Arab Descendant Identity in Media: A Discourse Analysis of Suara al-Irsyad

Madihah,[1*] Ahmad Sarbini,[2] Asep Muhyiddin,[3] M. Yusuf Wibisono[4]

[1] Computer University of Indonesia (UNIKOM) Bandung, Indonesia
[2,3,4] Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia

* Corresponding Author, Email: madihahbajri@gmail.com

Abstract: This study explores the representation of Arab descendants' identity in Indonesia through the community-based media, Suara Al-Irsyad (MSA). Media play a vital role in preserving identity within diasporic groups amidst globalization and social change. Using qualitative methods, including observation, interviews, and document analysis, this research examines MSA's efforts to maintain cultural identity and adapt to digital challenges. Findings reveal MSA serves as both an information platform and a medium for cultural preservation, balancing traditional values with modern strategies like social media engagement to attract younger audiences. Despite challenges from mainstream media, MSA remains relevant by highlighting Arab descendants' contributions to national development. This study contributes to media and identity discourse by emphasizing the significance of community media in representing minority groups and navigating globalization.

Keywords: *Arab descendants; identity; community media; cultural representation; media adaptation*

1. Introduction

Media has a strategic role in forming, maintaining and representing the identity of a community. In the context of the Arab community in Indonesia, the media has a function that is more than just a communication tool. It is the main means of maintaining cultural heritage, spreading community values, and strengthening social solidarity. One of the media that has a significant role in the Arab community in Indonesia is Media Suara Al-Irsyad (MSA). Since its founding, MSA has functioned as an information and educational media that not only provides news but also becomes a forum for communities of Arab descent to maintain their culture, values and identity amidst social and technological changes (Abdullah et al., 2020).

The Arab community in Indonesia has a long history that has shaped their social, cultural and economic interactions with local communities. Their presence in the archipelago can be traced back to the 13th century, especially through trade routes and Islamic preaching (Azra, 2004). Over time, this community develops, adapts, and experiences various challenges, including in terms of cultural and social identity. Even though they have been assimilated into local culture, communities of Arab descent still try to maintain their distinctive characteristics, both in terms of language, traditions and social systems. In this context, the media becomes a very important means for them to keep this identity alive and relevant amidst changing times (Nasution, 2018).

However, in the current digital era, community media such as MSA face big challenges in maintaining their existence. Changes in information consumption patterns, which are increasingly leading to digitalization, the dominance of social media, and competition with mainstream media, require MSA to adapt with the right strategy. Without an effective strategy, the sustainability of MSA as a medium that represents the identity of the Arab community could be threatened (Sunaryo & Albar, 2023). Apart from that, the shift in interest of the

younger generation of Arab descent towards community media is also a factor that must be taken into account. The younger generation is more interested in digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube compared to print media or traditional news portals (R. K. Siregar, 2022). Therefore, adaptation in media strategy is crucial to ensure that MSA remains relevant and can reach its audience.

On the other hand, the media is not only an internal communication tool but also plays a role in building the community's image in the eyes of the public. The representation of the identity of the Arab community in MSA is an important aspect to study, especially in seeing how this media shapes narratives about this community amidst social and political dynamics in Indonesia (Amaruli et al., 2022). Over the years, communities of Arab descent have often experienced certain stereotypes or labels that influence how they are viewed by society at large. In some cases, they are even considered an exclusive group that does not mix well with local society. In this context, media such as MSA can play an important role in providing a more accurate and positive picture of this community, as well as being a means of dispelling various stereotypes that are developing (Andayani et al., 2023).

Apart from that, another challenge faced by MSA is in terms of funding and operational sustainability. As community media, MSA does not have as large a source of income as mainstream media. Many community media outlets depend on donations, advertising from local businesses, or even internal community support to stay running (Krüger, 2023). This requires the right business strategy so that this media not only survives but can also develop amidst increasingly fierce competition in the media industry.

In the context of globalization, external cultural influences also pose a challenge for communities of Arab descent in maintaining their identity. Younger generations who are more open to global culture often experience a shift in values that can influence how they view their own ethnic identity (Jones et al., 2021). Therefore, MSA must not only adapt to technology but must also be able to create content that is attractive to the younger generation so that they remain connected to their cultural roots and community identity.

In media and identity studies, several theories can be used to understand how community media functions in maintaining and representing the identity of a group. One relevant approach is the representation theory of Stuart Hall (1997), which explains that media plays a role in forming and spreading social meaning through symbols and narratives (Hall, 1997). Through MSA, Arab communities can represent themselves more authentically, without having to rely on narratives from mainstream media that may not understand the complexity of their culture.

By considering the various challenges and dynamics faced by MSA, it is important to understand the strategies implemented by this media in maintaining its existence to date (Perkasa & Rahyuda, 2024). Studies on community media strategies, especially in the context of Arab communities, are still relatively limited. Therefore, this research seeks to fill this gap by digging deeper into how MSA designs and implements its strategies to remain relevant amidst ongoing social, technological and economic changes. Based on this background, this research focuses on how the strategy of Media Suara Al-Irsyad (MSA) maintains its existence to date in representing the identity of the community of Arab descent.

2. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis methods to examine the representation of religious ideas in Al-Irsyad Voice Media (MSA –Media Suara Al-Irsyad). This approach allows for in-depth exploration of social and cultural phenomena that emerge in the presentation of religious ideas as well as media strategies in maintaining the identity of the Arab community in Indonesia (Moleong, 2018).

Data collection techniques include direct observation to understand the dynamics of media production, in-depth interviews to explore MSA managers' perspectives on media strategy, as

well as documentation studies to identify communication patterns and religious themes raised in print and digital publications. Data analysis was carried out using a model(Miles & Huberman, 2013) that includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions to group information into relevant thematic categories and ensure the validity of findings through triangulation between observation, interviews, and documentation (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). With this approach, the research is expected to provide comprehensive insight into MSA's strategy in dealing with the dynamics of modern Islamic media and its role in maintaining the identity of the Arab community in Indonesia.

3.   Results and Discussion

3.1. Al-Irsyad Islamic Organization and Al-Irsyad Voice Media in Indonesia

The historical journey of the Al-Irsyad movement led by the Hadrami from its founding on September 6, 1914, to the Indonesian reform era in the 2000s has certainly gone through a long period. The periods that the Al-Irsyad movement has gone through are the colonial era, the beginning of independence to Guided Democracy, the New Order, and the current journey in the Reformation era. We have experienced ups and downs as a Hadrami organization and an Islamic organization. The Islamic community organization Al-Irsyad cannot be separated from the Hadramis as part of the diaspora community. Because they are in a foreign country as immigrants, their Hadramian identity must clash with the local culture and the socio-political conditions in which they live (Mobini-Kesheh, 1999).

The emergence of Al-Irsyad can initially be seen as a confirmation of their Hadramian identity as a medium for da'wah to answer the problems that emerged in their time. Meanwhile, in the following era, their identity with Al-Irsyad sometimes had to follow existing socio-cultural and political patterns and conditions, so that it appeared to be changing or still in a continuous search for identity. In historical records, it can be emphasized that the initial establishment of Al-Irsyad was part of the revival of the Hadrami people in Indonesia who developed a discourse of love for their homeland, namely Hadramaut (Mobini-Kesheh, 1999). When the discourse of Indonesian nationalism rolled around, some Hadrami people had to decide the opposite, namely to love the Indonesian homeland where they lived rather than Hadramaut. In its subsequent journey, Al-Irsyad was also influenced by the conditions in Indonesia, so this organization and its Hadrami members appeared to be giving rise to Islamic, Hadramian and Indonesian identities (Badjerei, 1996).

This kind of search for identity continued until the Indonesian reform period. In fact, in this reform era, there is a group of Al-Irsyad members who are trying to get out of the characterization or identity that they have had because they feel dissatisfied, as well as the influence of the Islamic discourse that is spreading in this modern era. The emergence of this group triggered internal conflict within Al-Irsyad, so that along the way, "rival" organizations emerged that both used the name Al-Irsyad, namely Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyah (initial name) and Perhimpunan Al-Irsyad (new organization). Seeing this phenomenon, it appears that some Hadramis are experiencing an identity crisis. Meanwhile, it is not enough on this occasion to reveal all the results of research into the history of the Al-Irsyad movement which spans a long period of time, namely post-independence until the reform era.

a.   *The emergence of the Al-Irsyad Movement*

The emergence of the Al-Irsyad Movement cannot be separated from the figure of Ahmad Surkati. He is the central figure of the Al-Irsyad movement. Ahmad Surkati was the initiator of an Islamic organization which was later called Al-Irsyad. Ahmad Surkati is seen as the Founding Father of Al-Irsyad, the Great Leader of Al-Irsyad. he is a teacher, educator, lecturer, preacher and leader of the people. Ahmad Surkati's arrival to Indonesia in the history of the development of Islam in Indonesia was recorded as an important event, namely as one of the pioneers of the Islamic Reformist Movement (Sarumaha, 2024). Not only was he the initiator of

the Al-Irsyad movement, moreover the results of his thoughts, views and behavior during Al-Irsyad's subsequent journey remain the basic reference for this movement. The belief in the responsibility for Islamic renewal which includes alleviating humanity from poverty and backwardness, and breaking the chain of ignorance is what apparently encouraged Ahmad Surkati to establish the Al-Irsyad movement.

Ahmad Surkati's arrival in Indonesia (Batavia or Jakarta now), started with the educational interests of Madrasah Jamiat Khair which needed teachers directly from abroad. In 1911, four teachers from Arab countries were invited to teach at Jamiat Khair in the hope of improving the quality of the madrasah with the Sunni teachings they mastered. The four teachers were Sheikh Ahmad Surkati from Sudan, Sheikh Muhammad Tayyib from Morocco, Sheikh Muhammad bin Abd' al-Hamid from Mecca, and al-Hasyimi from Tunisia (Affandi, 1999).

So, in Jakarta Ahmad Surkati worked for Jamiat Khair. However, on his next journey he was involved in a dispute between sayyid and non-sayyid groups. His involvement in the conflict began when Ahmad Surkati issued a fatwa in Solo which allowed, like Rashid Ridha, marriage between non-sayyid people and women of sayyid descent. He also emphasized that Islam fights for Muslim equality and does not recognize privileges based on descent, wealth, or status (Paturahman & Baisa, 2024). This kind of fatwa naturally causes unrest among sayyids and also conflict between sayyid and non-sayyid groups.

Because of this fundamental difference in understanding, Ahmad Surkati left Jamiat Khair, then founded the Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyah School which was located in Jati Petamburan, Jakarta with the help of Arab community leaders at that time. The school was opened on Sunday 15 Shawwal 1332 to coincide with September 6 1914. Its supporters, especially Sheikh Umar Manggusy, the Arab Captain at that time, were advised to establish an association to support the existing Al-Irsyad Madrasah. Subsequently, Jam'iyyah Al-Ishlaah wa Al-Irsyad Al-'Arabiyyah was founded, which in a few years was replaced by Jam'iyyah Al-Ishlaah wa Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah, shortened to Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah. This association only received legal recognition issued by the Dutch East Indies Government on 11 August 1915 with Beslit No. 47 and broadcast in Javasche Courant No. 67 dated 20 August 1915. However, the date of the founding of Madrasah Al-Irsyad, namely 6 September 1914, was recorded as the official date of the founding of the Al-Irsyad Association (Kadir, 2019).

The Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Association (Jam'iyat al-Islah wal Irsyad al-Islamiyyah) was founded on 6 September 1914 (15 Shawwal 1332 AH). This date refers to the founding of the first Madrasah Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah, in Jakarta. The legal recognition itself was only issued by the Dutch Colonial government on August 11, 1915 (Muttaqin, 2022).

The central figure in the founding of Al-Irsyad was Al-'Alamah Sheikh Ahmad Surkati Al-Anshori, a great Mecca cleric who came from Sudan (Tarigan et al., 2023). Initially, Sheikh Surkati came to Indonesia at the request of the Jami'at Khair association, the majority of whose management members consisted of Indonesians of Arab sayyid descent, and was founded in 1905 (Anshari & Fahruddin, 2020). His full name is Sheikh Ahmad Bin Muhammad Assoorkaty Al-Anshary.

Al-Irsyad is a national Islamic organization. The conditions for membership, as stated in Al-Irsyad's Articles of Association, are: "A citizen of the Republic of Indonesia who is an adult Muslim." So the assumption that Al-Irsyad is an organization of people of Arab descent is incorrect (Anshari & Fahruddin, 2020). The Al-Irsyad Association has special characteristics, namely an Association that adheres to Islamic beliefs in providing services to the community, in the fields of education, teaching, as well as social and national level da'wah. (AD, ps. 1 verse 2).

This assembly is an independent assembly that has absolutely no connection with any political organization, and does not deal with practical political problems (AD, ps. 1 verse 3). Sheikh Ahmad Surkati arrived in Indonesia with two of his friends: Sheikh Muhammad Tayyib

al-Maghribi and Sheikh Muhammad bin Abdulhamid al-Sudani (Sudarningsih et al., 2024). In his new country, Sheikh Ahmad spread new ideas within the Indonesian Muslim community. Sheikh Ahmad Surkati was appointed as Inspector of schools opened by Jami'at Khair in Jakarta and Bogor (Rosidin, 2018).

Thanks to the leadership and guidance of Sheikh Ahmad Surkati, within one year, the schools developed rapidly. However, Sheikh Ahmad Surkati only lasted three years in Jami'at Khair because of quite principled differences in understanding with the Jami'at Khair rulers, who were generally of Arab sayyid (alawiyin) descent (Pijper, 1985).

Even though Jami'at Khair is classified as an organization that has modern methods and facilities, its religious views, especially regarding equality, have not been well absorbed. This was seen after the Jami'at Khair leaders strongly opposed Sheikh Ahmad's fatwa regarding kafaah (equality). Because he was no longer liked, Sheikh Ahmad decided to resign from Jami'at Khair on 6 September 1914 (15 Shawwal 1332 AH). On that same day, he and several of his friends founded Madrasah Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah and the organization that oversees it, namely Jam'iyat al-Islah wal-Irsyad al-Arabiyah, which later changed its name to Jam'iyat al-Islah wal-Irsyad al-Islamiyyah (Sholikah & Mumtahanah, 2021).

After three years of existence, the Al-Irsyad Association began opening schools and organizational branches in many cities on the island of Java. Each branch is marked by the establishment of a school (madrasah). The first branch was in Tegal (Central Java) in 1917, where the madrasa was led by the first generation of Sheikh Ahmad Surkati's students, namely Abdullah bin Salim al-Attas. This was followed by branches in Pekalongan, Cirebon, Bumiayu, Surabaya and other cities (Thalib, 2018).

At the beginning of its birth, Al-Irsyad was known as an Islamic reform group in the archipelago, together with Muhammadiyah and Islamic Union (Persis). The three main figures of this organization—Ahmad Surkati, Ahmad Dahlan, and Ahmad Hassan (A. Hassan)—are often referred to as the "Indonesian Islamic Reform Trio." The three of them are also close friends. In fact, according to A. Hassan, he and Ahmad Dahlan were actually students of Sheikh Ahmad Surkati, even though they were not on the official class schedule (Al-Qudsy, 2009).

However, according to Dutch historian G.F. Pijper, a movement that is truly a renewal in thought and has similarities with reformism in Egypt is the Al-Irsyad Reform Movement. Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah, according to Pijper, was more of a reaction to the politics of the Dutch East Indies government which attempted to alienate the indigenous population (Pijper, 1985). Muhammadiyah played more of a role in developing educational and social institutions, while Al-Irsyad was involved from the start in various *diniyah* (religious) issues. Al-Irsyad's offensive against the purification of Islam made organizational development a bit hampered. Apart from that, Al-Irsyad's involvement in internal problems of Arab descendants has led to the perception that Al-Irsyad is a special organization for Arab descendants.

Al-Irsyad also played an important role in the First Islamic Congress in Cirebon in 1922, together with Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah. Since then, Sheikh Ahmad Surkati has been close friends with H. Agus Salim and H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto (Aisyah, 2017). Al-Irsyad was active in the formation of the Islamic Majlis 'A'laa Indonesia (MIAI) during the Japanese occupation, the Indonesian Muslim Congress Body (BKMI), Masyumi, the Contact Agency for Islamic Organizations (BKOI), and Amal Muslimin.

In the atmosphere of the Islamic Congress in Cirebon, a debate was held between Al-Irsyad and Sarekat Islam Merah with the theme: "With what can Indonesia be independent? With Islamism or Communism?" Al-Irsyad was represented by Sheikh Ahmad Surkati, Umar Sulaiman Naji, and Abdullah Badjerei, while SI Merah was represented by Semaun, Hasan, and Sanusi. As a follower of Pan-Islamism, Sheikh Ahmad Surkati persists with Islamism, while Semaun believes that only with communism can Indonesia be independent. Even

though the debate lasted for two hours without any common ground, Sheikh Ahmad Surkati still appreciated Semaun's strong and honest stance towards his beliefs (Otoman & Suriana, 2021).

This event proves that in 1922, Al-Irsyad leaders had spoken about Indonesian independence. In line with the teachings of Muhammad Abduh in Egypt, Al-Irsyad emphasized studying Arabic as the main tool for understanding Islam from its original sources. In Al-Irsyad schools, the development of students' mindsets is emphasized by providing in-depth understanding and critical thinking. The main focus of their education is monotheism, jurisprudence, and history (Pijper, 1985).

Since its inception, Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah has aimed to purify monotheism, worship and Islamic practice as well as being active in the fields of education and da'wah. To realize this goal, Al-Irsyad has established hundreds of formal schools and non-formal educational institutions throughout Indonesia. During its development, Al-Irsyad also entered the health sector by establishing several hospitals, such as Al-Irsyad RSU in Surabaya and Siti Khadijah Hospital in Pekalongan (Lestari, 2019).

b.   *Al-Irsyad Media*

Media Al-Irsyad's voice is a media institution that focuses on disseminating information and Islamic da'wah. Its presence cannot be separated from the public's need for accurate and reliable religious information and education. Historically, media like this have often emerged as a response to challenges faced by Muslims, such as the spread of misinformation or a lack of comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings (Azra, 2004).

This media is generally founded by groups or organizations that have a vision and mission to answer these challenges. Through various platforms, such as articles, digital magazines, podcasts, videos and other online media, Al-Irsyad's voice acts as a means of education and da'wah that reaches various groups. In its operations, this media involves intellectuals, social activists, and people who care about religious and social developments (Noer, 1980).

As part of an organization Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah, Al-Irsyad's voice Becomes a communication medium that functions to disseminate thoughts and information that are in line with the organization's vision. Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah itself is an Islamic organization founded in 1914 by Sheikh Ahmad Surkati in Batavia (now Jakarta). Since its inception, this organization has played a major role in the fields of education, da'wah and social affairs, with a more modern approach for its time (Pijper, 1985).

On progress, *Al-Irsyad's voice* become one of the important instruments for *Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah* in spreading Islamic values and strengthening people's understanding of Islamic teachings. Apart from discussing religious issues, this media also contains various information regarding internal organizational activities, social issues and developments in the Islamic world in general. Thus, existence *Al-Irsyad's voice* not only is it a source of information for the community, but also a tool of struggle in advancing Islamic education and da'wah in Indonesia (Abdullah, 1987).

3.2.   Suara Al-Irsyad Media Strategy in Maintaining Its Existence in Representing the Identity of the Community of Arab Descent

Suara Al-Irsyad Media (MSA) plays an important role in maintaining the existence of the identity of the Arab community in Indonesia. MSA emphasizes the spread of reformist Islamic values which form the basis *Al-Irsyad* since its inception. By insisting on the purification of monotheism and promoting simple Islamic teachings, MSA strives to reach various circles, including the Hadrami Arab community and the general public. This strategy is in line with the vision *Al-Irsyad* as a reformer organization based on the thinking of Sheikh Ahmad Surkati(Azra, 2004).

MSA supports education based on critical values and objective Islamic history. By

emphasizing teaching Arabic and understanding Islam from its original sources, this media helps strengthen the Arab community's ties to their cultural heritage without isolating them from wider Indonesian society (Salam, 2024).

In addition, MSA is active in promoting inclusive narratives that highlight the contributions of Arab descendants to national development. This plays a role in clearing that misunderstanding *Al-Irsyad* only serves the interests of certain ethnic groups. Through cross-community collaboration, MSA broadens its audience and strengthens the relevance of its role in Indonesia's multicultural society (Noer, 1980).

To remain relevant in the digital era, MSA utilizes social media platforms to reach the younger generation. This strategy reflects the modernization of the organization which supports the sustainability of its mission as a forum for da'wah and education (Pijper, 1985). Apart from that, MSA also takes advantage of the momentum of historical commemoration *Al-Irsyad* to reaffirm its role and contribution in the national context. By balancing traditional values and modern needs, MSA continues to be a pillar of the representation of Arab identity in Indonesia.

Birth *Al-Irsyad Voice Media* cannot be separated from the existence of the Arab community that has long lived in Indonesia. Historians note that the homeland of the Indonesian Arab community is Hadhramaut, Yemen. Hence, the name *Hadhram* often attributed to the Indonesian Arab community, including those who have migrated to various other regions in Asia (Prayogi & Al-Asyari, 2021).

Although there are differences of opinion regarding the exact time of arrival of the Arab community in the archipelago, their existence has been recorded since before the era of Dutch colonialism. Their migration to Indonesia became even greater after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, which shortened the shipping route from the Middle East to Southeast Asia (Houghton, 1869). In addition, the Arab community played an important role in the spread of Islam in the archipelago. In contrast to other foreign communities, Arabs have a special place in society because their Islamic status is considered purer (Al Qurtuby, 2017).

Islam is believed to have universal teachings and values. Its application penetrates geographical and political boundaries, and crosses societal barriers with diverse cultures and customs. This belief, at least, is based on the Koran's statement that Islam is the perfect religion. In addition, the bearer of this Islamic message, the prophet Muhammad, was declared by Allah as a messenger for all mankind or in the language of the Koran, rahmatan li al 'âlamîn (Syarifudin & Kholis, 2021). Islam with universal values is what is then referred to as normative, sacred, unchanging and "single" Islam.

However, that this "single" Islam is articulated and practiced in "diverse" ways by Muslims is a fact that cannot be denied. This universal Islam is apparently accepted by humans in accordance with their experiences, problems, intellectual abilities, local cultural systems, and all existing diversity. Space and time, where humans exist, seem to be factors in the emergence of this diversity. It is not surprising that in Islam there are two major sects: Shia and Sunni. Within Sunni itself, four schools of jurisprudence emerged: Maliki, Syafi'i, Hanafi, and Hanbali. There it is also known as Indonesian Islam, Egyptian Islam, Saudi Arabian Islam, Iranian Islam or African Islam (Maḥfūż, 1997).

This diversity of historical Islamic praxis makes it difficult to create a monolithic representation of Islam in the mass media. Instead of being uniform, historical Islam is often present and/or presented in various conflicting faces. In one place Islam is presented as a moderate and tolerant teaching, but in another place as an extreme and intolerant teaching(Muhaemin et al., 2023). Here, each media has the pretension of being a true revealer of Islam and "Islamic expression".

The diversity of representations of Islam in the media, to a greater or lesser extent, is also an inevitable result of the media's varied motives in choosing reporting "models", from those that are purely ideological to those that are purely business-oriented (Shah, 2022). Moreover,

the number of magazine publications in Indonesia continues to increase, resulting in increasingly high levels of competition between magazine publishing companies (Choliq et al., 2023). Here, the magazine publisher is assumed to have conducted field studies and thought carefully about the reader segment they are targeting (imagined reader).

Various terms that often appear in magazines, such as Islamic law, the Qur'an, Sunnah, salafus shalih, jihad, and martyr bombing, in addition to Arabic terminology for several of its columns (Ibroh, Muhasabah, Tadabbur, Tarqiyah, and Khazanah), there is a strong indication that the Islamic style is represented by Suara al-Irsyad media.

Modern society depends on the media to obtain information quickly and efficiently. Media allows people who do not have direct access to knowledge, on which their daily lives are based, to gain knowledge (Sobande, 2025). Through media, people navigate the complexities of modern life and enjoy a variety of socio-cultural experiences. It is not wrong if media is called an extension of human sensory organs (Vigliano Relva & Jung, 2021).

However, apart from functioning as a source of information, media also has a function as a means of entertainment and education. With this last function, the media can give birth to an intelligent, open-minded and advanced society. The information displayed by the media is also expected to be a driving force for the development of society's culture and prevent various elements that inhibit and destroy society's civilization (Ayuni et al., 2022).

Because of these media functions, the reality represented by the media cannot but have gone through construction. Before being presented to the public, reality has undergone a selection and highlighting process. The media will determine which facts to choose, highlight and remove certain parts of these facts. This fact can be seen from the many news headlines about the same fact or reality. The construction of reality in the media cannot first be separated from the perceptions and ideology of the journalist or media concerned (Wilner et al., 2022). Reality, for Littejohn, does not appear in its original form (as it is), but has been selected through the way the person views everything that exists (Carter & Littlejohn, 2021).

For Muslims in Indonesia, mass media can be said to be no stranger. What is called "Islamic mass media" or "media with Islamic nuances" has emerged for a long time. C. Smith estimates that Muslim media first appeared in 1953. He mentioned Duta Masjarakat, a media which was an organ of Nahdatul Ulama (Edward, 1970). There are also those who argue that Islamic mass media first appeared in the archipelago in 1934 with the publication of Pandji Islam 1934 led by Zainal Abidin Ahmad (Harahap, 2021). In fact, Hanazaki mentioned several mass media that were born in 1913 under the influence of Serekat Islam (SI), namely Sinar Djawa (Semarang), Panjaran Warta (Betawi), and Saroetomo (Surakarta) (Bakri et al., 2015).

Mass media (print) in many places is believed to be an effective tool for disseminating information. In Egypt, for example, in the first half of the 20th century, a period of searching for the identity of a nation that was fighting for independence, print media became the choice of socio-political activists, both left/socialist and right/fundamentalist (Karawya, 2024). Each of them is aware that in order for their views to spread widely and be accepted by society, the choice of this media instrument is necessary.

Mass media, as seen in the term, is a tool or means of connecting elements of society (Ismatullaeva et al., 2022). Implicitly, in the media, there are parties called "sender," "receiver," and "message." The sender is usually a person or group of people who act or position themselves as agents, while the recipient is usually the general public, who is the target of the sender's message. The sender's goal is to influence, stimulate and invite the community to work together on the ideal path. Therefore, in any place mass media has the function of information, education and criticism, in addition to criticism (Luthfiah et al., 2023). Seeing the power and function of the media like this, it is understandable that various Islamic groups or organizations in Indonesia use the media as a support for their existence.

As Islamic media, of course, these media pay great attention to Islam and the interests of Muslims. It is issues about Islam and the aspirations and interests of Muslims that are

represented by these media (Issaka, 2021). This is natural because, from a sociological point of view, Islamic media would not exist if there were no Muslim community groups who wanted it; in other words, because there was a Muslim community group who wanted Islamic media to appear, then Islamic media emerged. In short, Islamic media is of course a representation of the interests the aspirations of the Muslim community (Ida et al., 2023).

However, in its development, the media has become its own institution, which often departs from the interests and aspirations of the people who gave birth to it. The media has been co-opted, for example, by certain business and political interests so that the position and role of the media are no longer as independent as in its early days, namely accommodating and articulating the interests and aspirations of the supporting community (Maneenop et al., 2024).

Therefore, in their view, the world of Islamic media in Indonesia needs to be given an injection of "fresh blood." The injection in question is to give birth to media that has "content" that has so far been almost untouched by existing Islamic media, namely political content. Islamic media, for them, must have the courage to voice Islamic issues and the aspirations of Muslims, who at that time were helpless in the face of a regime that was unfriendly to them. Islamic media must be able to become the spokesperson for the Muslim community which has been powerless for a long time in the history of independent Indonesia despite being the majority religious community; dare to take any risks to be at the forefront in defending and advancing Muslims; and taking a balancing position from other media that are less pro-Muslim (Aini, 2023).

One form of da'wah strategy that Tarbiyah movement activists are trying to develop in spreading Islamic ideas is by building an Islamic mass media. They believe that mass media has a central and strategic role in the development of da'wah. In addition, they also seem to have learned from the fact that Western attitudes toward Islam are more influenced by their perceptions of Muslims than by Muslims themselves (Apriani et al., 2021). Western perceptions like this, in many cases, arise as a result of Islam in Western media being presented in a negative image, and in turn, giving birth to Western attitudes that are anti-Islam known as "islamophobia (Bajuwaiber, 2023)." In other words, the mass media, for them, can play a dual role: spreading Islam as they idealize and counter-balancing against Western media or those with a Western model that tends to corner Muslims.

People of Arab descent in Indonesia are divided into several groups, among them the Sayyid group and the non-Sayyid group. The Sayyids consider themselves to be the continuation of the Prophet's lineage through the Prophet's grandsons, namely Hasan and Husen. The non-Sayyid group are those who are looked down upon by the Sayyid group because they are considered not to have a lineage with the Prophet SAW (Haikal, 1985).

In 1913, together with several non-Sayyid Arab figures, Sheikh Ahmad Surkati founded the Jam'iyat al-Islah wa'l-Irshad organization, which means the Association for Reformers or reformers and those who are led and later became known as Al-Irsyad (Afriani, 2016). Al-Irsyad is an organization that focuses its attention on the field of education, especially for people of Arab descent. Al-Irsyad also deals with problems that arise in the Arab community in Indonesia, although there are Muslim Indonesians who are not Arabs who are members, and become students of Sheikh Ahmad Surkati and become great people like HM (Aisyah, 2017). Rasjidi (once an Indonesian minister), Ustadz Umar Salim Hubeis, head of Madrasah Al-Irsyad Surabaya and member of the DPR, Farid Ma'ruf, a Muhammadiyyah figure, KHM. Yunus Anis, once chairman of Muhammadiyyah, Hasbie As-Shidiqi, a scholar of tafsir and fiqh, a figure at IAIN Jogja and also A. Rasyid Baswedan, even the first president of the Republic of Indonesia, Sukarno, made Ahmad Surkati his consultant.

Many Al-Irsyad branches have sprung up in various regions in Indonesia. Al-Irsyad opened its branch in Pekalongan on November 20, 1917, and officially opened its first madrasah in 1918. The first chairman of the Pekalongan branch of Al-Irsyad was Said B. Salmin Sahaq

with the head of the madrasah Umar bin Sulayman Naji. Al-Irsyad has always been identified with Arab Indonesia, Al-Irsyad has always developed in areas inhabited by people of Arab descent (Miftahudin, 2017). Likewise, the Al-Irsyad Pekalongan branch developed because it was in an Arab residential area.

The development of schools that produce an educated generation is a form of national awareness in Indonesian society. Likewise, with the Al-Irsyad School, Al-Irsyad's national consciousness is often referred to as the national consciousness of Arab society. This form of national awareness of the Arab community in Indonesia was strengthened by the birth of the Pledge of Indonesian Youth of Arab Descent in 1934 (Afriani, 2016). The Youth Pledge of Arab Descent which was born after the Indonesian Youth Pledge in 1928 was the idea of A.R Baswedan, an alumnus of the Al-Irsyad educational institution (Chorizannah, 2016).

The establishment of Al-Irsyad as an organization and educational institution born of Arab descent is expected to have a role in instilling Indonesian nationalism in Arab descendants (Dalimunthe et al., 2023). However, there is an opinion that Al-Irsyad's education did not instill Indonesian homeland nationalism at all, but rather Hadramaut nationalism.

The further development of Al-Irsyad in 1929 showed that Al-Irsyad became more of an Indonesian organization. As a national organization, the Al-Irsyad Educational Institution, especially the Pekalongan branch, has a role in educating the nation's generation. The time period 1918-1942 was chosen because that period was the year when the Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Pekalongan Educational Institution was active. 1918 was the year the Al-Irsyad Pekalongan madrasa was founded, while in 1942 the Al-Irsyad Pekalongan education system underwent changes since Japanese colonialism. Apart from that, in the period 1918-1942 nationalism of Arab Indonesian descent began to receive attention, especially when in 1934, an oath of Indonesian homeland was born from young people of Arab descent in Indonesia (Afriani, 2016).

The Al-Irsyad Educational Institution seeks to instill nationalism among Arab descendants in Indonesia, through education aimed at fostering a nationalist young generation. Nationalism that emerged from the Arab community in Indonesia can be said to be the final form of searching for identity. Being one of the communities that the Dutch colonialists called "foreigners", the Arab community in Indonesia experienced a kind of identity search problem. In general, they still cannot let go of their sense of pride in the country of their ancestors, namely the Arab country. The existence of the Indonesian Youth Pledge of Arab Descent which later gave birth to the Indonesian Arab Association (PAI) was the final momentum of the search for identity, through this Pledge of Indonesian Arab Youth as a form of Indonesian nationalism from groups of Arab descent in Indonesia (Baswedan, 1974).

Most of the Arab people living in Indonesia are of Arab descent from Hadramaut, they are children of marriages between full-blooded Arabs and native women (Noor, 1980). Arab society in Indonesia is divided into several groups called the *du'afa*, *Mashayikh* and Alawi groups (Affandi, 1999). The Alawi group itself is known as Sharif and Sayyid, these titles are based on the lineage of the Prophet Muhammad's grandchildren, Hasan and Husen. The title Sharif is given to the Arab group descended from Hasan, and Sayyid to the Arab group descended from Husen.

People of Arab descent in Indonesia form a kind of community that lives in an area. This area is known as the Arab village. The Arab Village is actually a product of the *wijkenstelsel*, or settlement policy, by the Dutch Colonial Government. Around 1918 in the Arab village, Madrasah Al-Irsyad was founded. This Madrasah was founded by people of Arab descent there. Madrasah Al-Irsyad Pekalongan is a branch of Madrasah Al-Irsyad which was founded in Jakarta in 1915. Madrasah Al-Irsyad is the first modern Islamic educational institution in Pekalongan (Afriani, 2016).

The Al-Irsyad, Nurul Islam, Nadhatul Ulama, and Muhammadiyah movements were small parts of the Islamic reform movement that was growing rapidly at that time. However, the

relationship between these organizations is well established, even though they come from different group backgrounds (Jahar, 2016). Their role is very important in advancing Muslim society, especially during the national movement.

Al-Irsyad's background as an organization founded by groups of Arab descent has its own unique history. In the Arab community, it was inseparable from the divisive politics of the Dutch Colonial Government. The Dutch Colonial Government used the conflict between Sayyid and non-Sayyid Arab groups as a tool to divide Arab society in Indonesia (De Jonge, 2019).

The initial development of nationalism in Indonesia was marked by the establishment of a national movement, whose main focus was the world of education. This nationalist movement usually started with the cultural and educational efforts of the Western-educated Javanese nobility (Nico, 2003). However, the birth of the Islamic nationalist movement, driven by foreign eastern groups such as the Al-Irsyad organization, became a very important Islamic stronghold in Indonesia. The nationalism promoted by Al-Irsyad is Islamic nationalism. Islam is a religion adhered to by the majority of Indonesia's population. Islam is anti-politics of Christianization because Christianization is synonymous with imperialism or colonialism. Conditions of colonialism and oppression by the Dutch Colonials have given rise to an understanding among the Indonesian people that Islam is synonymous with nationhood or nationalism (Suyranegara, 2003).

The cultivation of nationalism at Madrasah Al-Irsyad is different from the cultivation of nationalism in schools during the national movement. The cultivation of Al-Irsyad madrasa nationalism can be seen in the education system, which has the following characteristics: (1) the use of Malay as the language of learning activities; (2) there are Indonesian language lessons; (3) The presence of students from Indigenous communities. The Al-Irsyad education curriculum is an Islamic education curriculum. In accordance with the atmosphere of the national movement period, the Al-Irsyad Islamic education curriculum also participated in cultivating Indonesian nationalism. This kind of nationalism is usually called Islamic nationalism (Afriani, 2016).

An education system that combines Islamic religious teachings and general knowledge is able to bring about significant changes in the living conditions of Arab descendants. The curriculum of the Al-Irsyad educational institution, which has the above Indonesian characteristics, has an impact on the increasingly strong sense of Indonesianness among Arab descendants in Indonesia in general. Indonesian nationalism from people of Arab descent emerged when some of the people of Arab descent initiated the Pledge of Indonesian Youth of Arab Descent, and grew by itself, as the direction of Indonesian independence became clearer (Badjerei, 1996).

The nationalism of the Indonesian nation, which began to develop, naturally strengthened the tendency towards an exclusive attitude towards people of Arab descent (Algadri, 1984). The idea that identity is related to one's region of origin is a bitter reality that must be accepted by people of Arab descent. The emergence of nationalism centered on the homeland by Chinese society has encouraged people of Arab descent to emulate how Chinese society views itself. In connection with this, it can be concluded that Chinese descendants belong to China, indigenous people belong to the Indies (Indonesia) and Arab descendants belong to Hadramaut (Mobini-Kesheh et al., 2007).

Arab descendants in Indonesia began to become aware of being Indonesian when the declaration of nationality was announced by various youth organizations in the Youth Pledge of 28 October 1928 (Majid, 2004). This declaration crosses ethnic and religious boundaries, thereby influencing the state orientation of people of Arab descent in Indonesia. The Youth Pledge Declaration created difficulties for people of Arab descent, because of their status as foreigners. Realizing this, a youth figure of Arab descent who had a nationalist spirit initiated the declaration of the Youth Pledge of Arab Descent. On October 4, together with other youth

groups of Arab descent, A.R. Baswedan, an Al-Irsyad alumnus, declared the Pledge of Indonesian Youth of Arab Descent (Saputra, 2019). This momentum was the peak of nationalism from Arab descendants in Indonesia, which, in its development, gave birth to the Indonesian Arab Association or PAI.

The feeling of unity among the people of descent, especially appeared when the Youth Pledge of Arab Descendancy was initiated. On October 4, 1934, an event occurred that shook the community of Arab descent in Indonesia. At that time, the Pledge of Indonesian Youth of Arab descent was initiated, which contained:

a. The homeland of the Arab Peranakan is Indonesia. (Before that they believed that their homeland was the Arab countries and were always oriented there).
b. Therefore they have to leave their life of solitude (isolation).
c. Fulfilling its obligations towards the Indonesian homeland and nation (Baswedan, 1974).

The arrival of the Arab nation is closely related to the development of the spread of Islam which then assimilated through marriage with noble princesses in the archipelago (Lapidus, 2014). Therefore, many kings in Malaya are of Arab origin, such as the Sultanate of Siak Inderapura with the successor of Sultan Syarif Kasim II (1893-1968), who supported the struggle for Indonesian Independence and voluntarily gave up his monarchy in order to choose to be an advisor to President Ir. Soekarno (Hafiz, 2013). Then the 20th century became the most decisive time for Hadhrami Arabs, where symptoms of important changes and new directions of society occurred (De Jonge, 2019).

However, the Hadhrami Arab diaspora then experienced a bright spot which later became one of the spears used by several domestic political figures. Before Indonesia became independent, precisely on 4 October 1934 in Semarang, five years after the 1928 Youth Pledge, naturally the population in Indonesia became completely Indigenous, a number of young people of Arab descent were committed to supporting the idea of an Indonesian homeland and no longer associated it with its origins in Hadramaut, Yemen (de Jonge, 2022). One of the Arab youths, namely A.R. Baswedan initiated the first revolutionary step to merge himself into the ideals of the Indonesian nation with the Arab Peranakans in the Dutch East Indies, which was the climax point in his search for identity to swear to his homeland of Indonesia while this nation was still strong in the grip of the colonialists' nails (De Jonge, 1993).

At the beginning of the Indonesian National Movement, the Jamiatul Kher association was the first modern organization founded by Arabs (Ghosh, 2014). This organization can be said to be a source of inspiration and a window of information from the outside world which influences the thinking patterns of Indonesian Muslim intellectuals to rise up and have the awareness to fight to free themselves from the grip of colonialism. One example is the birth of Syarekat Islam which was later led by HOS Tjokroaminoto as National Teacher, Political Teacher, and Bung Karno's father-in-law, whose idea of struggle with other Islamic movement figures was influenced by the idea of Jamiatul Kher's struggle which was officially founded in 1991 (S. N. Siregar et al., 2022).

Not only does it extend to Arab Hadhrami figures who are influential in Indonesian politics, Arab influence also provides a treasure trove of political terms as a system of power and government that are still used and officially used in modern times, namely the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) and the People's Representative Council (DPR). Apart from that, it is known that there are more than 3,000 Arabic vocabulary words that have been absorbed into Malay which has now been adopted as Indonesian (Minardi, 2021).

In the post-independence era, the Islamic movement through the role of Arab Hadhrami became a crucial domestic factor, although history has recorded the emergence of suspicion of Islamic organizations in Indonesia in the 1950s because of the dark traces of DI/TII (Darul Islam or Indonesian Islamic Army). Efforts to anticipate the return of radical movements, as carried out by Kartosuwiryo and his group, made the New Order regime more selective in limiting various activities deemed "suspicious." (Tohari et al., 2011).

Therefore, Islamic political groups try to adapt to government policies. Since the New Order era came into force, the Muslim vote was divided or divided into several parts, such as PPP, GOLKAR, and PDIP. According to Conor and Vickers in the book *Hadhrami Arabs in Present-Day Indonesia*, there is one of the most prominent characteristics of the New Order era, namely the democratization of murder (Jacobsen, 2009). Towards the end of the New Order period, Former President Soeharto demonstrated a closer relationship with Islam through Vice President Habibie. Therefore, after the end of the New Order period, it became the starting point or trigger for the emergence of religious-based political organizations. One of the most famous is the FPI (Islamic Defenders Front) (Budiatri & Wiratraman, 2022).

Former President Abdurrahman Wahid tried to improve the existing conditions by democratizing the political system in Indonesia by using a series of failures that occurred in Indonesia in 1999 as a lesson. The political reforms carried out by Abdurrahman Wahid produced good results, namely the freedom of the people can be formed, the sovereignty of the people can be upheld, and the supervision of the executive body can be done by the representative body of the people (Subekti, 2015).

Then in the 21st century, the most difficult challenges for the Islamic world are liberal democratic politics and capitalist economics which have a big influence on the policies of the Islamic world (Rahmatullah & Halimah, 2020). In the memory of all of us, consciously or unconsciously, religion will always be monitored by investors (Capitalists), because religion is considered to play an important role in the flow of world change, both in Indonesia and in other countries. One thing that is interesting and related to the topic of this research is how there is strict supervision of the president and strong guarantees for human rights.

The first direct presidential election was held in 2004 after holding general elections for the legislative body (Setiawan, 2023). Therefore, it can be said that democracy has been quite successful in forming the Indonesian government through the application of democratic values, namely the implementation of laws and regulations as stated in the 1945 Constitution. However, with the above changes, democracy in Indonesia has had a strong basis for development. Gus Dur, who once led the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia, namely Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), openly supported increasing rights for religious and ethnic minorities in Indonesian democracy (Sofyan, 2024).

However, members *The Hadhrami Healing Group* vocally expressed his distrust of Gus Dur. This distrust was also fostered by the fact that Gus Dur wanted to strengthen *Regional Commercial* with Israel in addition to the United States and Europe. At that time, Megawati traveled to Eastern Europe and Russia in the hope that Russia could counterbalance the United States' pressure on acts of terrorism in Indonesia (Lebang, 2010). So in a short time, they were able to arrest a leader of Hadhrami descent from the Indonesian militant group Laskar Jihad, one of which was the Bali Bombing which was launched on October 12, 2002 (Ashafa & Wuye, 2017).

In the regime of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, his policy emphasis was on *the Muslim World and expanding* its circle of concentration in order to increase Indonesia's existence in global competition. The foreign policy agenda produced by Marty Natalegawa encourages Indonesia to continue to actively contribute to world peace, become a conflict mediator, and improve welfare in order to maintain regional stability (Acharya, 2014). Indonesia is a representation of moderate Islam that is compatible with the world wave of democracy.

Behind the success of the SBY regime, there are contributions from Hadhrami Arabs, one of whom is Alwi Shihab who has been an advisor to the President of Indonesia and especially for the Middle East and the OIC since 2006 (Fanani, 2012). In the era of President Joko Widodo's administration, the movement of the Arab Hadhrami group in Indonesia could be said to be quite massive and even active. The differences between the two political camps, which have backups for each actor, and the movement of social organizations in the community, are

increasingly making political contestation even more heated. Since Jokowi was inaugurated as president on October 20, 2014, Islamist groups have not been able to escape from two things, namely, the figure of Prabowo Subianto and issues regarding Jokowi's personality and supporters (Kassim, 2021).

Prabowo formed a coalition with PDIP as a secular party whose spectrum was farthest from Islamist groups, both during the 2009 presidential election and the 2012 DKI regional elections (Tomsa, 2019). However, without independence in reading symptoms, Islamist groups will continue to depend on political forces, including those who are secular. In this case, Islamic populism must be restored in a progressive way.

Rizieq's return is an attempt to energize Islamic politics from bad luck. Executives at the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), a state Islamic institution known for its conservative stance, believe that Rizieq will be a powerful political weapon for Islamists to challenge the current situation (Yilmaz et al., 2023). Anwar Abbas as an MUI executive figure, believes that Habib Rizieq is a phenomenal figure with a large number of loyal followers, as well as unmatched skills in providing political positions to the establishment in this country.

The concept of identity is the structure of an individual's membership in a group such as characteristics, categories and social roles. According to Hogg and Abrams (2017), identity is people's concept of who they are and what they are like, as well as how they relate to other people (Hogg et al., 2017). Furthermore, political identity conceptually different from identity politics is a construction that determines the position of a subject's interests within the bounds of a political community, while the meaning of identity politics refers to the political mechanism of organizing identity (both political identity and social identity) as a political resource (Fuss, 2023). The diversity of Indonesian identities expressed in various multicultural social groups to diaspora groups is a challenge for policymakers to reconcile the values of diaspora ethnic groups with the values of Pancasila.

Identity politics refers to a political activity whose political path is closely related to the identities carried by each ethnicity (Ginanjar, 2024). This problem arises when in a multiethnic country, each ethnic group has different aspirations and interests. This can lead to ethnopolitical congruence, namely a political position only aimed at an ethnic identity group (Cederman et al., 2025).

Ethnic identity mobility becomes a political identity carried out to achieve the interests of the ethnic group in a country (Buchari, 2014). A dominant ethnicity will be able to dominate in all aspects, including the political realm and policies that tend to favor its ethnic group or can potentially be discriminatory against other ethnicities. It is not only the politicization of ethnic identity that has the potential to occur but also how political issues themselves can become issues that lead to ethnic issues (Herdiansah, 2017). All policies relating to ethnicity can be elevated to the political realm, which will have the potential to cause disparities in society and very likely lead to inter-ethnic conflict.

The Arab Hadhrami group can be grouped into an instrumentalist identity where the movement of the Arab Hadhrami diaspora in Indonesia tends to be situational, depending on whose era of government and what social problems and status quo are currently occurring in society (Aljunied, 2016). Then it continued in the post-reformation era, which saw several ups and downs in the performance of the Hadhrami Arab ethnic group in Indonesia (Mohamad, 2013). This can happen as a result of the emergence of many other Islamic movements, some of which have values or understandings that are different from those of the government in power.

For the first time in Indonesia, the dynamics of Arab citizens in Indonesia were discussed scientifically in an international seminar, but there was also sharp criticism of a number of figures who were deemed unable to maintain their ancestral heritage. In this international seminar, Arab Hadhrami immigrants were reminded to return to preaching in a way that does not divide the lives of religious communities (De Jonge, 2019).

This is inseparable from Habib Rizieq's leadership style, which is considered to be divisive and has a harsh leadership style. Identity politics has strengthened and intersected with the Islamic populism movement, whose actions by Habib Rizieq finally became the main focus after his prominent involvement during the Jakarta Pilkada, said Azyumardi Azra in the seminar. Azra's statement refers to the wave of demonstrations involving hundreds of thousands of people during the Jakarta Pilkada which used religious issues (Theofany et al., 2019).

This is because many people believe that Rizieq is a descendant of the only role model for Islam, namely the Prophet Muhammad SAW. However, this does not mean that the attitudes and actions of the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) represent the aspirations of people of Arab descent in Indonesia because many of them are also active and believe in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). It should be noted that Arab society in Indonesia, like society in general, is not anchored in a single political or religious sect. In the international seminar, Azra emphasized that Hadhrami in Indonesia consists of several sects, some of whom adhere to the Baalawi order as adhered to by their ancestors, but there are also those who are influenced by other currents in Islam, or the flow of liberalism and socialism (Dzikara, 2020).

Indonesia's multicultural society (heterogeneous, plural, diverse) has great potential to enter into conflict, both horizontal and vertical, and can even form complicated conflicts hidden or open so that social entropy emerges. Culturally diverse communities are very vulnerable to the danger of conflict tensions, which in the worst conditions can trigger separatism and threaten the disintegration of the Republic of Indonesia (Farabi, 2019).

To anticipate this, of course, the need for education that is able to accommodate and provide learning to create a new spirit and be tolerant towards other cultures, ethnicities and religions is very important, in other words, multicultural-inclusive-based Islamic education can be offered as an anticipatory solution to the possible danger of conflict and threats of national disintegration in the future (Farabi, 2019). Through the implementation of an inclusive-multicultural Islamic education pattern, it is estimated that we can realize the development of human resources who have strong character and are tolerant of other cultures, ethnicities and religions so that they are able to ward off the growth and development of radicalism in the midst of social, national and state life.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings and previous discussion, this research shows that Media Suara Al-Irsyad (MSA) has a strategic role in representing the identity of Arab descendants in Indonesia. As a community media, MSA not only functions as an internal communication tool but also as a means of preserving the cultural, religious and social values of the Hadhrami Arab community. Through digital adaptation strategies and packaging relevant content, MSA has succeeded in maintaining its existence despite facing challenges from changes in media consumption patterns and the dominance of mainstream digital platforms. This research contributes to the study of media and identity by highlighting how community media functions as a main instrument in building representation of minority groups in public spaces. These findings enrich our understanding of the dynamics of diaspora identity in the media context, especially in facing the challenges of globalization and social change. Furthermore, this study also provides practical implications for community media managers, academics and policymakers in designing ethnic-based media sustainability strategies in the digital era. Thus, this research confirms that community-based media continues to have high relevance in forming and maintaining ethnic identity amidst continuously developing social and technological dynamics.

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