

Effective Communication in the Workplace from the Perspective of the Qur'an

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Abstract

Workplace communication failures increasingly emerge as a critical challenge in modern professional environments, often stemming from the absence of ethical and values-based communication frameworks. This study examines the concept of effective communication in the workplace as reflected in QS. Al-Qashash verses 26–28, through a comparative analysis of two prominent Indonesian Quranic exegeses: Tafsir Al-Azhar by Buya Hamka and Tafsir Al-Misbah by M. Quraish Shihab. The research aims to identify the principles of effective workplace communication according to both exegetes and to explore their similarities and differences. A qualitative library research method was employed, utilizing content analysis, descriptive analysis, and comparative analysis of primary and secondary sources. The findings reveal that both exegetes agree on two foundational pillars of effective workplace communication: professional competence (*al-qawiy*) and moral integrity (*al-amīn*), alongside the necessity of transparent, unambiguous, and non-coercive work contracts, with Allah as the spiritual witness of every agreement. However, they differ in approach: Hamka employs an ethical-narrative method that extracts moral values chronologically from the Quranic narrative, emphasizing character and humanity, while Quraish Shihab adopts a linguistic-contextual approach that systematically analyzes Quranic diction to derive operational communication principles with stronger emphasis on workers' rights protection. These two approaches are complementary, together forming a comprehensive Quranic communication model that is simultaneously ethical, rational, transparent, and spiritually accountable.

Keywords: *effective communication; workplace; Tafsir Al-Azhar; Tafsir Al-Misbah*

Introduction

The Qur'an is the holy scripture that serves as evidence of the truthfulness of Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) prophethood and as guidance for humanity at all times and in all places.¹ It possesses numerous distinctive virtues and unique characteristics. The Qur'an also serves as an effective medium for study, contemplation, and appreciation of the beauty of its language. Many of the Prophet's companions were moved to tears, filled with awe, admiration, and profound amazement by the eloquence and linguistic beauty of the Qur'an.² This is exemplified in the story of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, whose heart was softened and who was ultimately inspired to embrace Islam after being deeply moved by the eloquence and beauty of the Qur'anic language when he heard the recitation of Surah Ṭā Hā.³

The reality of today's workplace indicates that many organizational problems stem from failures in communication, ranging from misunderstandings among colleagues to strained relationships between supervisors and subordinates.⁴ Effective communication has therefore become an essential factor in fostering collaboration, maintaining harmonious workplace relationships, and ensuring the achievement of organizational goals.⁵ In this context, communication is not merely the transmission of information; rather, it encompasses the ability to listen attentively, understand the messages being conveyed, and demonstrate proper ethics in the way words and ideas

¹ M. Nur Kholis Setiawan, *Al-Qur'an Kitab Sastra Terbesar* (Yogyakarta: eLSAQ Press, 2005), 85; Khayranil Ula, "Gaya Komunikasi Perspektif Al-Qur'an: Studi Komparatif Tafsir Al-Misbah dan Fi Zilāl al-Qur'ān," *Jurnal Penelitian Agama* 27, no. 1 (2026): 19–44, <https://doi.org/10.24090/jpa.v27i1.2026.pp19-44>

² M. Nur Kholis Setiawan, *Al-Qur'an Kitab Sastra Terbesar* (eLSAQ Press, 2005), 85.

³ M. Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Qur'an: Fungsi Dan Peran Wahyu Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat* (Mizan, 1999), 45; Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Qur'an: Fungsi Dan Peran Wahyu Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat*.

⁴ Yuyun Affandi et al., "Interpersonal Communication between Parents and Children from Hamka's Perspective: A Thematic Study in the Tafsir Al-Azhar on Surah Luqman Verses 16–19," *ICJ: Islamic Communication Journal* 9, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.21580/icj.2024.9.1.20982>

⁵ Misrawati, 'Komunikasi Interpersonal Di Lingkungan Kerja: Membangun Relasi Yang Sehat Antara Atasan Dan Bawahan', *Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Humaniora* 5, no. 1 (2022): 45.

are expressed. Effective communication requires not only clarity of speech but also sensitivity, respect, and wisdom in interacting with others.

As social beings, humans cannot live in isolation and continuously depend on interactions with others. Consequently, communication serves as the primary medium through which individuals establish, maintain, and develop social relationships. Through communication, people exchange ideas, express feelings, coordinate activities, and build mutual understanding in both personal and professional contexts.⁶ Effective communication, defined as the process of conveying messages clearly, accurately, and in a manner that fosters mutual understanding between the sender and the receiver, plays a crucial role in human life, particularly in the workplace. Through effective communication, individuals can exchange information efficiently, minimize misunderstandings, strengthen professional relationships, and enhance collaboration in achieving organizational objectives.⁷ Without effective communication, working relationships can easily become obstructed and may potentially give rise to conflicts that undermine productivity..

One relevant example of communication in the context of the workplace is the story of Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) in Surah Al-Qasas (28): 26–28, which illustrates how he was offered employment by Prophet Shu‘ayb (peace be upon him) based on the recommendation of Shu‘ayb’s daughter after she observed his integrity and competence.⁸ This recommendation is recorded in the Word of Allah (SWT), as follows:

قَالَتْ إِحْدَهُمَا يَا أَبَتِ اسْتَأْجِرْهُ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ

Translation:

“O my father, hire him as an employee (laborer). Indeed, the best person you can hire is one who is strong and trustworthy.”

⁶ Suranto Aw, *Komunikasi Interpersonal* (Graham Ilmu, 2011), 27.

⁷ Misrawati, ‘Komunikasi Interpersonal Di Lingkungan Kerja: Membangun Relasi Yang Sehat Antara Atasan Dan Bawahan’, 47.

⁸ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur’an* (Lentera Hati, 2005), 108–10.

This study is important as a guideline for Muslims, particularly workers, in building workplace communication grounded in Qur'anic values such as trust, integrity (*amanah*), honesty, and proper etiquette (*adab*). Thus, communication in the workplace is not merely a tool for achieving goals, but also a means of shaping moral conduct and character that is pleasing to Allah (SWT). Therefore, this research explores the values of effective communication in Surah Al-Qasas (28): 26–28 through a comparative approach to Tafsir Al-Azhar by Buya Hamka and Tafsir Al-Misbah by M. Quraish Shihab.

Based on the description above, this study focuses on three main issues: first, how the concept of effective communication in the workplace is understood according to the guidance of the Qur'an; second, how Buya Hamka and M. Quraish Shihab interpret the concept of effective workplace communication based on Surah Al-Qasas (28): 26–28; and third, what similarities and differences exist between the two exegetes in their understanding of the same verses in relation to effective communication in the workplace.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach with a library research design to gain an in-depth understanding of the values of effective communication in the workplace as contained in Surah Al-Qasas (28): 26–28. Data are collected through documentation techniques by examining, recording, and classifying relevant interpretations derived from *Tafsir Al-Azhar* by Buya Hamka and *Tafsir Al-Misbah* by M. Quraish Shihab as primary sources, while supporting literature such as journals, books, articles, and other scholarly works are used as secondary data.

The data analysis is conducted using three complementary methods: content analysis to draw conclusions from the reviewed literature, descriptive analysis to systematically, objectively, and critically describe the concept of effective communication in the workplace based on both tafsirs, and comparative analysis to identify similarities and differences between the interpretations of *Tafsir Al-Azhar* and *Tafsir Al-Misbah*. The validity of the data is ensured through persistence in source examination, consistency in data classification, and triangulation between primary and secondary sources in order to produce findings that are valid and academically accountable.

Interpretation of Surah Al-Qasas (28): Verses 26–28 from the Perspectives of Buya Hamka and M. Quraish Shihab

Surah Al-Qasas (28): Verses 26–28 are a passage from the story of Prophet Musa (peace be upon him), which contains rich prophetic communication values relevant to the modern workplace context. These three verses sequentially illustrate three important moments: the recommendation of a worker, the offer of an employment contract, and the establishment of an agreement witnessed by Allah (SWT).

1. The Interpretation of Qur'an Surah Al-Qashash Verse 26: The Ideal Criteria for the Workforce

Verse 26 of Surah Al-Qasas presents a dialogue between one of the daughters of Prophet Shu'ayb and her father. She recommends that Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) be employed, stating that the best person to hire is one who is strong (*al-qawiy*) and trustworthy (*al-amīn*). These two qualities serve as Qur'anic normative foundations in determining the ideal criteria for a worker.

In *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, Buya Hamka interprets the term *al-qawiy* not merely as physical strength, but as encompassing skill, competence, work capability, and seriousness in carrying out responsibilities. In the context of the modern workplace, “strength” is understood as professional competence aligned with job requirements. A person entrusted with responsibility must possess adequate capacity so that the assigned duties can be properly fulfilled.⁹

The term *al-amīn* is understood by Hamka as the quality of trustworthiness (*amanah*), namely integrity and honesty in carrying out responsibilities. Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) had already demonstrated both qualities: his strength was evident when he helped the two women at the well, while his trustworthiness was reflected in his respectful conduct and his ability to maintain proper boundaries during his journey with the daughter of Prophet Shu'ayb.¹⁰ Hamka concludes that the ideal standard for selecting a worker is a combination of competence and trustworthiness. If a person possesses strength but lacks trustworthiness, there is a risk of abusing authority; conversely, if a person is trustworthy but lacks competence, the assigned tasks cannot be carried out optimally.

In addition, Hamka highlights the manner in which the daughter conveyed her recommendation. She did not express her

⁹ Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar Juz XX* (Pustaka Panjimas, 1982), 113–14.

¹⁰ Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar Juz XX*, 114.

opinion in a harsh or coercive way, but rather addressed her father with polite and well-reasoned speech. This indicates that effective communication must be accompanied by ethics and clear justification. In the workplace context, recommending someone should be based on factual evidence and genuine qualifications, rather than purely subjective considerations.¹¹

Meanwhile, M. Quraish Shihab in *Tafsir Al-Misbab* explains that the daughter's admiration for Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) arose from two concrete experiences: his physical strength and dignity when helping to water the livestock amid a crowd of shepherds, and his noble conduct during the journey to the home of the two women's father.¹²

According to Quraish Shihab, the expression “yā abati ista’jirhu” (O my father, hire him) reflects a communication pattern that is polite, rational, and persuasive. The statement is not delivered as an order, but rather as a suggestion accompanied by logical reasoning and full respect. This demonstrates that the success of communication is determined not only by the substance of the message conveyed, but also by its ethics and the manner in which it is delivered.¹³

Quraish Shihab views the meaning of *al-qunwāb* as contextual, depending on the nature of the assigned task. Strength may refer to physical ability, intellectual intelligence, professional skills, or mental resilience. Meanwhile, *al-amānab* encompasses moral integrity, honesty, and responsibility in carrying out duties. He emphasizes that ability without trustworthiness may lead to misconduct and abuse of authority, whereas trustworthiness without competence can result in an inability to perform tasks effectively.¹⁴

Classical exegetes further enrich this interpretation. Ibn Kathir emphasizes that the strength of Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) includes courage, firmness, and resilience of character; thus, his ability to confront the crowd of shepherds reflects a strong personality that is not weak and is capable of bearing significant responsibilities. Al-Qurtubi explains that *al-qunwāb* is not limited to physical strength, but refers to competence and suitability for the type of work to be performed, meaning that employability is determined by relevant capability rather than mere physical power.

¹¹ Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar Juz XX*, 115.

¹² M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbab*, Vol. X (Lentera Hati, 2002), 334.

¹³ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbab: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, 388–89.

¹⁴ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbab: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, 390–91.

Fakhr al-Din al-Razi adds that strength in this verse can also be understood as intellectual sharpness and strategic reasoning (*qunwat al-ra'y*), which are essential in managing responsibilities and decision-making. Meanwhile, Al-Tabari highlights that the expression points to practical ability demonstrated through real action, as seen in Musa's assistance at the well, which becomes evidence of his reliability and effectiveness in work-related situations.¹⁵

2. The Interpretation of Surah Al-Qasas (28): Verse 27 in Relation to Transparency in Employment Contracts

Verse 27 describes the employment contract offered by Prophet Shu'ayb to Prophet Musa (peace be upon him). The offer was presented in a clear and detailed manner: marriage to one of his daughters as compensation, with the condition of working for eight years, along with an optional additional two years as an act of goodwill. The wording of this verse reflects transparency in information, clarity regarding the duration of employment, and the provision of a non-coercive option.¹⁶

Buya Hamka interprets this verse as an example of a clear, transparent, and ethically grounded contractual communication. The offer presented is neither ambiguous nor convoluted, but explicitly states the purpose, conditions, and specified duration. Hamka emphasizes the importance of clarity of contract (*clarity of agreement*) in order to prevent misunderstandings in the future.¹⁷

The stipulation of an eight-year working period, with an optional additional two years as an act of goodwill from Musa, reflects flexibility within the agreement. According to Hamka, this option demonstrates a non-coercive approach and provides freedom for the contracting party. In the modern workplace, this principle is relevant as a foundation for professional communication that is not authoritarian, but rather dialogical and considerate of the other party's capacity.¹⁸

¹⁵ Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim*, vol. 6 (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, n.d.), 229–231, tafsir Surah al-Qasas (28): 26. Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, vol. 13 (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyyah, 1964), 266–268, tafsir Surah al-Qasas (28): 26. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, *Mafatih al-Ghayb*, vol. 24 (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, 1981), 212–214, tafsir Surah al-Qasas (28): 26. Al-Tabari, *Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil ay al-Qur'an*, vol. 20 (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1984), 61–63, tafsir Surah al-Qasas (28): 26.

¹⁶ Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, *Mafatih al-Ghayb*, vol. 24 (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, 1981), 215–217, tafsir Surah al-Qasas (28): 27

¹⁷ Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar Juz' XX*, 117–18.

¹⁸ Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar Juz' XX*, 118.

The phrase “*wa mā urīdu an asyuqqa ‘alaika*” (“I do not intend to burden you”) is interpreted by Hamka as a reflection of empathy and noble character in social and economic dealings. The employer emphasizes that the agreement is not meant to impose a burden beyond the worker’s capacity. This indicates that Islam does not justify labor exploitation, but instead promotes humane and just professional relationships. Furthermore, the statement “*in shā’ Allāh, you will find me among the righteous*” is understood by Hamka as a moral assurance from the employer, implying that not only workers are required to uphold integrity, but employers are also obligated to maintain ethics, honesty, and righteousness in professional interactions.¹⁹

M. Quraish Shihab explains that the expression “*innī urīdu an unkihāka ihdā ibnatayya hātayn*” reflects clear and transparent communication. The father of the two women conveys his intention openly and directly, without ambiguity, so that it does not create suspicion or misunderstanding. In the context of the modern workplace, this illustrates the principle of honest and straightforward communication in presenting job offers or employment contracts.²⁰

The employment condition “*‘alā an ta’juranī thamāniya hijaj*” according to Quraish Shihab highlights the importance of clarity in determining the duration of work. The specification of an eight-year period with an option of ten years as an act of goodwill reflects flexibility that remains within the framework of justice. This affirms that employment contract communication must clearly outline time limits, rights, and obligations in detail. The phrase “*wa mā urīdu an asyuqqa ‘alayka*” is also interpreted by Quraish Shihab as an expression of the employer’s empathy toward the worker, indicating that Islam teaches communication that does not impose undue burden or pressure on others.²¹

Ibn Kathir considers this verse as evidence for the permissibility of using services or labor as a form of dowry in marriage, provided that the duration and scope of work are clearly defined. The specification of an eight-year term with an optional

¹⁹ Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar Juz XX*, 119.

²⁰ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbab, Vol. X*, 405.

²¹ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbab, Vol. X*, 406. Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, vol. 7 (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 1983), 529–532, interpretation of Surah al-Qasas (28): 27–28. Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur’an al-‘Azim*, vol. 6 (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, n.d.), 233–235, tafsir Surah al-Qasas (28): 27–28. Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami’ li Ahkam al-Qur’an*, vol. 13 (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyyah, 1964), 272–274, tafsir Surah al-Qasas (28): 27–28.

additional two years demonstrates clarity and precision in contractual terms.²²

Al-Qurtubi interprets the verse as a legal basis for the permissibility of *ijarah* (employment contracts) with a predetermined duration agreed upon by both parties, while emphasizing the necessity of clearly defining the length of employment, type of work, and form of compensation. Wahbah al-Zuhayli further explains that the verse reflects the Islamic legal principle of removing hardship (*raf' al-haraj*), indicating that employers are prohibited from imposing obligations beyond a worker's capacity.²³

3. The Interpretation of Surah Al-Qasas (28): Verse 28 in Relation to Contractual Agreement and Spiritual Dimension

Verse 28 contains Prophet Musa's response to the offer presented by Prophet Shu'ayb. The statement "dhālika baynī wa baynaka" ("that is [an agreement] between me and you") signifies a conscious and voluntary acceptance of the contract, while also affirming that the agreement has been concluded without deception or coercion. The verse concludes with Allah (SWT) being made a witness to the agreement.

In *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, Buya Hamka interprets the phrase "dhālika baynī wa baynaka" as a form of firm, honest, and responsible communication in a contractual agreement. This concise statement carries a strong sense of commitment. Prophet Musa not only accepted the offer verbally but also clarified the boundaries of the agreement to prevent future misunderstandings. This attitude reflects honesty (*ṣidq*) and trustworthiness (*amānah*) in social and economic dealings.²⁴

Furthermore, Hamka emphasizes that Prophet Musa accepted the option of working for eight or ten years with full awareness and willingness, without seeking personal advantage. This serves as a concrete example that effective communication in the workplace must be built upon contractual clarity, mutual understanding, and a moral commitment to fulfill trust. By appointing Allah (SWT) as a *wakīl* (guardian and witness), every

²² Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim*, vol. 6 (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, n.d.), 234–236, tafsir Surah al-Qasas (28): 27–28.

Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, vol. 13 (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyyah, 1964), 273–275, tafsir Surah al-Qasas (28): 27–28

²³ Wahbah az-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Munir Fi al-'Aqidah Wa al-Syari'ah Wa al-Manhaj*, Juz XX (Dar al-Fikr, 1991), 52–53.

²⁴ Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* Juz XX, 120.

work commitment must be upheld with full consciousness, sincerity, and honesty.²⁵

M. Quraish Shihab views this verse as a depiction of Prophet Musa's (peace be upon him) spiritual closeness to Allah (SWT). Musa's repeated reference to "Rabb" signifies a deep personal relationship between a servant and his Lord as the Sustainer and Guide. This spiritual awareness is reflected in his communicative behavior, including when establishing work agreements and managing worldly affairs.²⁶

The phrase "ayyamā al-ajalayni qaḍaytu fa-lā 'udwāna 'alayya" is interpreted by Quraish Shihab as an affirmation of workers' rights protection. Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) states that once he completes either of the two agreed terms of service, no further obligation may be imposed upon him. Islam prohibits workplace communication that is manipulative or that extends responsibilities beyond the agreed terms.

According to *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, Surah Al-Qasas (28): 28 emphasizes that contractual communication in Islam must be grounded in honesty, moral awareness, and submission to Allah (SWT). Employment agreements should not be understood merely as formal contracts, but as trusts (*amanah*) for which one is accountable before Allah.

Ibn Kathir explains that this expression signifies a valid and binding agreement between both parties, without any addition or reduction to the stipulated terms. Al-Qurtubi further stresses that the phrase "fa-ayyamā al-ajalayni qaḍaytu fa-lā 'udwāna 'alayya" establishes a legal principle that contracts must be honored according to their original terms without unilateral modification.²⁷

Wahbah al-Zuhayli emphasizes the spiritual dimension in the concluding part of the verse, "Wallāhu 'alā mā naqūlu wakīl" (And Allah is a witness over what we say), which indicates that every agreement is not merely a social contract, but also a trust (*amanah*) for which one is accountable before Allah (SWT).²⁸

Fakhr al-Din al-Razi gives special attention to the psychological dimension of this verse. He explains that the clarity of Prophet Musa's statement contributes to a sense of security

²⁵ Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* Juz XX, 121.

²⁶ Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Qur'an: Fungsi Dan Peran Wahyu Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat*, 330–33.

²⁷ Al-Qurthubi, *Al-Jami' Li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, Juz XIII, 275.

²⁸ az-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Munir Fi al-'Aqidah Wa al-Syari'ah Wa al-Manhaj*, Juz XX, 54.

and helps build mutual trust between both parties. This verse teaches that a good contract is one formulated in calm, unambiguous, and empathetic language.²⁹ Al-Maraghi adds that the clarity of time limits and responsibilities in this verse constitutes an essential foundation for the establishment of harmonious and trustworthy social relationships.³⁰

The Perspectives of Buya Hamka and M. Quraish Shihab on Effective Communication in the Workplace

1. Buya Hamka's Perspective

In *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, Buya Hamka develops the concept of effective communication in the workplace through three interconnected layers of meaning. First, communication must be grounded in honesty and objectivity. The recommendation made by the daughter to her father is not based on emotional fabrication, but on an observable factual assessment, namely the strength and trustworthiness (*al-qunwāh wa al-amānah*) of Prophet Musa (peace be upon him). This principle affirms that in the workplace, the evaluation of a person's competence must be factual rather than subjective.

Second, communication in employment contracts must be transparent and non-exploitative. Hamka shows that Prophet Shu'ayb presents the agreement by clearly stating all essential elements of the contract: the parties involved, the form of compensation, the duration of work, and an optional extension offered as a voluntary choice. Nothing is concealed or ambiguous. Even the statement "wa mā urīdu an asyuqqa 'alaika" explicitly affirms the employer's good intention not to burden or exploit the worker.

Third, workplace communication must include a moral and spiritual dimension. By invoking Allah (SWT) as *wakīl* (witness and guarantor) in the agreement, Hamka emphasizes that every employment contract in Islam is not merely a binding legal transaction in this world, but also a trust (*amanah*) for which individuals are accountable before Allah. This principle fosters

²⁹ Fakhruddin al-Rāzī, *Mafātih Al-Ghayb Juʿ XXV* (Dār Ihya' al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 2000), 179.

³⁰ Aḥmad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, *Tafsīr Al-Marāghī, Juʿ XX* (Dar al-Fikr, 1946), 73.

honesty, commitment, and sincerity in fulfilling professional responsibilities.³¹

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Overall, Buya Hamka views Surah Al-Qasas (28): 26–28 as an ideal model of workplace communication—honest, clear, and responsible, grounded in moral and spiritual values. His approach is ethical-narrative in nature: he constructs the concept of communication through a chronological reading of the story and extracts moral values from each detail presented in the Qur'anic narrative.

2. M. Quraish Shihab's Perspective

M. Quraish Shihab, in *Tafsir Al-Misbab*, develops the interpretation of Surah Al-Qasas (28): 26–28 through a more analytical and methodological approach. He places each Qur'anic expression within a detailed linguistic and pragmatic context, thereby giving the extracted principles of communication a more systematic epistemological dimension.

In his interpretation of verse 26, Shihab emphasizes that the persuasive communication model demonstrated by the daughter—delivering a suggestion supported by rational

³¹ Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar, Jilid VII* (Pustaka Panjimas, 1983), 325.

justification rather than issuing a command—represents the most effective communication strategy in social relations. He further asserts that the success of communication is determined not only by the substance of the message, but also by the manner and ethics of its delivery.³²

Quraish Shihab explains that the principle of transparency in employment contract communication, as reflected in Qur'an 28:27, should be manifested through the clear specification of the essential elements of the agreement. These elements include the identities of the contracting parties, the duration of employment and the responsibilities to be undertaken, as well as a clear delineation of the rights and obligations of each party. Such clarity within an employment contract serves not only to prevent potential disputes but also to cultivate mutual trust between employers and employees. According to Shihab, employment relationships founded upon openness and transparency are more likely to achieve stability and sustainability.³³ Furthermore, he emphasizes that employers should refrain from imposing burdensome conditions upon workers, as such practices contradict the Islamic principles of justice (*al-'adl*) and respect for human dignity, which constitute fundamental values within Islamic teachings.³⁴

In verse 28, Quraish Shihab highlights the spiritual dimension in which Allah (SWT) is made a witness and guarantor of every contract. Awareness of Allah's supervision fosters integrity that goes beyond formal legal compliance, becoming an inner commitment rooted in faith. Thus, contractual communication in Shihab's perspective represents both an expression of faith and a form of professional governance.³⁵

Overall, M. Quraish Shihab understands Surah Al-Qasas (28): 26–28 as a depiction of effective workplace communication that emphasizes methodological and rational dimensions: communication must be clear, objective, and transparent, and grounded in moral responsibility as well as spiritual awareness.

³² Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbab*, Vol. X, 407.

³³ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbab*, Vol. X, 408–9.

³⁴ M. Umer Chapra, "The Islamic Vision of Development in the Light of Maqasid Al-Shariah," *Islamic Research and Training Institute* 15, no. 2 (2008): 25–27

³⁵ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbab*, Vol. X, 410.

The Similarities and Differences Between the Perspectives of Buya Hamka and M. Quraish Shihab

Based on the comparative analysis between *Tafsir Al-Azhar* and *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, there is a fundamental similarity that unites the perspectives of both exegetes. They agree that effective workplace communication must bring together two main pillars: professional competence (*al-qunwah*) and moral integrity (*al-amānah*). Both also emphasize that employment contract communication must be transparent, unambiguous, and free from coercion. In addition, the spiritual value of invoking the name of Allah as a witness in contractual agreements is acknowledged by both as a dimension that adds ethical weight to every employment contract.³⁶

The difference between the two lies in their interpretive orientation and method. Hamka employs an ethical-narrative approach that prioritizes moral and humanistic dimensions. He constructs his argument on communication by following the chronological flow of the story, extracting moral values from each event and dialogue contained in the verses. For Hamka, effective communication is communication that reflects noble character, empathy, and responsibility.³⁷

In contrast, Quraish Shihab adopts a more systematic linguistic-contextual approach. He analyzes each Qur'anic word choice and sentence structure to identify communication principles that can be operationalized. For Quraish Shihab, effective communication is structured, rational, and methodical. He is also more explicit in formulating workers' rights protection and the legal consequences of a contractual agreement.

The difference in approach between the two perspectives is not contradictory, but rather complementary. Hamka builds the ethical foundation of workplace communication through moral values, while Quraish Shihab complements it with a methodological framework that

³⁶ Anang Kurniawan et al., 'Konsep Akhlak Mulia Dalam Tutar Kata Menurut Tafsir Al-Azhar: Sebuah Pendekatan Etika Komunikasi Dan Maqāṣidī', *Journal of Islamic Scriptures in Non-Arabic Societies* 2, no. 2 (2025): 81–93, <https://journal.kurasinstitute.com/index.php/jisnas/article/view/1470>.

³⁷ Yuyun Affandi et al., 'Interpersonal Communication between Parents and Children from Hamka's Perspective: A Thematic Study in the Tafsir Al-Azhar on Surah Luqman Verses 16-19', *ICJ: Islamic Communication Journal* 9, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21580/icj.2024.9.1.20982>.

provides operational direction.³⁸ The integration of both perspectives produces a complete Qur'anic concept of communication: one that is polite, honest, clear, rational, non-coercive, and grounded in moral and spiritual awareness as a form of accountability before Allah (SWT).

The relevance of these two perspectives to the modern workplace is undeniable. In an era where transparency, labor protection, and business ethics have become universal demands, the values derived from Surah Al-Qasas (28): 26–28 provide a strong normative foundation. Workplace communication built on honesty, clarity of contracts, respect for workers' rights, and awareness of divine accountability is not only pragmatically effective, but also ethically sound and spiritually meaningful.³⁹

Findings and Novelty

This study finds that the concept of effective workplace communication based on Surah Al-Qasas (28): 26–28 is integrative in nature, combining professional competence (*al-qumamah*) and moral integrity (*al-amānah*) as the two fundamental pillars of work relations. Competence is not merely understood as physical strength, but also includes ability, professional skills, and readiness to carry out job responsibilities, while integrity emphasizes honesty, trustworthiness, and moral accountability in every form of work practice.

Furthermore, workplace communication in the Qur'anic perspective reflects the principles of clarity, transparency, and non-exploitation, as illustrated in the contractual relationship between Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) and Prophet Shu'ayb. The clear specification of working duration, compensation, and contractual flexibility demonstrates that Islamic contractual communication is grounded in justice, transparency, and respect for human rights.

From a tafsir perspective, Buya Hamka in *Tafsir Al-Azhar* emphasizes an ethical-narrative approach, viewing communication as a reflection of moral character, empathy, and responsibility derived from the chronological flow of Qur'anic storytelling. In contrast, M. Quraish Shihab in *Tafsir Al-Misbah* employs a linguistic-contextual and systematic approach, focusing on language structure, contextual meaning, and the operational application of communication principles

³⁸ Khayranil Ula, 'Gaya Komunikasi Perspektif Al-Quran, Studi Komperatif Tafsir Al-Misbah Dan Fi Zhilalil Quran', *Jurnal Penelitian Agama* 27, no. 1 (2026), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24090/jpa.v27i1.2026.pp19-44>.

³⁹ Nikmah Dalimunthe et al., 'Keadilan Upah Buruh Dalam Perspektif Hukum Ketenagakerjaan Indonesia Dan Etika Ekonomi Islam: Telaah QS. Al-Muthaffifin Ayat 1-3', *BIMA: Journal of Business Inflation Management and Accounting*, 2, no. 2 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.57235/bima.v2i2.6534>.

in modern professional settings. Both perspectives affirm that effective communication must be clear, rational, and ethically grounded.

The study also finds that the inclusion of Allah as a witness in the contract introduces a spiritual dimension that strengthens moral consciousness and ethical responsibility in workplace communication. This highlights that, within the Qur'anic worldview, communication functions not only as a social and professional mechanism but also as a spiritual practice connected to divine accountability.

As its novelty, this research integrates the ethical-narrative framework of Buya Hamka and the linguistic-contextual approach of M. Quraish Shihab into a unified conceptual model of Qur'anic workplace communication. This synthesis produces a new formulation stating that effective workplace communication must not only ensure clarity and professionalism, but also be grounded in moral ethics, spiritual awareness, and transcendental responsibility. Accordingly, this study offers a more comprehensive, applicable, and contemporary model of Qur'anic communication in professional contexts.

Conclusion

1. Effective communication in the Qur'anic perspective is not only concerned with the transmission of information, but also emphasizes honesty, politeness, gentleness, and clarity as the foundation of a fair and healthy working relationship. Surah Al-Qasas (28): 26–28 shows that workplace communication must be built on professionalism and *amanah*, fostering responsibility, mutual trust, and respect for rights between parties.
2. The interpretations of Buya Hamka and M. Quraish Shihab share a common view on the importance of contractual clarity, honesty, and moral responsibility in workplace communication. However, their approaches differ: Buya Hamka highlights moral values and practical ethical application in daily life, while M. Quraish Shihab uses a more systematic and analytical method focusing on linguistic and contextual meanings. Despite these differences, both perspectives are complementary and affirm that effective workplace communication in Islam must integrate professionalism, ethics, and spiritual awareness of Allah (SWT).

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