual serves as a way to connect with ancestors, seeking their blessings and assistance for daily life

### **Incense (*Bukhur*)**

Incense is an almost essential element in the *jere* pilgrimage ritual, especially in group or family pilgrimages or during traditional ceremonies such as *Fere Kie* and *Kololi Kie*. However, individual pilgrims typically do not bring incense. Nevertheless, at specific *jere* sites, such as Kulaba, Talangame, or the tomb of Sultan Baabullah, incense (*bukhur*) is often provided for visitors.

In Islamic tradition, using *bukhur* (incense) is permitted; some scholars even consider it a recommended practice (*sunnah*). This recommendation stems from the pleasant fragrance (derived from burning agarwood), which is believed to be beloved by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and favoured by angels (Interview: M. Fadly Albaar, April 16, 2024). According to Al-Syaikh Muhammad Hasyim Asy'ari, burning incense in a mosque is commendable (*sunnah*) (Karyadi, 2022). However, among the general public, incense is often seen as a ritual requirement to summon the spirits of those being visited so they may come and be communicated with for prayers. Such beliefs persist within the *jere* pilgrimage tradition, albeit less commonly than before (Interview: M. Fadly Albaar, April 16, 2024).

### **Pandan Leaves (*Pondak*)**

Another essential item in the *Jere* pilgrimage ritual is *pondak*, the local term for pandan leaves. Pilgrims, whether individuals, families, community groups, or participants in traditional ceremonies, always bring *pondak*. The pandan leaves are usually pre-cut into medium-sized pieces or smaller fragments and can be prepared at home or purchased at the local market.

Bringing pandan leaves has become a "requirement" for pilgrims to sprinkle over the *jere* as a sign of respect (Interview: H. Hidayatussalam, April 17, 2024). The act of scattering *pondak* (pandan leaves) is compared to the practice of the Prophet Muhammad, who, according to a hadith, placed palm fronds on graves; in this case, pandan leaves are used as a substitute for palm fronds (Kusumaningrum et al., 2023).

The use of pandan leaves as an essential part of the ritual is due to their pleasant fragrance, which is believed to be favoured by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), angels, and the spirits of scholars and saints. Some pilgrims who visit the *jere* without bringing *pondak* believe their pilgrimage may be seen as lacking in blessings and as a sign of disrespect towards the *jere* being visited (Interview: H. Mohtar, April 15, 2024).

Another attribute that complements the *Jere* pilgrimage ritual is the white cloth, though it is not as essential as *pondak*. The white cloth is typically used for several purposes, including *Wrapping Pondak (Pandan Leaves)*. White cloth was traditionally used to wrap the pandan leaves brought by pilgrims. However, this practice has gradually declined, as plastic bags have now primarily replaced white cloth. *Wrapping Water*. Similarly, using a white cloth to carry water in the *nyekar* ritual (sprinkling water over graves) has also been largely replaced by plastic bags. However, some communities, especially among certain traditional groups and followers of specific Sufi orders, still maintain this practice.

In addition to its practical function as a tool, the white cloth is also used as a ritual accessory. During *jere* pilgrimages involving larger community groups, the ritual is often accompanied by specific prayers, such as the recitation of the Qur'an, *Yasin*, *tahlil*, *sawaba*



prayers, *Karamat* prayers, *tawasul*, and prayers for protection. In these settings, a white cloth is typically spread out in front of the participants, who sit facing one another while reciting these prayers. The white cloth also serves as a mat for laying out food offerings prepared for the pilgrims.

According to *Jou Kalem* of the Sultanate of Ternate, the use of white cloth symbolizes both outward and inward purity. It serves as a reminder for pilgrims to purify their intentions, as it reflects the belief that humans come from Allah with nothing (no worldly possessions) and will return to Him with nothing, except for the white burial shroud (*kain kafan*) (Interview: Hidayatussalam, April 17, 2024).

The white cloth also symbolizes *tadzkirot al-maut* (remembrance of death), which is the primary purpose of grave visitation. In Ternate's rituals, the community is closely associated with white symbols, such as canopies, bowls, and cloth. This theme of *tadzkirot al-maut* is also reflected in the *tifa* teachings held dearly by the people of Ternate, such as:

*Ajali fo tuda-tuda, sone fo madodoho ua:*

*Dunia ne fo bau bato, akherat ge ngom ma due:*

*Mote afa dunia ma garo, maski sanang l roro ua:*

"Death is always with us, yet we do not know when it will come (only Allah knows).

This world is, in essence, merely on loan to us (a trust from Allah), while the Hereafter is what truly belongs to us (our eternal deeds).

Do not be swayed by the world's temptations, for even its pleasures are ultimately meaningless" (Interview: H. Mohtar, April 15, 2024).

### **Fragrant Flower Mix (*Bunga Rampai*)**

*Bunga rampai* is an attribute closely associated with the *jere* pilgrimage rituals, often placed on top of a spread-out white cloth. Individual pilgrims do not commonly use this item; it is typically utilized in specific rituals, such as the recitation of *Yasin*, *tahlil*, *sawaba* prayers, *Karamat* prayers, *tawasul*, and protective prayers (*tola bala*). During these rituals, *bunga rampai* is scattered over the white cloth that has been laid out.

*Bunga rampai* consists of fragrant and colorful leaves and flowers, including pandan leaves, roses, jasmine (*manuru*), and tuberose or ylang-ylang. In addition to serving as a source of fragrance, the use of *bunga rampai* is seen as an expression of gratitude to Allah SWT for the blessings and life granted to all His creations (Interview: Hidayatussalam, April 17, 2024).

## Water

In the *jere* pilgrimage, water is typically provided alongside *pondak* (pandan leaves), though it is not as essential as *pondak*, which holds a more significant role in the ritual. This means it is generally acceptable if a pilgrim does not bring water.

The act of *nyekar* (sprinkling water over graves) is considered *sunnah* because it aligns with the actions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who, according to hadith, sprinkled water on the grave of his son, Ibrahim.

In Ternate's Sufi tradition, water is one of the primary elements of human existence, alongside earth, air, and fire. Water symbolizes life, scientifically supported by the fact that the human body primarily comprises water. Thus, water use in pilgrimage rituals, including the *jere* pilgrimage, serves as a symbol of life, in contrast to the white cloth that symbolizes death. This symbolism aims to remind the living to learn from the lives of the deceased, who are regarded as righteous people, scholars, and saints (*Auliya*) (Interview: M. Fadhly Albaar, April 16, 2024).

## The Significance of the *Jere* Ritual

The Muslim community in Ternate perceives the role of communication within the *Jere* ritual through several integrated aspects of its practice. The *Jere* ritual process includes both vertical communication between humans and Allah SWT and horizontal communication that fosters cooperation within the community. This ritual has been passed down from generation to generation, maintained and respected as an essential part of their cultural heritage (Rakhmat, Asnianti, 2024). This demonstrates that communication within the *Jere* ritual is not solely about an individual's relationship with God but also involves social interaction within the community.

The *Jere* ritual is often regarded as a sacred religious ceremony imbued with mystical values. The people of North Maluku generally believe that this ritual can help them obtain blessings and favour from God (Manan, 2014). The community sees the *Jere* ritual as a way to honour their ancestors, considered righteous individuals from the past. The ritual is believed to bring divine blessings and favour (Sofyan et al., 2018). The graves of these righteous individuals are thus revered and hold significant spiritual value (Rakhmat, Asnianti, 2024).

In addition to being a mystical religious ritual, the *Jere* ritual functions as a traditional cultural ceremony. This demonstrates that it encompasses religious aspects and social and cultural dimensions. The values embodied in the *Jere* ritual also carry a strong spiritual dimension. The community believes that this ritual can help them draw closer to God and seek assistance from the revered sacred graves.

The primary function of communication within the *Jere* ritual is to strengthen the commitment of the Muslim community in Ternate. Additionally, ritual communication serves as a means to convey symbolic messages related to the community's religious beliefs and system of faith (Maifianti et al., 2014). Thus, communication within the *Jere* ritual plays a crucial role in preserving and cultivating the cultural and religious identity of the Muslim community in Ternate.

In this way, the *Jere* ritual exemplifies how cultural, social, spiritual, and traditional values can be seamlessly integrated into a single ritual activity.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

From the discussion in this article, several key conclusions can be drawn regarding the role of communication in executing the ritual. The *Jere* pilgrimage ritual represents a profound cultural manifestation in which communication plays a central role in preserving and transmitting spiritual meanings and values. Furthermore, communication within the *Jere* ritual extends beyond verbal interaction; it encompasses symbols, rituals, and cultural norms that bind the community together. Participants build social and spiritual bonds that strengthen community cohesion through ritual language, gestures, and specific symbols.

The communication during this ritual serves as a medium to reinforce group identity and pass down traditions from one generation to the next. Participants are not only engaged in religious practices but also in a dialogue that enables them to understand and appreciate the cultural values embedded within the ritual.

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#### Authors' contribution

The first author was the principal investigator, leading the research design, data collection, analysis, and manuscript preparation. The second, third, fourth, and fifth authors acted as supervisors, providing critical guidance throughout the research process. They contributed to refining the research methodology, offering theoretical insights, and reviewing the manuscript to ensure academic rigour and alignment with relevant standards. Their collaborative efforts ensured the research's success and the final publication's quality.

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