

# Inclusive Communication: Unveiling Disabilities, Building Harmony in Diversity

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**Abstract:** The problems of people with disabilities are part of the global humanitarian problem. People with disabilities have limitations in social communication with the surrounding environment. The aim of this research is to explain inclusive communication for people with disabilities in creating harmony in social life. The research used a literature review type by reviewing 50 research articles on disability. The research results found that there are three categories of disabilities, namely physical, sensory, and intellectual disabilities. Physical disabilities include congenital paralysis, amputation, or similar. Sensory disabilities include blindness, deafness, and inability to speak. Intellectual disabilities include autism or syndrome, depression, anxiety disorders, and schizophrenia. These limitations that people with disabilities have give rise to social pressure, inequality and even social discrimination. Inclusive communication plays a role in bridging the gap between people with disabilities and their social environment. Inclusive communication brings equality in social communication and supports the point of view of people with disabilities. Inclusive communication maintains self-openness for people with disabilities with empathy without prejudice, tolerance without intervention, and respect without degrading them.

**Keywords:** disability; limitations; diversity; harmony; inclusive.

**Abstrak:** Permasalahan penyandang disabilitas merupakan bagian dari masalah kemanusiaan global. Penyandang disabilitas memiliki keterbatasan dalam komunikasi sosial dengan lingkungan sekitarnya. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menjelaskan komunikasi inklusif bagi penyandang disabilitas dalam menciptakan keharmonisan dalam kehidupan bermasyarakat. Penelitian ini menggunakan jenis kajian literatur dengan mengkaji 50 artikel penelitian tentang disabilitas. Hasil penelitian menemukan bahwa terdapat tiga kategori disabilitas, yaitu disabilitas fisik, sensorik, dan intelektual. Disabilitas fisik meliputi kelumpuhan bawaan, amputasi, atau sejenisnya. Disabilitas sensorik meliputi kebutaan, ketulian, dan ketidakmampuan berbicara. Disabilitas intelektual meliputi autisme atau sindrom, depresi, gangguan kecemasan, dan skizofrenia. Keterbatasan yang dimiliki oleh penyandang disabilitas ini menimbulkan tekanan sosial, ketidaksetaraan, dan bahkan diskriminasi sosial. Komunikasi inklusif berperan dalam menjembatani kesenjangan antara penyandang disabilitas dengan lingkungan sosialnya. Komunikasi inklusif membawa kesetaraan dalam komunikasi sosial dan mendukung sudut pandang penyandang disabilitas. Komunikasi inklusif menjaga keterbukaan diri penyandang disabilitas dengan empati tanpa prasangka, toleransi tanpa intervensi, dan menghargai tanpa merendahkan.

**Kata kunci:** disabilitas; keterbatasan; keberagaman; keragaman; harmoni; inklusif.

## A. Introduction

Communication has a multidisciplinary scientific positioning, which is able to integrate various variants of scientific disciplines. Communication is in the flow of cross-disciplinary

development, exploring the space of philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and even more specifically, in the space of communication within individual limitations (disabilities). From an Islamic perspective, Islam is a universal teaching, which regulates individual and social life, ways of religion, and organizes family life, organizes property with legal certainty, and even regulates a person's profession<sup>1</sup>. Through communication, Islamic universalism is taught to all humans to understand Islamic teachings and is guided by attitudes and behavior in life in society, nation, and state.

Communication is a primary human need, which is conveyed in verbal and nonverbal symbols. Problems in social, national, and state life often arise due to distortion of communication messages which give rise to misunderstandings in the meaning of messages. In the midst of the limitations of some people with disabilities that permeate social life, communication has an important role to open the veil of limitations for people with disabilities so that they are able to interact with the world around them. Communication has a role in building harmony within a diversity of limitations.

The phenomenon of limitations for people with disabilities requires a communication touch that is able to provide empathy for diversity, personality, disability, and individual needs. Communication with this typology of society requires inclusive communication. Inclusive communication is a communication process that involves all parties in a change consisting of individuals and groups in society. Inclusive communication aims to ensure that all parties feel involved, heard, and have the opportunity to participate in the process of change in society. Inclusive communication aims to ensure that the messages conveyed are easily understood by all parties involved, regardless of their background, abilities, or needs<sup>2</sup>.

Based on data from the World Health Organization (WHO), people with disabilities in the world number 1.3 billion, or 16% of the world's population, or 1: 6 of the population<sup>3</sup>. Meanwhile in Indonesia, there are 22.97 million people with disabilities or 8.5% of Indonesia's population<sup>4</sup>. They all require attention in receiving their rights as individuals in social life. Indonesia has ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the form of legislation and government regulations.

Implementation of laws and government regulations requires inclusive communication by involving as many people as possible in an interaction<sup>5</sup>. Inclusive communication encourages, supports, and provides opportunities for people with disabilities to use whatever means of understanding and expressing themselves that they find easiest. Inclusive communication supports all members of society to be equal by reducing communication barriers for all people who experience communication difficulties<sup>6</sup>. Inclusive communication utilizes a variety of methods to help people understand and express themselves<sup>7</sup>.

Communication can open the veil of limitations for people with disabilities to interact with the world around them. Disabilities are conditions that affect a person's physical, cognitive, and

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<sup>1</sup> Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam Universal* (Yogyakarta : Pustaka Pelajar, 2007), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Rebecca Shute et al., "Inclusive Communication: A Tool for Service Innovation," *British Journal of Healthcare Management* 18, no. 1 (2012), 20.

<sup>3</sup> WHO, "Disability," 2023, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health>.

<sup>4</sup> Tratama Helmi Supanji, "Pemerintah Penuhi Hak Penyandang Disabilitas Di Indonesia," 2023, <https://www.kemenkopmk.go.id/pemerintah-penuhi-hak-penyandang-disabilitas-di-indonesia>.

<sup>5</sup> Jerneja Novšak Brce and Damjana Kogovšek, "Inclusion, Inclusive Education and Inclusive Communication," *Selected Topics In*, 2020, 161.

<sup>6</sup> Jerneja Novšak Brce and Damjana Kogovšek, "Inclusion, Inclusive Education and Inclusive Communication," 177

<sup>7</sup> Jerneja Novšak Brce and Damjana Kogovšek, "Inclusion, Inclusive Education and Inclusive Communication," 178

mental functioning and can limit their ability to participate fully in daily activities. A disability can be temporary or permanent<sup>8</sup>.

Diversity within limitations is an inevitability that cannot be avoided, especially in the digital-global era. This era forms interdependence that crosses national borders with a diversity of limitations, cultures, languages, religions, beliefs, and even skin color. In the economic field, the diverse activities of workers with various cultural and educational backgrounds unite in the goal of economic improvement. In this way, intercultural interaction has become a necessity and forms an interdependent global community<sup>9</sup>. Inclusive communication for people with disabilities is a challenge in itself.

Global society (originating from various countries) forms a community to live, learn and work in all regions of the world. They serve as active participants in public life. They build community values against a background of cultural diversity<sup>10</sup>. Global society forms harmony within cultural diversity and limitations. This is the beauty of communications, John Dewey said: *of all affairs, communication is the most beautiful*<sup>11</sup>.

Based on the above background, the veil of limitations needs to be opened with inclusive communication. Diversity of limitations and cultures need to be framed in a space of tolerance and mutual understanding. World harmony is built with inclusive communication of mutual respect and tolerance. The aim of this research is to understand and describe inclusive communication for people with disabilities in creating harmony in social life.

## B. Theoretical Review

The limitations of people with disabilities and cultural diversity are interesting to study from a communication perspective. Existing research explaining the limitations and advantages of people with disabilities confirms the role of communication in developing interpersonal relationships towards world harmony. Research on physical disabilities was conducted by Taleporos and McCabe<sup>12</sup>, which explained that people with physical disabilities feel that their bodies are not physically and sexually attractive, but there are also those who feel comfortable with their physical condition. The comfort level of people with physical disabilities is influenced by the social environment in which they live. Individuals with physical disabilities are often stigmatized and do not receive full social acceptance, often belittled and discredited. Meanwhile, individuals without disabilities experience discomfort and are reluctant to make friends with people with disabilities<sup>13</sup>.

Lippold and Burns<sup>14</sup> say that people with disabilities have limited social support structures and this affects their mental health and quality of life. This shows that a person's disability affects patterns of social relationships and this is detrimental for people with disabilities. People with

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<sup>8</sup> Jason J. Barr and Kristi Bracchitta, "Attitudes Toward Individuals with Disabilities: The Effects of Contact with Different Disability Types," *Current Psychology* 34, no. 2 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-014-9253-2>. 225.

<sup>9</sup> Larry A Samovar et al., *Communication between Cultures* (Cengage Learning, 2016), 3.

<sup>10</sup> Fay Patel, Mingsheng Li, and Prahalad Sooknanan, *Intercultural Communication: Building a Global Community* (SAGE Publications India, 2011), 5.

<sup>11</sup> Ineke De Feijter, *The Art of Dialogue: Religion, Communication and Global Media Culture*, vol. 15 (LIT Verlag Münster, 2007), 9.

<sup>12</sup> George Taleporos and Marita P McCabe, "The Impact of Physical Disability on Body Esteem," *Sexuality and Disability* 19 (2001), 306.

<sup>13</sup> Carolyn J Barg et al., "Physical Disability, Stigma, and Physical Activity in Children," *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* 57, no. 4 (2010), <https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2010.524417>, 371.

<sup>14</sup> Ted Lippold and Jan Burns, "Social Support and Intellectual Disabilities: A Comparison between Social Networks of Adults with Intellectual Disability and Those with Physical Disability," *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research* 53, no. 5 (2009), <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2788.2009.01170.x>, 463.

disabilities interpret themselves as feeling embarrassed, scared, needing pity, and needing empathy<sup>15</sup>. People with disabilities face a dilemma in disclosing their condition to others<sup>16</sup>.

Even though services for people with disabilities are increasing, the reality is that there are many gaps that occur for individuals with disabilities, such as services that are still focused on certain health institutions, without touching services at the community level. Meanwhile, most people still view individuals with disabilities as having no role and contribution in social life<sup>17</sup>, so they are socially marginalized and face disparities in health, housing, and employment due to the stigma attached to their condition<sup>18</sup>.

Apart from the problems of people with disabilities, religious and cultural diversity are also obstacles to achieving harmonious communication<sup>19</sup>. Differences in understanding of religion and culture can give rise to clashes of social civilizations based on religion, social groups, ethnicity, and culture. Religion has an important role in understanding cultural diversity. Every religion has an influence in shaping culture in people's lives<sup>20</sup>. Religious fanaticism gives rise to ideological clashes that underlie radical groups to seek followers under the 'guise of religion'. Religious fanaticism poses a real threat that can poison attitudes, ways of thinking, and behavior in social life<sup>21</sup>. Fundamentalism in religions can also trigger ideological, social, and cultural clashes in people's lives. Fundamentalism is a defense of religious tradition, a tradition that is considered eroded by the processes of modernization and secularization<sup>22</sup>.

Apart from religion, cultural aspects are also often the trigger for social conflicts in people's lives. Intercultural management is important to face the pressures of globalization, including movement of capital, relatively rapid growth, intensity of trade exchanges, and the birth of global organizations<sup>23</sup>.

In international business, understanding cultural aspects is very important for cross-cultural workers. Cultural factors act as invisible barriers in international business communication. Understanding cultural differences is one of the skills that companies must develop in order to have a competitive advantage in international business. Cross-cultural communication presents opportunities to promote global peace and prosperity. On the other

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<sup>15</sup> Sulaeman, Muhammad Rijal, and M Ridwan, "Self-Meaning of Oligodactyly: Health Communication Study of People with Oligodactyly in the Village of Ulutaue, South Sulawesi, Indonesia," *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science* 55, no. 3 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12124-020-09546-z>, 497.

<sup>16</sup> Masakuni Tagaki, "Meaning of Disability and Management of Its Visibility: A Review of a Qualitative Inquiry on People with Oligodactyly," *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science* 55 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12124-020-09597-2>, 486.

<sup>17</sup> Colin Hudson and Jeffrey Chan, "Individuals with Intellectual Disability and Mental Illness: A Literature Review," *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 37, no. 1 (2002), <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1839-4655.2002.tb01109.x>, 40.

<sup>18</sup> Nicole Ditchman et al., "Stigma and Intellectual Disability: Potential Application of Mental Illness Research.," *Rehabilitation Psychology* 58, no. 2 (2013), <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032466>, 206.

<sup>19</sup> Ali Nurdin, Pudji Rahmawati, and Sulhawi Rubba, "The Harmonious Communication Model on among Religious Adherents in Sorong, West Papua," *Jurnal Pekommas: E-Journal Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Komunikasi Dan Informatika* 5, no. 2 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.30818/jpkm.2020.2050205>, 157.

<sup>20</sup> Adam B Cohen, Michael Shengtao Wu, and Jacob Miller, "Religion and Culture: Individualism and Collectivism in the East and West," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 47, no. 9 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022116667895>, 1236.

<sup>21</sup> Amanah Nurish, "Dari Fanatisme Ke Ekstremisme: Ilusi, Kecemasan, Dan Tindakan Kekerasan," *Jurnal Masyarakat Dan Budaya* 21, no. 1 (2019), 39.

<sup>22</sup> Michael O Emerson and David Hartman, "The Rise of Religious Fundamentalism," *Annu. Rev. Sociol.* 32 (2006), <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.32.061604.123141>, 134.

<sup>23</sup> Irina Onyusheva and Etiopia Elisa Changjongpradit, "Problematic Issues of Cross-Cultural Interaction in the Context of International Management," *The EURASEANS: Journal on Global Socio-Economic Dynamics*, no. 3 (10) (2018), [https://www.euraseans.com/3\(10\)](https://www.euraseans.com/3(10)), 57.

hand, if communication is not carried out well, many problems will arise due to cultural diversity<sup>24</sup>.

In the global era, communication competence has become a necessity. Often misunderstandings in communication occur due to ethical and cultural differences. The ability to communicate across cultural boundaries is becoming increasingly important. In global business, you must understand how to communicate with stakeholders from different cultures to build value for stakeholders. According to Genevieve Hilton, understanding culture does not mean memorizing every cultural nuance at all times. However, you must know when to listen, when to ask for help, and when to speak<sup>25</sup>.

Culture is determined by the way people think, speak, look, and behave. Culture is used to describe behavior that represents general norms that apply in a particular social environment. Culture also explains how members behave toward each other and with other groups. Culture is relative, which means that culture is not right or wrong, but rather a gray area full of beliefs, religions, and customs. Culture is not absolute. People from different countries view the world in different ways. Every culture has its own views on what is permissible and what is not<sup>26</sup>.

The phenomenon of limitations of people with disabilities, religious and cultural diversity are closely related to Goffman's (1963) theory of stigma, which is described as society's attitude towards someone who has attributes that 'fail' to meet society's expectations and result in the emergence of 'marginalizing' perceptions in certain social interactions<sup>27</sup>. There are three conceptual components related to stigma, namely cognitive (stereotypes), emotional (prejudice), and behavioral (discrimination) components. Stereotypes are knowledge structures used to categorize information about social groups. They represent collectively agreed statements about a group of people and tend to be associated with negative attributes. Prejudice involves endorsing negative beliefs that lead to emotional reactions. Prejudice indexes negative emotional responses among those who endorse a stereotype, for example fear of individuals with a particular stereotype. These cognitive and affective components of stigma can lead to discrimination<sup>28</sup> expressed through behaviors such as avoidance, overprotection, pity, and rejection<sup>29</sup>.

Stereotypes are often directed at people with disabilities. A stereotype is a set of qualities that a particular group of people is thought to possess. Stereotypes can take the form of associative networks and cognitive schemas that associate labels with groups of people with certain sets of traits, attributes, and images. However, stereotypes are not always negative, sometimes they are also positive in helping to simplify social information<sup>30</sup>.

These stereotypes influence the attitudes and behavior of people with disabilities. Therefore, people with disabilities and communities with religious and cultural diversity need to develop interpersonal relationships in social life. Joseph A. Devito (1997) explains the importance of developing relationships with others in order to reduce loneliness, get stimulation from others, get pleasure, and minimize suffering<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> R Delecta Jenifer and G P Raman, "Cross-Cultural Communication Barriers in the Workplace," *International Journal of Management* 6, no. 1 (2015), 348.

<sup>25</sup> Lowell C Matthews and Bharat Thakkar, "The Impact of Globalization on Cross-Cultural Communication," *Globalization-Education and Management Agendas*, 2012, <https://doi.org/10.5772/45816>, 325.

<sup>26</sup> Onyusheva and Changjongpradit, "Problematic Issues of Cross-Cultural Interaction in the Context of International Management", 58.

<sup>27</sup> Ditchman et al., "Stigma and Intellectual Disability: Potential Application of Mental Illness Research", 207.

<sup>28</sup> John D DeLamater and Amanda Ward, *Handbook of Social Psychology* (Springer, 2006), 204.

<sup>29</sup> Leslie Goddard and Lila Jordan, "Changing Attitudes about Persons with Disabilities: Effects of a Simulation," *Journal of Neuroscience Nursing* 30, no. 5 (1998), <https://doi.org/10.1097/01376517-199810000-00006>, 307.

<sup>30</sup> Michelle R Nario-Redmond, "Cultural Stereotypes of Disabled and Non-disabled Men and Women: Consensus for Global Category Representations and Diagnostic Domains," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 49, no. 3 (2010), <https://doi.org/10.1348/014466609X468411>, 472.

<sup>31</sup> Joseph A Devito, *Komunikasi Antarmanusia, Alih Bahasa : Agus Maulana* (Jakarta: Professional Books, 1997), 245-250.

The development of interpersonal relationships can be studied with Self-Disclosure Theory from Sidney Marshall Jourard and Johari Window Theory from Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham. Self-Disclosure Theory explains how a person's self-disclosure is done in different ways. The process of expressing one's self occurs not only through face-to-face communication, but has also spread to written, auditory, and even visual forms through technological networks in the form of the internet<sup>32</sup>. One's self-disclosure is carried out to achieve individual social goals, namely self-clarification, relational development, social validation, and social control.

Johari Window Theory explains that the self and self-concept can help understand interpersonal interactions in a human way. There are four frames for understanding oneself and self-concept, namely; 1) someone who has an open nature, he knows himself and he can be known by others. 2) someone who is blind, he does not know about himself, and other people can know about him. 3) someone who has a hidden or secretive nature about himself, only he can know about himself and other people cannot know about him, and 4) someone who has the characteristic of not knowing himself, he himself cannot know about himself and other people also do not know about him<sup>33</sup>.

In the context of interpersonal relations between people with disabilities and people with different religious and cultural backgrounds, Self-Disclosure Theory and Johari Window Theory explain that each individual has a different way of disclosing themselves with other individuals, especially with individuals with disabilities and different religions and cultures. Everyone must understand and respect the right of others to express themselves in different ways.

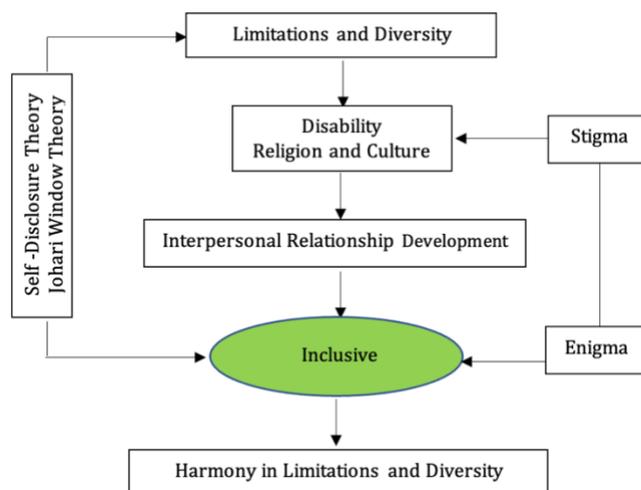


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework for Inclusive Communication

Inclusive communication bridges the limitations and diversity of religion and culture to achieve harmony in the life of society, nation, and state. Inclusive communication is a process that requires the right resources, the right communicators, and communication partners<sup>34</sup>. Inclusive communication is carried out to reduce communication barriers, prejudice, and exclusion from society. Inclusive communication supports all members of society to be equal by reducing communication barriers for all people who experience communication difficulties. Inclusive communication uses a variety of methods to help people understand and express themselves. Inclusive communication includes statements about values, social inclusion, and the communication environment. Inclusive communication is an approach that seeks to create a

<sup>32</sup> Ali Nurdin, *Teori Komunikasi Interpersonal : Disertai Contoh Fenomena Praktis*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Jakarta : Kencana Prenadamedia Group, 2020), 124.

<sup>33</sup> Ali Nurdin, *Teori Komunikasi Interpersonal*, 129.

<sup>34</sup> Brce and Kogovšek, "Inclusion, Inclusive Education and Inclusive Communication." 176

supportive and effective communication environment, using every communication tool available to understand and be understood and using the right type of communication at the right time based on individual needs. Inclusive communication aims to open a space for interaction that is more accessible to everyone<sup>35</sup>. Inclusive communication requires the development of an inclusive culture that involves awareness and understanding of the issues that occur and empowers community capacity and skills in inclusive interactions and practices<sup>36</sup>.

### C. Methods

This research uses a type of literature review, namely searching for research literature published in national and international journals that describe the problems of people with disabilities in social life. The steps taken are first, identify reference sources that are relevant to the disability theme via Google Scholar and Springer. Searching via Google Scholar with the keyword disability (in English) found 3,700,000 articles, while using the keyword disability (in Indonesian) found 60,800 articles. A search via Springer with the keyword disability found 3,356 articles. This research focuses on examining 50 articles as representations of the disability theme. Second, collect reference sources and research results related to disabilities. Articles that fit the theme of disability were reviewed in detail to identify the main findings. Third, carry out analysis and create data synthesis. The specified articles were mapped based on physical, sensory, and intellectual disability categories. Next, analysis is carried out and a synthesis of the article is found.

### D. Results and Discussion

#### 1. Opening the Veil of Limitations with Communication

Disability is part of humanity. Disability is a global health problem because it affects around fifteen percent of the world's population. Disability is a human rights issue where people with disabilities experience injustice regarding their rights, acts of violence, harassment, prejudice and discrimination based on age and gender, as well as other factors. Disability is a development priority because of its higher prevalence in low-income countries. Disability and poverty mutually reinforce and influence each other<sup>37</sup>.

Disability is defined as a limitation in the functioning of a person's body caused by one or more health conditions that limit a person's ability to move and develop<sup>38</sup>. In general, people with disabilities receive little attention<sup>39</sup>, but now the government is starting to receive attention with various facilities and easy access. Indonesia signed the convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on March 30 2007 in New York. In this way, the state provides protection rights and access for people with disabilities to live a normal life in society. The rights granted are the right to equality and non-discrimination, the right to accessibility of services, the right to life, the right to increase awareness, and the right to freedom from exploitation and violence.

People who have disabilities have limitations in communication and interaction in society. People with disabilities are those who have physical, mental, intellectual, and sensory disabilities

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<sup>35</sup> Shute et al., "Inclusive Communication: A Tool for Service Innovation.", 178-179

<sup>36</sup> Pedro Nuno Teixeira and Jung Cheol Shin, *The International Encyclopedia of Higher Education Systems and Institutions* (Springer, 2020), 594.

<sup>37</sup> WHO, "WHO Policy on Disability" (Geneva: World Health Organization, Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO, 2021), 3.

<sup>38</sup> Yinyin Ji et al., "Self-Esteem Mediates the Relationships between Social Support, Subjective Well-Being, and Perceived Discrimination in Chinese People with Physical Disability," *Frontiers in Psychology* 10 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02230>, 2230.

<sup>39</sup> Akhmad Sholeh, "Islam Dan Penyandang Disabilitas: Telaah Hak Aksesibilitas Penyandang Disabilitas Dalam Sistem Pendidikan Di Indonesia," *PALASTREN: Jurnal Studi Gender* 8, no. 2 (2016), 293..

that may hinder their full participation in society on an equal basis with others<sup>40</sup>. There are physical, sensory, cognitive, mental, psychiatric disabilities, and speech and language disabilities<sup>41</sup>. Physical disabilities (paralysis, amputation, or similar) can affect a person's physical mobility in interacting with the world around them. Sensory disabilities (blindness, deafness) can affect a person's senses in interacting in society. Cognitive disabilities can affect a person in the learning process in society. Mental disabilities (autism or syndrome) can affect a person's development in interacting in society<sup>42</sup>. Psychiatric disabilities (depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia) can affect a person's mental health. Speech and language disabilities affect a person's ability to communicate. However, people with disabilities have the same rights in social life, interacting and communicating. People with disabilities have the right to be part of and participate in social life, should be respected and accepted like everyone else, and should have access to all the services and activities that other people enjoy<sup>43</sup>.

The characteristics of people with physical disabilities are explained in Sulaeman's research<sup>44</sup> that the limitations that people with physical disabilities have are in the form of oligodactyly, namely the condition of having fewer than five fingers and toes. This condition is certainly different from the condition of other people with normal fingers. Physical limitations result in a lack of confidence in people with oligodactyly. In interacting with the world around them, they avoid crowds more, have low self-esteem, are afraid, and are even anti-social. People with oligodactyly interpret themselves with a pessimistic attitude because the surrounding environment rejects them and considers them to be worthless in their environment. This condition adds to their anti-social attitude towards their social environment, and they increasingly close themselves off from their social environment. However, people with oligodactyly also have positive messages that are internalized in an attitude of surrender, enthusiasm, optimism, self-confidence, not making distinctions, living as they are, and not thinking about their physical abnormalities<sup>45</sup>. Physical disabilities have a negative influence on psychological experiences, feelings, and attitudes towards one's body, the impact of social care received and, in time, being able to adapt to one's limitations<sup>46</sup>. Social networks correlate with a person's level of depression. Family functioning, negative social interactions, and the quality of social relationships correlate with the mental health and well-being of people with disabilities<sup>47</sup>. Self-esteem and social support can bridge the limitations of people with physical disabilities<sup>48</sup>.

The characteristics of people with sensory disabilities are explained in Lestari's research<sup>49</sup>, which discusses the frequent occurrence of discrimination against people with visual disabilities, namely that they are often excluded from their social environment in the form of restrictions on their rights in education, there is no space for socialization in the surrounding environment, and

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<sup>40</sup> WHO, "WHO Policy on Disability", 10.

<sup>41</sup> Carol J Gill, "Four Types of Integration in Disability Identity Development," *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation* 9, no. 1 (1997), <https://doi.org/10.3233/JVR-1997-9106>, 41.

<sup>42</sup> Jason J. Barr and Kristi Bracchitta, "Attitudes Toward Individuals with Disabilities: The Effects of Contact with Different Disability Types," *Current Psychology* 34, no. 2 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-014-9253-2>, 224

<sup>43</sup> U N General Assembly, "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities," *Ga Res* 61 (2006), 3.

<sup>44</sup> Sulaeman, Rijal, and Ridwan, "Self-Meaning of Oligodactyly: Health Communication Study of People with Oligodactyly in the Village of Ulutaue, South Sulawesi, Indonesia", 498.

<sup>45</sup> Sulaeman, Rijal, and Ridwan, "Self-Meaning of Oligodactyly:", 522.

<sup>46</sup> George Taleporos and Marita P McCabe, "Body Image and Physical Disability—Personal Perspectives," *Social Science & Medicine* 54, no. 6 (2002), 971.

<sup>47</sup> Hannah Tough, Johannes Siegrist, and Christine Fekete, "Social Relationships, Mental Health and Wellbeing in Physical Disability: A Systematic Review," *BMC Public Health* 17, no. 1 (2017), 1, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-017-4308-6>.

<sup>48</sup> Ji et al., "Self-Esteem Mediates the Relationships between Social Support, Subjective Well-Being, and Perceived Discrimination in Chinese People with Physical Disability", 2230.

<sup>49</sup> Widya Lestari and Rizki Fitlya, "Citra Diri Penyandang Tunanetra Terhadap Diskriminasi Dari Lingkungan Sosial," *PSIKOLOGI KONSELING* 12, no. 2 (2021), 1163.

they receive less priority in public facilities. People with visual disabilities have a negative self-concept in the form of feelings of inferiority, lack of enthusiasm for life, pessimism, shyness, and like to be alone. The stereotype of blind people was explained by Mulyani<sup>50</sup> as people who cannot carry out activities like normal people and are even less competent. The character of people with visual disabilities is that they have limitations in carrying out daily activities and this results in feelings of insecurity in their social environment<sup>51</sup>.

Apart from that, deafness also has obstacles in social communication with the surrounding environment. The limitations of deafness are lack of stability in managing emotions, lack of ability to socialize with the social environment, and minimal diction in communication<sup>52</sup>. Permata Sari's research<sup>53</sup> also explains the characteristics of deaf disabilities, including low self-confidence, closed off, difficulty interacting with the world around them, and in some countries, deaf people do not even have the opportunity to study at school<sup>54</sup>. From an ethnocentric point of view, the disability of deafness is seen as people who are 'different' among hearing people this has a negative perspective that marginalizes them<sup>55</sup>. Deaf people have different cultures and are even constructed differently by their social environment<sup>56</sup>.

Intellectual disability is defined as a learning disability. This term is used internationally to refer to people with mental retardation. However, the term mentally retarded has a negative connotation in accordance with the culture that has developed in local society. Understanding intellectual disabilities continues to develop along with the era of developments in knowledge and social changes in society which vary between cultural and ethnic groups<sup>57</sup>. In any case, social stereotypes provide limited opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities. Stereotypes of intellectual disabilities can be categorized as people who are friendly, need pity, unintelligent, and bullies. Not being intelligent is a prominent stereotype of people with intellectual disabilities<sup>58</sup>. People with intellectual disabilities experience health disparities compared to the general population. Biological, psychological, social, developmental factors and life experiences contribute to this inequality. People with intellectual disabilities also experience access barriers in using health services. People with intellectual disabilities have different patterns of health needs<sup>59</sup>.

Stereotypes of people with intellectual disabilities are classical and modern. Classical forms are overtly stereotyped, while modern forms are more subtle and hidden. For example, stereotypes in the classic form of mental weakness do not have the same quality of life as normal individuals and they live in protected places because they are considered dangerous to the surrounding environment. In contrast, stereotypes in modern form are expressed as people with intellectual disabilities no longer experience discrimination, are treated the same as other people,

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<sup>50</sup> Hani Mulyani et al., "Stereotipe Masyarakat Terhadap Kemampuan Tunanetra," *Faidatuna* 4, no. 2 (2023), 45.

<sup>51</sup> Rahmah Rahmah, "Penerimaan Diri Bagi Penyandang Disabilitas Netra," *Alhadharah: Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 18, no. 2 (2020), 1.

<sup>52</sup> Bonifasia Ayulianti Tat, Robertus Hudin, and Mikael Nardi, "Metode Pembelajaran Dalam Mengembangkan Interaksi Sosial Anak Tunarungu," *Jurnal Literasi Pendidikan Dasar* 2, no. 1 (2021), 22.

<sup>53</sup> Indah Permata Sari and Frisca Meivilona Yendi, "Peran Konselor Dalam Meningkatkan Kepercayaan Diri Siswa Disabilitas Fisik," *SCHOULID: Indonesian Journal of School Counseling* 3, no. 3 (2018): 80–88.

<sup>54</sup> Harlan Lane, "Do Deaf People Have a Disability?," *Sign Language Studies* 2, no. 4 (2002), 364.

<sup>55</sup> Robert J Hoffmeister, "Language and the Deaf World: Difference Not Disability," in *Language, Culture, and Community in Teacher Education* (Routledge, 2013), 71.

<sup>56</sup> Harlan Lane, "Constructions of Deafness," *Disability & Society* 10, no. 2 (1995), <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599550023633>, 171.

<sup>57</sup> Laura Allison and Andre Strydom, "Intellectual Disability across Cultures," *Psychiatry* 8, no. 9 (2009), 355.

<sup>58</sup> Hannah A Pelleboer-Gunnink, Jaap Van Weeghel, and Petri J C M Embregts, "Public Stigmatisation of People with Intellectual Disabilities: A Mixed-Method Population Survey into Stereotypes and Their Relationship with Familiarity and Discrimination," *Disability and Rehabilitation* 43, no. 4 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638288.2019.1630678>, 489.

<sup>59</sup> Sally-Ann Cooper, Craig Melville, and Jillian Morrison, "People with Intellectual Disabilities," *BMJ* (British Medical Journal Publishing Group, 2004), <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.329.7463.414>, 414.

and their future is fought for against injustice in society<sup>60</sup>. People with intellectual disabilities have experiences with various forms of discrimination, harassment, and vulnerability in social interactions<sup>61</sup>.

Based on the disability limitations data above, they are actually individuals who have the same rights in social life. However, the reality is that some, or even the majority, of individuals with disabilities experience inequality in social interactions. People with disabilities are often marginalized in social life. The veil of limitations of people with disabilities must be opened through inclusive communication. Communication is carried out with care, empathy, tolerance, and humanity.

## 2. Inclusive Communication in Diversity of Disabilities

Communication is very important in human life. Communication plays a role in every space and dimension of human life. There is but void without communication. Communication is needed in social change. Effective communication is used to overcome and identify any obstacles to success<sup>62</sup>. Inclusive communication is used directly to overcome identified obstacles in the change and innovation process carried out. Inclusive communication involves acceptability, credibility, clarity, and accuracy of the message conveyed<sup>63</sup>.

Inclusive communication requires an inclusive society, namely a society that includes all individuals, regardless of their background, abilities, or social status. An inclusive society aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination and social exclusion, and ensures that everyone has the same opportunity to participate and contribute to society<sup>64</sup>. Social exclusion refers to the process or condition in which individuals or groups are marginalized, or even excluded from participating in the social, economic, and political life of society. Social exclusion can occur due to various factors, such as poverty, disability, discrimination, or structural injustice. Social exclusion can result in individuals or groups losing access to the resources and opportunities needed to achieve prosperity and a decent life. Efforts to overcome social exclusion involve steps such as social inclusion policies, community empowerment, and eliminating discrimination. The aim is to create an inclusive society where all individuals have equal opportunities to participate and contribute to social, economic, and political life<sup>65</sup>.

The formation of an inclusive society lifts the veil on the limitations of people with disabilities. In an inclusive society, people with various disabilities have equal rights in social life. To open the veil of these limitations, inclusive communication is needed that emphasizes the importance of caring, empathy, tolerance, and being humane in dealing with diversity within limitations.

Inclusive communication requires a comprehensive understanding of the perspective of people with disabilities. The understanding needed in inclusive communication is an understanding of the diverse world of people with disabilities, how they live, what their culture is, what their outlook on life is, and how they feel about it. This understanding of diversity becomes capital for carrying out inclusive communication by understanding how to empathize with them, how to show our concern, and how to show tolerance towards them.

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<sup>60</sup> Nazar Akrami et al., "Classical and Modern Prejudice: Attitudes toward People with Intellectual Disabilities," *Research in Developmental Disabilities* 27, no. 6 (2006), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2005.07.003>, 616.

<sup>61</sup> Aminath Didi, Leanne Dowse, and Louisa Smith, "Intellectual Disability and Complex Support Needs: Human Rights Perspective for Policy and Practice," *The International Journal of Human Rights* 22, no. 8 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2018.1485653>, 989.

<sup>62</sup> Rebecca Shute et al., "Inclusive Communication: A Tool for Service Innovation," *British Journal of Healthcare Management* 18, no. 1 (2012): 20.

<sup>63</sup> Rebecca Shute et al., "Inclusive Communication, 25.

<sup>64</sup> Ruth Levitas, *The Inclusive Society?: Social Exclusion and New Labour* (Springer, 2005), 7

<sup>65</sup>, 7

Based on the results of the literature review, it was found that stereotypes of people with disabilities can be categorized as follows: Stereotypes for people with physical disabilities are bodies that are physically and sexually unattractive, scary, need pity, need empathy, are useless. The stereotype for people with sensory disabilities is that they are unable to see, unable to hear, unable to speak. The stereotype for people with intellectual disabilities includes unintelligent, disruptive, intellectually limited, and mentally retarded. In fighting for civil rights, people with disabilities often still face discrimination and pressure as a minority group. This is due to the assumption that individual character is more related to a person's disability and gives rise to categorizations such as dependent, incompetent, and even asexual<sup>66</sup>. People with disabilities are more likely to hide themselves in social life.

Stereotypes are constructions in the culture of a particular society, at a particular time, and as a reflection of certain events and interests<sup>67</sup>. The incident that happened to a blind woman from Indonesia (Putri Ariani) who earned the Golden Buzzer on America's Got Talent (AGT), and even advanced to the AGT final, shows that the stereotypes attached to her do not limit her from developing interpersonal relationships, national relations, and even international acclaim. The motivation to develop relationships with the surrounding environment is to change the way of thinking from overthinking to positive thinking and from insecurity to gratitude. Her struggle to develop relationships succeeded in changing her lifestyle from a closed character to being open to developing relationships with the world around her and gave birth to diverse netizen opinions<sup>68</sup>;

“@James-ct5vm: People living in their own world are amazing. She will never know how Simon looks like. Her world is always beautiful as much as she could imagine and she successfully delivered it”.

“@PK-oy4fe: My nephew was blind from the age of 2. He could tell how someone looked by gently touching a face! When one sense is removed, all other senses become stronger. He played guitar and even had a paper route. Don't underestimate their life!”

“@roninthecat: I believe that in her blindness, she's already seen such beautiful ethereal lights and colors brought by angels which radiate through her breathtaking voice, amazing musical talent, and great attitude. A global phenomenon and an inspiration for our young generations. A 21st century "Stevie Wonder" who comes maybe once in a lifetime. A creative, fearless, funny, and humble 17 year old girl who's vibrating all of her positive energy to the world. Such a beautiful soul indeed”

The stereotypes attached to people with disabilities have an impact on interpersonal relationship patterns with the surrounding environment. In the perspective of Self-Disclosure Theory, people with disabilities need to develop interpersonal relationships with the surrounding environment so that their basic human needs for developing relationships and self-clarification can be realized in social life. By developing interpersonal relationships, people with disabilities can communicate equally, interactively, and reciprocally to express themselves in social life.

On the contrary, the above reality requires support from the social environment to maintain the development of interpersonal relationships for people with disabilities. Support in the form of positive stereotypes was provided by 150 participants of the 5th International Conference on Da'wa and Communication 2023 who stated that people with disabilities are special people, great, strong, amazing, spirited, awesome, tough, special, caring, and tough. This data can be used as capital in integrating inclusive communication to maintain self-disclosure for

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<sup>66</sup> Michelle R Nario-Redmond, “Cultural Stereotypes of Disabled and Non-disabled Men and Women: Consensus for Global Category Representations and Diagnostic Domains,” *British Journal of Social Psychology* 49, no. 3 (2010), <https://doi.org/10.1348/014466609X468411>, 471.

<sup>67</sup> Lane, “Constructions of Deafness.” 171

<sup>68</sup> Talent Recap, “AGT 2023 Semifinals 3 and RESULTS! Is Putri Ariani in the Finals?” (Talent Recap, 2023), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=wpX1oX\\_ukpI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=wpX1oX_ukpI).

people with disabilities. They need support with empathy without prejudice, tolerance without intervention, and respect without degrading them.

In the perspective of the Johari Window Theory, people with disabilities can have varied personalities like other individuals. They can be open and can interact with their environment. They can be closed to their environment and even be people who don't know who they are. Inclusive communication must pay attention to the character of people with disabilities who are open, closed, and do not even recognize themselves. Of course, this is a challenge in inclusive communication to achieve mutual understanding in the diversity of individual characters.

## E. Conclusion

The limitations of people with disabilities require a communication touch that is able to provide empathy and take into account diversity, personality, disabilities, and individual needs. Communication with a typology of society like this requires inclusive communication, namely a communication process involving all parties in a change in society consisting of individuals and groups. Inclusive communication aims to ensure that all parties feel involved, heard, and have the opportunity to participate in the process of change. Inclusive communication aims to ensure that the messages conveyed are easily understood by all parties involved, regardless of their background, abilities, or needs.

People with disabilities are individuals who have equal rights in social life. However, the reality is that some, or even the majority, of individuals with disabilities experience inequality in social interactions. People with disabilities are often marginalized in social life. The veil of limitations of people with disabilities must be opened through inclusive communication. Communication is carried out with care, empathy, tolerance and humanity. Inclusive communication must pay attention to the character of people with disabilities who are open, closed, and do not even recognize themselves. Diversity of limitations and cultures need to be framed in a space of tolerance and mutual understanding. World harmony is built with inclusive communication that is mutually respectful and tolerant.

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