

## Conference Paper

# Intercultural Interaction in the Multiethnic Context of Makassar City: A Case Study in an Urban Neighborhood

Asmunandar<sup>1</sup>, Iqbal Arifin<sup>2\*</sup>, Dyan Paramitha Darmayanti<sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup>Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia<sup>2</sup>Universitas Sulawesi Barat, Indonesia**ORCID**Asmunandar: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-6236-1006>Iqbal Arifin: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-4712-440X>Dyan Paramitha Darmayanti: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1901-5742>**Abstract.**

This research is a case study in an urban environment that investigates intercultural interaction in the multiethnic context of Makassar City. The research aims to understand how intercultural interactions occur in the daily lives of the residents of Makassar, which is a city rich in cultural and ethnic diversity. Data were collected through direct observation and in-depth interviews. Seven local residents with diverse ethnic backgrounds were selected as informants for this study. Intercultural communication, acceptance and tolerance, cooperation and collaboration, the influence of intercultural interaction, and challenges and barriers are some of the elements studied. According to the results of the study, intercultural communication in Makassar City requires the use of language and special signs to overcome language differences. The majority of Makassar City residents appreciate and accept ethnic diversity. However, there are still problems in overcoming differences in tradition and culture. In various initiatives and activities involving multiethnic communities, there is cooperation and collaboration between ethnicities. The social, cultural, and economic life of Makassar City is greatly enhanced by intercultural interaction. However, there are some challenges faced, such as language differences and cultural stereotypes, which can make inter-ethnic communication and understanding difficult. This study enhances our understanding of cultural interaction in a multiethnic urban environment and offers suggestions for improving inter-ethnic understanding, tolerance, and collaboration in Makassar City.

**Keywords:** intercultural interaction, multiethnicity, urban environmentCorresponding Author: Iqbal  
Arifin; email:  
iqbalarifin@unsulbar.ac.id**Published** 3 January 2024Publishing services provided by  
Knowledge E

© Asmunandar et al. This article is distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License](#), which permits unrestricted use and redistribution provided that the original author and source are credited.

Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the ICHELSS Conference Committee.

**OPEN ACCESS**

## 1. Introduction

Interactions that occur between cultures in a multiethnic context, especially those that occur in Makassar City, are currently a topic of research that is quite interesting. In addition, Makassar City is one of the largest cities in Indonesia located in South Sulawesi Province, where the city has become a center of trade and a place for intercultural

interactions that allow various ethnic groups from various regions to interact and settle in Makassar City [1–3].

Makassar has a very long history as one of the most important port cities in Indonesia and became one of the major ports in Southeast Asia in the 14th century [4]. Along with the development of international trade in Makassar City, it eventually made this city one of the leading commercial cities in the 17th century until it was inhabited by more than 100,000 which eventually made Makassar City a multicultural city with residents who came from various tribes and ethnicities such as the Makassar tribe, Bugis tribe, Toraja tribe, Mandar tribe, Buton tribe, ethnic Chinese and others [5–7]

The development of Makassar city as one of the major cities continues to this day. The role of the rapidly growing economy in Makassar city has attracted more people to live in Makassar city. This has resulted in an increasing flow of migration from various regions, which in turn enriches the cultural and ethnic diversity in the urban environment. The interactions that occur between these ethnic groups can reflect the diversity of different cultures, values and norms. However, this intercultural interaction can also lead to potential conflicts that must be understood and overcome.

The multi-ethnicity of Makassar city has made it a unique city that is not only rich in culture but also tolerance. Makassar is still one of the major cities with a center of intercultural interaction where various ethnic groups can coexist harmoniously while maintaining their respective traditions and cultural identities [1].

One of the studies conducted by Juliani [8] is about intercultural communication between Acehnese and Makassarese Bugis through marital assimilation in Makassar City. This study explains that intercultural communication between Acehnese and Bugis Makassarese ethnicities has been able to run very well until now, this happens because of several things, namely trust and honesty between the two ethnicities, high tolerance, and mutual understanding of each other but the nature of ethnocentrism that often appears is also an obstacle to assimilation.

The same thing was also explained [9] The research on social interaction in ethnic Chinese in conflict prevention in Makassar City. The interaction process that occurs is due to different ethnic and cultural backgrounds so that it will always be a trigger for problems, especially regarding ethnocentrism. Intercultural interaction in society is also explained by [10] which in his research he explains the experience of subjects or individuals who come from Javanese ethnicity and Makassarese ethnicity doing intercultural interactions.

Intercultural interactions that occur can also be seen in research conducted by [11] which in his research he explained the intercultural interactions that occur in two

different ethnic groups, namely ethnic Chinese and indigenous people in Sela Panjang City, where these groups have quite different cultural characteristics, languages and traditions. Intercultural interaction includes all aspects of communication both verbal and nonverbal, which is where intercultural communication itself is the way in which two different ethnic groups communicate and interact with each other in everyday life. In the process of intercultural interaction the socio-cultural norms of each different tribe or ethnicity can influence the way they communicate.

In the face of cultural and ethnic diversity, intercultural interaction becomes one of the important things to study. This research aims to gain a better understanding of how intercultural communication occurs in the urban environment of Makassar, which has tremendous ethnic and cultural diversity. Since the fourteenth century, Makassar, located in South Sulawesi Province, has been an important trading center. People from various tribes and ethnicities came to the city, including Makassarese, Bugis, Toraja, Mandar, Buton and Chinese.

In addition, research was also conducted to investigate how the residents of Makassar accept and embrace ethnic diversity. Makassar is known as a city that is tolerant and welcoming of cultural differences, but there are still challenges in overcoming differences in traditions and culture between ethnic groups. Although most Makassar residents value and accept ethnic diversity, there are still issues that need to be resolved to overcome differences in traditions and culture that can affect intercultural interactions.

Thus this study has significance in improving the understanding of culture and cultural interaction particularly in Makassar City in the context of multiethnicity in an urban environment. The results of the research conducted are expected to provide input for government policies and programs that are inclusive and increase our understanding of cultural and ethnic diversity that can contribute to a more harmonious community life.

## 2. Method

A case study was conducted in an urban setting to investigate intercultural interaction in a multiethnic context located in Makassar City. The purpose of this study was to understand how intercultural interactions occur in the daily lives of the residents of Makassar, a city that has tremendous ethnic and cultural diversity. To achieve this goal, the research used direct observation and in-depth interviews to collect data.

Interactions that occur between cultures in the city of Makassar can be observed by conducting direct observation, not only that, this research also uses in-depth interviews

with 7 informants selected based on criteria determined by the researcher where the informants are representatives of each ethnicity living in the city of Makassar.

In the results of interviews that have been conducted by researchers, researchers can find out about intercultural communication that occurs in the city of Makassar, how people in the city of Makassar interpret tolerance towards different cultures to how intercultural communication can affect daily life. Researchers hope that the informants in this study can explain their point of view on the intercultural communication they experience in the city of Makassar. In this study, researchers also analyzed the data in order to help researchers in understanding intercultural communication that occurs in the city of Makassar.

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1. Inter cultural communication in makassar city

In a multi-ethnic life, the intercultural communication that occurs in the city of Makassar is one of the most interesting phenomena to discuss. The city of Makassar is one of the cities with a population that has quite a lot of cultural diversity so that it is very possible for intercultural interactions to occur. Intercultural communication is very important in order to understand differences and build peaceful intercultural relationships when interacting [11-13].

Language is very important in intercultural communication, including in Makassar City. Language is a very important tool so that people can interact with each other and understand each other even with different intercultural groups. However, often a language that is quite different is often one of the obstacles in communicating between cultures so that for some things people in Makassar city use certain signs as a tool in overcoming difficulties in language. Not only using special gestures in language, often in intercultural communication gestures, and facial expressions are often also used. This was explained by one of the informants, A (28 years old) :

There are so many languages in Makassar City, probably almost all languages from all over Indonesia. So in certain conditions because the language usually has different meanings, we often use hand signals, body movements or facial expressions.

Efforts to use specific signs show a desire to understand and communicate with each other, although there are still challenges in overcoming language differences. While the use of language and specific signs has helped intercultural communication, there are still some issues to overcome. Misinterpretation or misunderstanding in communication

can occur due to differences in traditions and culture between ethnic groups. [12] Cultural stereotypes can also affect the way a person sees and interprets a message, which in turn causes a person to fail to understand the message correctly .

The study of intercultural communication in Makassar city provides an important picture of how people of different ethnicities communicate and interact with each other in everyday life. This research can help improve ethnic understanding, tolerance and cooperation in Makassar city. Intercultural communication is essential for understanding and appreciating cultural diversity; it helps build a harmonious and inclusive society.

Some interesting findings have been generated from the intercultural communication process that occurs in the urban environment of Makassar in the context of a multiethnic society. This study shows that intercultural communication in Makassar City occurs and runs well. It is evident that various ethnic groups can communicate well by using certain signs and languages.

Language is an important component in intercultural communication. In multiethnic cities like Makassar, people use various ethnic languages. However, intercultural communication becomes easier as people use a common language or a more widely recognized language, such as Indonesian [13–15]. Bahasa helps different ethnic groups come together, and this reflects the level of multiculturalism in Makassar City.

Certain signs help people from different cultures communicate, in addition to language. These signs help convey messages and information without using words. This enables cross-language communication, helping to overcome language differences that hinder verbal communication.

Although intercultural communication goes well, this research also found some problems. One of them is the differences in traditions and cultures between ethnic groups, which sometimes make communication and understanding between ethnic groups difficult. In addition, cultural stereotypes can affect the way one sees and understands messages, which in turn causes one to fail to understand messages correctly. This was also explained by B (33 years old):

Although in Makassar city, tolerance is very high, but the misunderstanding often still exists among us who are of different ethnicities, but we hope that it does not become a big problem for us who are of different ethnicities.

The results show that the use of language and specific signs greatly influences intercultural communication in urban Makassar. The use of Indonesian and specific signs helps to overcome language differences and allows different ethnic groups to communicate well [16,17]. This research makes an important contribution to understanding intercultural interaction in a multiethnic context in Makassar's urban environment.

However, the challenges of overcoming differences in traditions and cultures as well as cultural stereotypes remain elements that need attention.

In addition, the results show that the majority of Makassar City residents are positive towards the ethnic and cultural diversity that exists in Makassar City; they appreciate and accept cultural diversity as part of their city's identity, and this shows a high level of tolerance among people who come from different ethnicities. This is also explained by D (45 years old):

I come from Java, everyone in Makassar is very kind and willing to accept us Javanese very openly. So far we have supported and respected each other, and we all realize that wherever we live there will always be differences so we should consider that differences are common and beautiful.

This research shows that in various initiatives and activities involving multiethnic communities, such as cultural events, festivals, or social activities, there is good cooperation and collaboration between various ethnic groups. Such activities and initiatives strengthen social ties and allow multicultural communities to get to know and interact with each other better.

Coping with the different traditions and cultures between ethnicities in Makassar City, as with many other multicultural societies, is a challenge. In intercultural communication and interaction, these cultural differences can cause tension and conflict [18,19]. Therefore, efforts are needed to increase understanding and comprehension between ethnic groups, as well as to encourage discussion and cooperation to build harmonious relationships[20,21].

Cultural stereotypes are also important in intercultural communication. Cultural stereotypes are generalized images of an ethnic group, which are often simplistic and clichéd [22,23]. Stereotypes may influence the way a person understands intercultural communication but can also lead to prejudice against certain ethnic groups [14,24,25]. Therefore, in overcoming the occurrence of cultural stereotypes it is very important to understand each other between different cultures.

The research conducted by the researcher is very likely to help us in understanding the changes in intercultural communication that occur in Makassar city. This research is able to help us in developing strategies that can be used to create a more harmonious intercultural life. In addition, this research is also able to have a very positive impact, especially in terms of economic and social development in the city of Makassar.

In order for positive intercultural interactions to occur, there needs to be activities that encourage this interaction so that the people of Makassar city can get to know each other, interact with each other so that they can get to know each other's culture. The

activities that can be done. The first thing is to hold a cultural festival, or cross-cultural meetings held in a place that is friendly in language.

Second, with education about multiculturalism, it is hoped that students This can be done if the school curriculum has lessons on multiculturalism so that it can make the younger generation more aware of the importance of cooperation and tolerance between cultures.

Third, the media is quite important in shaping people's perspectives on intercultural communication. Good media is media that can bring positive things, especially those related to intercultural interaction so that it can help people understand cultural diversity.

Fourth, intercultural communication must also be a concern of the government in making policies. Governments can adopt an inclusive and diversity-based approach in social, educational and economic policies, thereby creating an environment that supports ethnic unity.

Involving the multiethnic community as partners in program planning and implementation is important in continuing this research. Active and inclusive community participation will increase the effectiveness of efforts to increase intercultural communication and cooperation [14,22,26]

With this innovative action, it is hoped that intercultural communication in Makassar City will get stronger and cooperation and inter-ethnic harmony will continue to be improved. This research will provide valuable information to the government, society and other institutions in an effort to create an environment that is inclusive, harmonious and lives side by side with cultural and ethnic diversity in Makassar City.

### **3.2. Makassar City residents' response to ethnic diversity and how to overcome it**

The response of people in Makassar to ethnic diversity is positive and open. Everyone in Makassar is friendly and open to different ethnic groups. Cultural diversity is an important part of the city's identity.

The people of Makassar use tolerance and mutual understanding to overcome them and cross-cultural encounters. In situations like this, spaces that are language-friendly and inclusive should encourage students to recognize and appreciate the culture of other ethnic groups. By carrying out the differences in traditions and culture between ethnic groups. They try to understand each other and respect the culture of people of different ethnicities. The people of Makassar City create a harmonious environment that allows inter-ethnic cooperation and collaboration through intercultural

communication based on mutual respect. Therefore, Makassar residents play an active role in maintaining the balance and diversity of the city's culture.

To maintain cultural balance and diversity, Makassar City residents apply an inclusive lifestyle in their daily lives. They strive to understand and respect different cultures and traditions. In Makassar City, there are many government programs and community initiatives that support multicultural life that encourage intercultural interaction. This was explained by C (37 years):

We who live in the city of Makassar come from various cultures so we will certainly try to respect each other because I myself believe that the diversity that is owned both in the city of Makassar and in Indonesia is a wealth that is second to none. F (49 years old) also explained the same thing:

I really feel very proud of the cultural diversity that exists in Makassar. Cultural diversity makes Makassar a very beautiful and colorful city. Despite its diversity, the people of Makassar support each other and work together. This also makes us learn that different cultures make us learn what tolerance is.

Education that teaches tolerance and multiculturalism is also supportive. Education that teaches tolerance and multiculturalism is also very helpful. Schools and educational institutions are essential for raising awareness of the importance of appreciating cultural and ethnic diversity. To overcome language barriers in daily communication, education helps strengthen local and national languages. The people of Makassar City continue to strive to create an environment of harmony and mutual respect in cultural and ethnic diversity through positive responses, inclusive approaches and educational efforts. It is an example to other cities of how important the values of cooperation and tolerance are in building a harmonious multicultural society.

## 4. Conclusion

People of different ethnicities living in Makassar demonstrate positive and inclusive cultural interactions, and the community graciously accepts cultural and ethnic diversity. Makassar people are open and tolerant of different ethnic groups. The people of Makassar are inclusive in their daily lives and engage in cross-cultural activities. Education to raise awareness and values tolerance of cultural differences is very important. This all contributes to the establishment of a harmonious and respectful environment among the cultural and ethnic diversity of Makassar City.



## References

- [1] Juditha C. Stereotip dan prasangka dalam konflik etnis tionghoa dan bugis makassar. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*; 2015. p. 12.
- [2] Rahim AR, Arifuddin A, Thaba A. Alih kode dan campur kode penjual dan pembeli di pasar pabbaeng baeng kota makassar. *KREDO: Jurnal Ilmiah Bahasa Dan Sastra*. 2020;4(1):245–261.
- [3] Surya IB, Taibe P. Transformasi spasial dan perubahan sosial komunitas lokal: Perspektif dinamika pembangunan kawasan kota baru. *Chakti Pustaka Indonesia*; 2022.
- [4] Anonim. Kota Makassar. Profil Baru. 2020.
- [5] Bahfiarti T, Arianto A, Fatimah JM, Farid M. Literasi multikultural komunitas etnik kampung rama kecamatan panakukang kota makassar. *Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*. 2020;26(2):55–59.
- [6] Mirhan AM. Proses pembentukan komunitas Muslim Indonesia. *Jurnal Studia Insania*. 2014;2(2):79–88.
- [7] Sulistiyono ST. Mengenal sistem pengetahuan, teknologi, dan ekonomi nelayan Pantai Utara Jawa. *AGASTYA: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Pembelajarannya*. 2014;4(2):1–24.
- [8] Juliani R, Cangara H, Unde AA. Komunikasi antarbudaya etnis aceh dan bugis-makassar melalui asimilasi perkawinan di kota makassar. *KAREBA: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* 2015:70–87.
- [9] Rahim A, Muhajir K. Interaksi sosial etnis lokal dan etnis tionghoa dalam pencegahan konflik di kota makassar. *JED. Jurnal Etika Demokrasi*; 2018. p. 3.
- [10] Arswendi R. Interaksi antarbudaya etnis bugis-makassar dengan etnis jawa (Studi Mahasiswa Bugis-Makassar dengan Mahasiswa Etnis Jawa di Lingkungan Kos di Semarang). *Konvergensi. Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Komunikasi*. 2015;1:124–144.
- [11] Murni. Komunikasi antarbudaya etnis tionghoa dengan masyarakat pribumi dalam penggunaan pesan nonverbal di kota selatpanjang. Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim, 2021.
- [12] Fahmi D. PERSEPSI: Bagaimana sejatinya persepsi membentuk konstruksi berpikir kita. *Anak Hebat Indonesia*; 2020.
- [13] Hamdiah M. Komunikasi lintas budaya antara pengajar bipa dan pemelajar madagaskar. *Jurnal Ilmiah Bina Bahasa*. 2023;16(1):63–73.
- [14] Sihabudin HA. Komunikasi antarbudaya: Satu perspektif multidimensi. Bumi Aksara; 2022.

- [15] Rizak M. Peran pola komunikasi antarbudaya dalam mencegah konflik antar kelompok agama. *Islamic Communication Journal*. 2018;3(1):88–104.
- [16] Martaulina SD. Bahasa Indonesia terapan. Deepublish; 2018.
- [17] Farhurohman O. Implementasi pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di SD/MI. *Primary: Jurnal Keilmuan Dan Kependidikan Dasar*. 2017;9:23–34.
- [18] Nugroho AB, Lestari P, Wiendijarti I. Pola komunikasi antarbudaya Batak dan Jawa di Yogyakarta. *Jurnal Aspikom*. 2012;1(5):403–418.
- [19] Muhtadi AS. Komunikasi lintas agama: Mencari solusi konflik agama. *Conference Proceeding ICONIMAD*, 275, 2019.
- [20] Handoko W. Perniagaan dan Islamisasi di wilayah maluku. *Kalpataru*. 2013;22:17–30.
- [21] Andriani Lubis L. Komunikasi antarbudaya etnis tionghoa dan pribumi di kota medan. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi Terakreditasi*. 2012;10:13–27.
- [22] Liliweri A. Prasangka, konflik, dan komunikasi antarbudaya. Prenada Media; 2018.
- [23] Rafida. Representasi stereotyping dalam film hichki. Institut Agama Islam Negeri Pare Pare. 2022.
- [24] Triningtyas DA. *Konseling Lintas Budaya*. CV. AE MEDIA GRAFIKA; 2019.
- [25] Harahap AS, Nofianti R, Agustia NR. Kerukunan umat beragama: Keragaman dan keharmonisan di kwala begumit kabupaten langkat. PT. Green Pustaka Indonesia; 2023.
- [26] Bakri M, Mistar J, Ghony D, Purnamasari NI. Pesantren dan multikulturalisme di madura: Adaptasi nilai multikultural dalam menciptakan kerukunan masyarakat multi etnis dan agama. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*. 2020;8:173–194.