

## Qualitative Description of Harms in the Communication between People and the Clergy in Islamic Preaching from the Viewpoint of Elite Preachers

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### Introduction

The communication process in Islamic preaching and guidance of people in the realm of beliefs can be effective only when the relationship between people and the clergy is desirably at work, and that people are still willing to listen to clerics' Islamic teachings. Over the past forty years after the Islamic Revolution of Iran, the relationship between people and the clergy in the realm of Islamic preaching have been experiencing ups and downs which require serious pathology despite its efficacy. The researchers in this article investigated the harms in the communication between people and the clergy in Islamic preaching, and the main purpose of this study was to describe this pathological process. What are the harms in the relationship between people and the clergy in Islamic preaching? Is the process of communication formed between people and the clergy in Islamic preaching? Do the clergy preach considering the audience's social context needs? And do they need the audience's negative feedback in the process of communication? To answer these questions, the conceptual framework of the study was based on the model of meaning source dealt with the process of communication and its six-fold elements.

### Material & Methods

The population was composed of clergies whose preaching efforts were evaluated annually in the Islamic Propagation Office. The participants of the study were 22 that showed the standard of 'success in preaching' in the apex of 'elitism' and acquired a high score. They were chosen as the best in two conferences on propagation in terms of such indices as the rate of reception and presence of the youth in religious and cultural activities, selection of appropriate content along with appropriate methods, practical ways of life, social behaviors and interactions, creativity and innovation in proposing religious issues among the youth, creation of spiritual atmosphere, revival of religious rituals, generation of positive attitude toward Islamic Revolution and the clergy, education, compilations, teaching, research, etc. For the purpose of credibility of the results, a meeting under the title of Focus Group was held consisting of seven preaching elites who were among the successful university teachers and lecturers in the realm of preaching. After numerous talks among the researchers, all believed that codes, classifications and conceptual categories were rightly extracted from the interviews, and in addition, a

few alterations were suggested and applied to some words and concepts.

A qualitative-descriptive method was employed for this study. In the qualitative description, the data collection was conducted through 'open interview' or interviewing the 'focus group'. Utilizing Sandelowski's (2000) qualitative description, the present researchers, without manipulation, organized and described the data deeply taken from the elite preacher clergies concerning the harms in the relationship between people and the clergy in Islamic preaching in order that the results of the study would be closer to the reality of the data.

### Discussion of Results & Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the participants described the harms in the relationship between people and the clergy in Islamic preaching under the umbrella of the process of communication, the role distance, the contextual requirements, the power of communication and the preaching boomerang, and concepts such as waving someone's flag (advocating someone), judicial and administrative authority and conspiracy theorizing (conspiracy theory) under the category of severing the

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process of communication, Mokalla cleric (a clergy without a turban), inverted religion, hollow sermons and instrumental cleric (abusing the clerics as a means of achieving one's ends) under the category of the role distance were introduced. The category of the contextual requirements was described via concepts such as culture eluding (inattentiveness to the audience's culture), taste eluding (inattentiveness to the audience's taste), value eluding (inattentiveness to the audience's values) and the reduction of the power of communication. This category was under the category of the preaching boomerang, nonverbal preaching and envelope preaching (on the basis of wage), which the Islamic preachers should pay attention to.

**Keywords:** Qualitative Description, Clerics, Islamic Preaching, Elite Preachers, Pathological Study of Islamic Preaching, Communication Process.

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