

Exploring Cultural Conflict Resolution through Face Negotiation Theory in the Indonesian Film 'Tarung Sarung'

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Abstract

Introduction: This study examines Islamic values and intercultural communication through the lens of Face Negotiation Theory (FNT) in the film 'Tarung Sarung' ('Sarong Fighting'). As a medium of communication, film delivers embedded messages that influence audience perceptions and emotions. 'Tarung Sarung' reflects societal realities and conveys messages that foster understanding across cultures. Indonesia's cultural diversity often leads to conflicts rooted in stereotypes, highlighting the need for cultural approaches to conflict resolution.

Methods: This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore how cultural values and communication strategies are portrayed in the film 'Tarung Sarung.' The research design included textual and visual analysis of selected scenes and dialogues reflecting intercultural communication and conflict resolution. Stella Ting-Toomey's Face Negotiation Theory (FNT) was applied to interpret key themes such as individualism versus collectivism and face concerns.

Findings: The analysis reveals that the film illustrates how cultural values shape individuals' approaches to conflict resolution. Through its characters, the film demonstrates how intercultural strategies are influenced by cultural backgrounds, emphasizing the importance of understanding cultural differences.

Originality: The study contributes novel insights by applying FNT to analyze 'Tarung Sarung,' showcasing its depiction of Islamic values and intercultural communication in media. It underscores the role of film as a medium for fostering cross-cultural understanding.

Keywords: Intercultural Communication, Face Negotiation Theory, Cross-Cultural Understanding, Conflict Resolution.

Introduction

Indonesia, the largest archipelago in the world harbors numerous tribes, cultures, religions, and beliefs, making it easy for the culture of one region to differ from that of another. According to Firdaus et al., (2020), these cultural differences often cause communication barriers, increasing the chances of conflicts. Islam emphasizes the importance of interactions between people from different tribes. Surah Al-hujurat verse 13 says, "*O mankind! Indeed, we created you from a male and a female and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may 'get to' know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is knowing and acquainted.*" This verse emphasizes the diversity in the creation of mankind in terms of ethnicity, nationality, and culture. However, this diversity should not cause conflicts but encourage people to know each other. This emphasizes the importance of intercultural communication in a world with a myriad of cultures, languages, traditions, and beliefs. One thing to remember is that diversity can be a gift and a challenge. As an example, it

promotes cross-cultural communication, cultural richness, and learning opportunities. The challenges include inequality, lack of understanding, cultural clashes, and communication barriers. Communication plays an important role in people's lives. It is a social process through which humans express feelings, thoughts, and ideas and exchange messages with each other (Mahajan, 2015).

Potential conflicts stem from individual or group misperceptions of other cultures (Al Azis & Irwansyah, 2021). Most conflicts among the youth and students are caused by prejudice and stereotypes against certain cultures (Indreswari, 2020). It is possible to counter these stereotypes and create a society that values the richness of cultural diversity. However, it is important to understand that ways to prevent conflicts need to be supported and continued to be developed. One effective strategy is understanding different values and cultures, focusing on ways in which cultural diversity is a mechanism to solve conflicts. Understanding other cultures (cross-cultural understanding) is effective in conveying conflict resolution messages. There are many mediums for conveying these messages, but film is the most influential avenue.

The film is known for its closeness to the communities, making it an effective avenue for conveying knowledge about diverse cultures. Messages embedded within the story's content can effectively reach the audience and subsequently affect their perception and emotions. Furthermore, it is a reproduction of societal realities and not just a form of entertainment. Relatable nature of films makes the audience comprehend and interpret messages and lessons conveyed (Ekasaputra, 2020).

Many studies in media analysis utilize films as a primary source of data. For examples; Varga, (2020) analyzing the connections between conflict types and genres of film. Media narrative frames can serve to intensify tensions and increase the risk of conflict (Okuda, 2016). Kramer (2018) analyzed the mediation of exile narratives, conflict testimonies, and visual evidence within the ethical space of film. However, thus researches have not yet clearly described the interconnection of the struggle between culture, ethnicity and religion in the context of modern society.

The academic study of communication is often constrained by institutional and professional practices. Yet it is vital to explore basic communication concepts and to situate communication studies within the academic world (Paterno, 2017). Various studies have also highlighted how conflict resolution practices through media (Waziri, 2022). The role of media in recent conflicts has become increasingly important as civil wars have occurred in various parts of the world. Media has been used during conflict situations in countries affected by civil war (Raisov & Simsek, 2018).

This study focused on the film 'Tarung Sarung', an Indonesia movie directed by Archie Hekagery. 'Tarung Sarung' also known as 'Sarong Fighting' is a Bugis cultural tradition from the Bugis people that shows how two individuals can resolve a conflict (Salma, 2021). 'Tarung Sarung' originated from the 'sigajang laleng lipa', a tradition that was common during the Bugis sultanate period (Henisubagiharti et al., 2022). Intercultural communication in the film was analyzed through the lens of Face Negotiation Theory (FNT) to understand interactions between people of different cultures. According to the film, it was clear that there was diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, socio-economic background, or a combination of both.

FNT conceptualizes cultural differences and various aspects of individual and cultural identity as 'face' (Putra, Hairunnisa, & Sabiruddin, 2018). The 'face' represents an individual's self-image, describing how they want to be treated by others. These aspects of communication are among the elements of cultural identity and 'face' is embedded into

these aspects. The concept of 'face' is a manifestation of an individual's self-presentation and image (Al Azis & Irwansyah, 2021).

FNT can also be used to analyze 'facework' which involves predicting an individual's behavior, promoting refinement of individuality. The concept of 'facework' is based on several assumptions and one revolves around self-identity. Individuals who come from a certain culture will engage in face negotiations while observing their cultural norms and values. Habitual patterns will be seen in how they respond to a problem or, in this case, an interaction.

The second assumption revolves around the way individuals manage a problem or conflict, a process influenced by how they control their facial expressions. It is safe to say that the first and second assumptions are connected and interdependent, having a cause-and-effect relationship. The third assumption is about the reactions elicited by the facial expressions portrayed on individuals' face. The fundamental dimensions of FNT include the individualism-collectivism dimension, high context, low context, and power distance (Ting-toomey & Kurogi, 1998).

There is a need for further studies employing an intercultural communication approach in the future. However, this study tried to cover the area that has yet to be extensively explored using Ting-Toomey's FNT. In this context, diversity can be interns of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or a combination of both. The film is a good tool for encouraging intercultural communication. film has audio-visual storytelling, which effectively conveys the messages to the audience (Lane, 2023). Film conveys messages to a broader community or mass audience rather than one or two individuals (Yesildag & Bostan, 2023)

This study uniquely applies Face Negotiation Theory (FNT) to an Indonesian cultural context, specifically analyzing the film *Tarung Sarung*. The novelty lies in bridging Islamic values with intercultural communication strategies depicted in popular media, offering fresh insights into the role of cultural identity in conflict resolution.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore how cultural values and communication strategies are portrayed in the film 'Tarung Sarung.' According to Moleong (2000), descriptive research observes phenomena or behaviors in detail. The research design included textual and visual analysis of selected scenes and dialogues that reflect intercultural communication and conflict resolution. The primary data source was the film itself, while secondary sources included scholarly literature on Bugis cultural traditions, Islamic values, and Stella Ting-Toomey's Face Negotiation Theory (FNT).

Data collection involved identifying key themes aligned with FNT's theoretical framework, such as individualism versus collectivism, face concerns, and conflict resolution styles. Analytical procedures included interpreting the narrative context and visual elements to reveal how cultural identity shapes the characters' approaches to conflict. By employing this method, the study provides insights into the interplay between cultural norms and communication strategies in resolving conflicts.

Results

The conflict in the film 'Tarung Sarung' surrounds a myriad of cultures, each with different individual aspects and character identities. This study focused on three main

characters, including Dani Ruso, Tenri, and Sanrego, whose individual identities have been shaped by family and socio-cultural backgrounds.

Dani Ruso, raised in a materialistic environment, initially resolves conflicts through wealth. This contrasts sharply with Tenri's collectivist values and Sanrego's reliance on physical prowess. These conflicts reflect varying dimensions of FNT, illustrating how cultural values influence conflict resolution styles. According to Suhartono (1997), a culture influenced by materialism values material possessions. A culture that is deeply materialistic stands in striking contrast with the Islamic culture that thrives in South Sulawesi. The development of Islam in this region is influenced by various local cultures, creating a distinctive Islamic style.

Tenri is portrayed as a strong Bugis woman. She grew up in a culture that values collectivity but rejects the proposal of a strong dominant man, holding a prominent position in the region. Sanrego is an antagonistic character with a seafaring spirit that uses physical strength to solve conflicts. However, his prowess does not prevent him from being vulnerable when proposing to Tenri, the woman he admires. Tenri asks for an exorbitant dowry, which is a subtle rejection of his proposal.

A deeply materialistic culture is portrayed at the beginning of the film when Dani effortlessly gifts a car to a woman after a minor accident involving his car. Dani Ruso's social life also portrays him as an arrogant person who solves problems with paid people constantly available to him. This is illustrated in a scene where Dani confronts a man who is believed to be seducing his girlfriend. Another instance of a culture entrenched in materialism materialistic culture is illustrated in a scene where Dani gifts his girlfriend a luxury watch. Dani also compensates for damage caused at the nightclub where the conflict occurred with a sizable reimbursement. The depiction of a materialistic culture is further reinforced through the dialog between Dani and his uncle, where Dani believes he can make people happier than God. This is illustrated in a scene where Dani places a lot of money on a prayer mat and says that he is the source of the money, not God. The film 'Tarung Sarung' also depicts a cultural identity crisis among its characters. This is illustrated when Dani's mother asked him to return home. Dani thought his hometown was New York, while his mother knew it was Makassar, South Sulawesi. Dani's disbelief in God is illustrated in several scenes, labeling him an atheist.

Another scene portrays Tenri, who comes from a simple family, rejecting the proposal of Sanrego, a champion of fighting gloves. She achieves this by asking for an exorbitant dowry that Sanrego could not possibly afford. Tenri is an environmental activist who harbors strong negative feelings towards the Ruso Corp, owned by Dani Ruso's family. She believes this company is involved in the destruction of coastal environments. The analysis focuses on Dani Ruso, Tenri, and Sanrego as the subjects of research. These three characters represent the various conflicts that arise in the film. The film not only focuses on the conflict between Dani and Sanrego that ends with a Tarung Sarung but also centers on conflicts and interactions stemming from cultural identities that can be analyzed through FNT. The table below provides an overview of the characters and their conflicts.

Table 1. Mapping Characters and Conflicts They Experience

No	Character	Cultural Identity	Conflict
1.	Dani Ruso	-).Metropolitan, urban upbringing (Switzerland, New York, Jakarta).	-).Conflict at the nightclub (arrogance and dominance using wealth).

		-).Wealthy entrepreneur.	-).Conflict with his mother (identity and cultural roots).
		-).Materialistic orientation.	-).Internal conflict (belief in God and self-transformation).
		-).Secular worldview.	
2.	Tenri	-).Rural, coastal Bugis culture.	-).Conflict with Sanrego (rejection through dowry request).
		-).Environmental activist.	-).Conflict with Ruso Corp (opposing environmental destruction).
		-).Strong values on community collectivity and sustainability.	
3.	Sanrego	-).Bugis sailor culture.	-).Conflict with Tenri (love and rejection).
		-).Valuing physical strength as resolution.	-).Conflict with Dani (physical and emotional struggle for love).
		-).Strong collectivist cultural background.	

Note: Mapping Characters and Conflicts (Film ‘Tarung Sarung’)

Discussion

1. The Film as Representation of Social Reality

Storytelling has long been a vital part of the human experience. Technological advancements over time have enabled stories to come alive through images, videos, and sound, reaching broader audiences than ever before. Film, in particular, has emerged as a powerful medium for representing and preserving the cultural values of a nation (Elhersh, Khan, & Alqawasmeh, 2024). Recent research in media psychology recognizes that media entertainment provides not only simple pleasure but also profound, meaningful experiences. Study comprehension of media enjoyment by investigating how media entertainment can evoke spiritual emotions and beliefs, including feelings of connectedness, a sense of blessedness, and experiences of transcendence (Janicke & Ramasubramanian, 2017; Wibawa, 2024). Film has the potential to reframe the war narrative while avoiding the dominant frozen tropes of a cultural set of values (Nguyen, 2023).

The contemporary Indonesian dictionary describes representation as an act of representing or an entity involved in the act of representing. Stuart Hall argues there are two processes of representation. One is mental representation, which focuses on the concept of "something" existing as a conceptual map in people’s heads. This process of representation remains abstract. The second process, ‘language’, plays an important role in meaning construction (Stuart Hall, 1997). The abstract concepts in our heads are translated into a common language, helping people connect concepts and ideas with the help of signs and symbols. The affective turn, or critical focus on emotion and affect as a gateway to understanding the context and place of experience, has become fashionable in the early 21st century (Venkatesh & del Carmen Caña Jiménez, 2016). The content or

meaning of a film can be representation a of reality. Representation is the process by which reality is conveyed through words, sounds, or combinations of both (Vdovin & Zubkov, 2021; Schröder-Butterfill et al., 2023).

Indonesian feature films portray a myriad of themes from romance to humor and social commentary to horror, the most popular of all. These themes not only come from the thoughts and ideas of the filmmaker; rather, they also represent phenomena that exist within society. These phenomena provide story elements that capture the public attention, making the film become a reflection of the society it comes from. Films capture the reality that grows and develops in society and then project it onto the screen. The film is also an avenue that re-represents life within society (Dianiya, 2020). This representation can be supportive, rejecting, critical or neutral. In this context, media is an important tool in shaping attitudes between groups (Gönültaş & Mulvey, 2023).

The film 'Tarung Sarung' film is set in Makassar, depicting various cultures of the region, depicting social issues, local languages, typical sports, and the beauty of the panorama of South Sulawesi. The film also contains martial art fight scenes because martial arts is one of the typical Indonesian sports. The martial art portrayed in this film is a typical form of Makassar martial art, used for artistic expression, competitive endeavors, and solving conflicts. This film not only contains action scenes; rather, it also packs unique choreography that creates a captivating portrayal of regional culture, making it interesting to watch. By featuring local languages, sports, and artistic styles, the film contributes to the celebration of cultural diversity. It emphasizes the importance of preserving local traditions and identities, fostering intercultural understanding and appreciation (Gale, Yogeewaran, & Verkuyten, 2021). The film indicates an awareness of the social context in which these cultural elements exist. Media representations can either challenge or reinforce social norms and issues. In this case, the film can be seen as a reflection on the dynamics within Makassar, providing a platform for discussing contemporary social issues while intertwining them with local customs.

The film focuses on social issues by depicting problems that occur in Indonesian society, especially revealing the differences in habits between residents of the capital city and other cities outside Java. It depicts the behavior of powerful Jakarta youths who use gangs up to solve conflicts. In Makassar, ganging up is not a common way of solving conflicts as youths opt for one-on-one fighting. Another social issue depicted in the film is the creation of a billboard for a property company that may damage the community's environment. The representation of martial arts through choreography not only captivates the audience but also instills a sense of regional pride and identity. This aspect aligns with the representation theory, which posits that how something is depicted can influence perceptions and understandings of that culture. The power of culture in influencing the settlement behavior of internal migrants (Xie, Chen, & Wei, 2023).

2. Cultural Identity in Communication

Cultural identity occurs when a group creates a system of cultural symbols and gives them meaning, establishing what is considered worthy and unworthy in a historical context. Stuart Hall, through the development of cultural theory, also raises key questions about the role of film art in the formation and articulation of identity. Hall's work and engagement with social justice remain relevant for a broader understanding of the historical conjuncture, and for progressive readings of emerging sub-cultures and representational forms that resist cultural hegemony in a corporate media society (Harman, 2016).

The symbols and norms are then passed down to new members of a group.

According to Fitriana (2017), cultural identity is a representation of the group's unique communication system formed from certain circumstances and contexts. Ethnic and religious conflicts frequently escalate swiftly into violent confrontations. Conventional conflict models, which emphasize rational actors and institutional dynamics, often fall short in explaining these abrupt outbreaks of mass violence. A convergence of deep-seated social tensions with a catalytic event can ignite swift and intense clashes (Schulte & Trinn, 2024). The different communication methods that people use show that come from distinct cultural backgrounds. Cultural differences among people shape each phase of global communication (Al-Shboul & Maros, 2020).

The main characters in the film 'Tarung Sarung' have different cultural identities. Each character portrays their cultural identity through communication and negotiation. These identities appear when messages are exchanged through different scenes and dialogs. Identity is influenced by the role of intercultural communication (IC), which defines how people see themselves and others. Identity develops and emerges in the context of communication interactions (Owete & Olusakin, 2016; Liaw, 2019). Culture is a social setting within which certain frames of reference are concretely established or institutionalized. These frames then shape the structure of the interactions and communications among people within a specific cultural context. When people shape their patterns of social existence, they are more likely to make principally unconscious choices that are influenced by relevant intracultural values and choices (Cui et al., 2024). The main characters in the film 'Tarung Sarung' show that their approaches to interaction and problem-solving are influenced by their respective cultural backgrounds.

Dani, raised in a strong materialist culture and enjoying the benefits of Western education, values open communication and understands the feelings of people from different cultural backgrounds. Sanrego, on the other hand, has a preference for open communication but harbors feelings of disappointment over the dowry proposed by Tenri's family. Tenri, who is an educated woman and environmental activist in the context of Bugis culture, does not directly reject Sanrego's proposal. A woman's rejection of a man's proposal is portrayed through her family's action of asking for an exorbitant dowry. Cultural identity refers to the formation and cultivation of reality based on certain values, wherein value systems and social systems are completely intertwined and imbued with each other's activities (Cooke, Boyd, & Moyer, 2023).

3. The Multifaceted Nature of Culture

FNT helps explain the cultural, individual, and situational factors that influence communicators' tendencies to approach and manage different conflict scenarios (Ting-Toomey, 2017). FNT describes cultural differences that can be used for conflict resolution within communication as a science. It focuses on aspects of individual and cultural identities, which are termed "face" (Cameron, 2020).

Based on the results of the study tendencies of the main characters in the film 'Tarung Sarung' to approach and manage conflict scenarios are influenced by their respective cultural backgrounds. The fundamental dimensions of the negotiation theory include individualism-collectivism, high context-low context, and power distance. Different responses to situations where there is a mismatch between needs, interests, or goals promote the development of an individual's conflict resolution style (Ting-toomey & Kurogi, 1998). There are five conflict resolution styles, including avoiding, accommodating, compromising, dominating, and integrating. According to Griffin (2006), these styles are recognized and discussed by a majority of Western authors analysis. The table below provides the results of the analysis of the main characters in the

film 'Tarung Sarung' using the FNT theory.

Table 2. Analysis of the Main Characters Using FNT Theory

No	Character	Ways of Conflict Resolution
1.	Dani Ruso	Using money to solve conflicts.
2.	Tenri	Choosing alternative ways to resolve conflicts.
3.	Sanrego	Using violence/physique energy to solve conflicts.

Note: This table shows how to resolve the conflict of the main characters in the 'Sarung Tarung' film using Face Negotiation Theory

FNT changes the concept of 'face' into a multifaced object of analysis. The definition of 'face' can vary from person to person, depending on the individual's own culture and identity. However, Ting-Toomey suggested that people should look at the concept of 'face' in two dimensions, including face concern and face need. Face concern is about one's face and the face of others, highlighting elements of self-interest and concern for others. Interpreting the concept of 'face' in this dimension allows individuals to maintain a certain image and be polite when interacting with people from other cultures to avoid offending them. The concept of face need or need for face is also very influential when communicating. Facial appearance exerts an influence and can lead to being well-received by the interlocutor. This sentiment is depicted in the film 'Taung Sarung' when Dani does not care about the people around him and believes that he can be dominant in any situation. For example, his approach to solving the conflict during the fight at the nightclub portrays how he wants to be perceived-powerful and invincible. This is seen physically when he engages in a fight, and economically when he compensates for all damages at the nightclub.

Tenri chooses alternative ways of solving conflicts. As an example, instead of directly rejecting Sanrego's proposal, she asks for an exorbitant dowry, which Sanrego is unlikely to provide. Sanrego, with a seafaring spirit, thinks everything can be fought for. This is especially true when he resolves various conflicts through violence. Individualism-collectivism cultural dimension influences behavior and communication. People from individualist cultures typically do more face work that recognizes people as independent entities and place importance on a high self-face orientation (Binder, 2019). They consider themselves more important than others and focus on building their self-esteem and that of others. The same cannot be said of people from collectivist cultures as their face work is oriented toward the group (Littlejohn, Foss, & Oetzel, 2017).

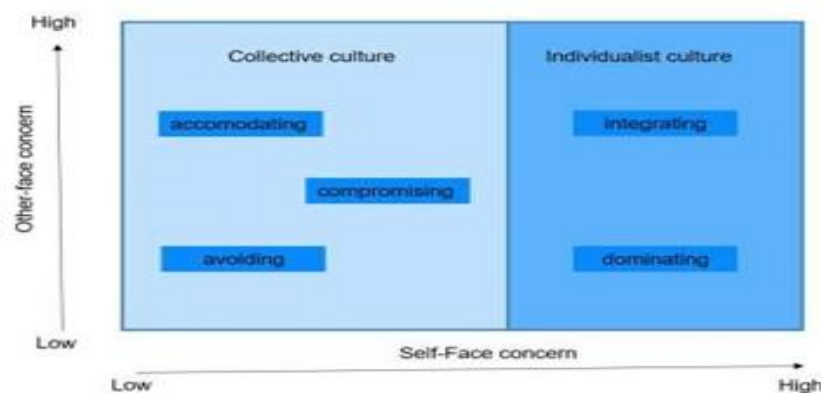


Figure 1. Ting-Toomey's Five Conflict Resolution Styles

(source: Ting-Toomey et al., 1991)

Meanwhile, the table below provides the conflict resolution approaches of the main

characters in the film ‘Tarung Sarung.’

Table 3. The conflict management styles of the main characters in the film ‘Tarung Sarung’

Name	Collective culture	Individualist Culture
Dani Ruso		Dominating
Tenri	Avoiding	
Sanrego	Avoiding and compromising	

Note: This table shows the conflict management style of the main character of the film ‘Tarung Sarung’ using Ting-Toomey’s Five Conflict Resolution Styles

Based on the table above, the conflict resolution style for Dani Ruso comes from individualist and develops a dominating conflict resolution style. He has high self-concern, specifically when he believes he can dominate any situation with his face of power and invincibility. Tenri and Sanrego come from collective culture and have an avoidance conflict resolution style. This is illustrated in a scene where Tenri refuses Sanrego's proposal, and he experiences inner conflict when Tenri’s family requests an exorbitant dowry. Sanrego then chooses a compromising style by trying to find alternatives to fulfill the dowry. Indonesia has a collectivistic culture, known for its focus on individual image and that of other people. People from this culture avoid offending other people because they believe in avoidance, cooperation, or compromise. The same cannot be said of Dani Ruso who comes from collective culture and has a dominating conflict resolution style. People from Individualistic culture value self-image, making focus on improving their image through dominance and assertiveness (Ang, 2019). Sanrego and Dani Ruso's aggressiveness is portrayed differently. Sanrego's aggressiveness is a reflection of the collective culture that still considers other people's image.

Context also influences communication. It involves the surrounding of a message or interaction, affecting its interpretation and significance. According to Hall (2009), the presence or lack of context surrounding the message contributes to variations in communication styles. Hall suggested that individuals should combine context and pre-programmed culture-specific information to create meaning in communication. The use of context varies greatly between cultures attached to geographical classifications (countries).

4. Conflict Resolution

Conflict is a normal part of human life, both in vertical and horizontal forms. A multicultural society like Indonesia has a myriad of cultures, beliefs, and values, increasing the chances of conflicts. This increases the need for understanding conflict resolution to resolve conflicts that arise constructively. The conflicts depicted film ‘Tarung Sarung’ illustrate two modes of existence in human life (Bunge, 2016). The first mode is about the tendency to ‘posses’ (to have), while the second mode is about the need to ‘become’ (to be).

The first mode evokes the desire ‘to have’ material items with status, such as yearning to belong to an exclusive, honorable group like Dani Ruso. This obsession with ownership becomes even stronger when it comes to status and power. Excessive desire for possession is unhealthy and can even cause conflicts in society. The second mode of human existence is the desire to ‘become’, someone characterized by personality and self-actualization obtained through effort and hard work. The fulfillment of self-identity takes place through a process. This sentiment is illustrated in the scene where Dani Raso's character transforms. The desire to fit in leads him to the mode of becoming, where he

wants to conform to Tenri's expectations and face concerns. This process is closely related to human self-awareness, revealing of their potential to not only receive and hoard possessions but also adopt productive behavior. This orientation emerges from constructive actions, generosity, and connections that promote that improve social welfare. When the desire to possess outweighs the need to become, conflicts are likely.

The film 'Tarung Sarung' suggests the incorporation of Islamic values as the foundation for conflict resolution. Moving from to "posses" to "being" as experienced by Dani Ruso indicates a complicated inner conflict with belief or faith. A character named Halim emerges at the height of the conflict between Dani Ruso and Sanrego. Halim is a Tarung Sarung veteran figure who now devotes his life to the mosque. The inner conflict is evident in the scene where Master Halim mentions an individual should believe in the existence of God to become his student. Dani Ruso thinks that Tarung Sarung is irrelevant because it relies on physical strength. The introduction of Halim is an indirect way of placing importance on believing in the existence of God. Dani Ruso's disbelief in God stems from the misconception he holds, associating Islam with violence. The Sigajang Laleng Lipa tradition from the Bugis culture encourages people to embrace tabayyun, where if a conflict occurs, it should be investigated before taking action. This can prevent misunderstandings that can lead to impulsive emotional reactions.

Believing in the existence of God shows that humans are mere creations, and the divine power only belongs to God. This sentiment is evident when the conflict between Sanrego and Dani Ruso climaxes. Sanrego mentions that their conflict will not be resolved until they fight and one of them succumbs. In a different scene, Dani Ruso has doubts about the training process in Tarung Sarung under Master Halim. He thinks the training period is not enough time to give him the essential fighting skills. In response to Sanrego, Master Halim mentions that death is only God who has the right to kill. When responding to Dani, Master Halim states that God's power is unlimited. This means that believers in God's power are more likely to find everything possible compared to non-believers. Taking this perspective seriously cultivates the spirit of endurance and encourages people to always give their best without giving up (Dworkin, 2024). This study's reliance on a single film limits its generalizability to broader intercultural communication contexts in Indonesian cinema. Furthermore, while rich in detail, the qualitative descriptive approach may lack the objectivity required for broader theoretical generalization. Future studies should incorporate comparative analyses of multiple films and quantitative methods to validate findings.

Conclusion

An intercultural communication perspective gives a better understanding of communication within different cultural contexts and backgrounds. Indonesia's culturally diverse population has the potential for conflict stemming from cultural differences and perpetuated by stereotypes against other cultures. This increases the need for the adoption of a cultural approach to conflict resolution. Stella Ting-Toomey's Face negotiation theory (FNT) explains the cultural, individual, and situational factors that influence the communicators' tendencies and strategies for approaching and managing different conflict scenarios.

Conflict of Interest

We certify that there is no conflict of interest with any financial, personal, or other relationships with other people or organization related to the material discussed in the manuscript.

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