

Readiness, Attitude and Motivation of *Penggerak Masyarakat Orang Asli* (PMOA) in the Preaching Activity to Indigenous Peoples in Malaysia

Kesediaan, sikap dan motivasi :*Penggerak Masyarakat Orang Asli* (PMOA) dalam aktiviti dakwah kepada Orang Asli di Malaysia

ABDUL GHAFAR DON
ANUAR PUTEH
RAZALEIGH MUHAMAT @ KAWANGIT
ZULKEFLI AINI
BADLIHISHAM MOHD.NASIR
MARLON GULENG

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the Islamic Proclamation is to persuade people to believe in Islam and to accept Islam as their way of life. This article is the result of a study on the level of readiness, attitude, motivation, facilities, infrastructure and challenges of the Indigenous Peoples Movement or Penggerak Masyarakat Orang Asli (PMOA) in assessing the level acceptance towards Islam. A survey was conducted and distributed to 120 respondents. The data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows version 22. The results of this study showed that PMOA had adequate preparation in the context of the implementation of the preaching of indigenous people with high mean values of 3.98. Meanwhile, the PMOA motivation level was very high with a mean score of 4.24. With regard to the comfort and convenience of the Orang Asli villages, respondents' views also high with an overall mean value of 3.46. In terms of challenges, the PMOA showed a moderate level of mean, 3.32 while the approach aspect was high mean values of, 4.24. The overall findings of the study showed that the PMOA possessed all the required aspects. However, all of the elements that was measured must be enhanced from time to time.

Keywords: *Readiness; Attitude; Motivation; Indigenous Peoples' Organizers (PMOA); Indigenous Peoples'*

ABSTRAK

Tujuan utama dakwah Islamiyah ialah mengajak manusia kepada Islam dan menerimanya sebagai satu cara hidup. Artikel ini adalah hasil dapatan kajian mengenai tahap kesediaan, sikap, motivasi, kemudahan, infrastruktur dan cabaran Penggerak Masyarakat Orang Asli (PMOA) dalam mengajak komuniti masyarakat asli di Malaysia. Satu kajian tinjauan telah dilaksanakan membabitkan satu set instrumen soal selidik yang telah diedarkan kepada 120 orang responden. Data kajian kemudiannya dianalisis menggunakan Perisian Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) versi 22. Hasil analisa dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa PMOA mempunyai persediaan yang cukup dalam konteks perlaksanaan dakwah terhadap Orang Asli dengan nilai min yang tinggi, iaitu min=3.98. Manakala tahap motivasi PMOA pula berada pada tahap sangat tinggi dengan skor min=4.24. Berkaitan dengan keselesaan dan kemudahan di perkampungan Orang Asli, pandangan responden tentangnya juga berada pada tahap tinggi dengan nilai keseluruhan min=3.46. Daripada aspek cabaran, PMOA menunjukkan pada tahap sederhana iaitu min=3.32 manakala daripada aspek pendekatan pula adalah tinggi, iaitu min=4.24. Rumusan dapatan kajian menunjukkan PMOA telah memiliki semua aspek yang dikehendaki. Walau bagaimanapun kesemua elemen-elemen yang telah diukur itu perlu dipertingkatkan dari semasa ke semasa.

Kata kunci: *Kesediaan; Sikap; Motivasi; Penggerak Masyarakat Orang Asli (PMOA); Orang Asli*

INTRODUCTION

The Malaysian indigenous communities still have a negative attitude towards the teachings of Islam. This situation, according to Halim (2002), is due to low educational background as their thinking are not exposed to Islam and enclosed to current

developments. In fact, they are still cuddled and influenced by indigenous leader's view of the bitter history experienced by their ancestors on the maltreatment of the Malays against them. In addition there are several other factors that contribute to their attitude towards Islam, namely:

1. Standing firmly with the teachings of ancestral beliefs

It is a hereditary and family belief. When embracing Islam, it has given a negative picture as it would have lost the status of the Indigenous and the fear of being called 'MahJobo' (or the Malays) if they abandon the religion of their ancestors. In some cases, the aggressive indigenous leader will put pressure on those who embrace Islam and they will be marginalized on the island of the village. This situation forced them to leave the village if they decided to adhere to Islam.

2. Freedom in life

The behavior of indigenous people is described as a free community and dislike to be controlled. Freedom in this context is all the daily life matters. Islamic teachings have put some restrictions such as drinking alcohol, eating pork and promiscuity which have been their habits. When embracing Islam, they have to abandon those habits. This is beyond their desire as their will is controlled and forbidden, thus it becomes an excuse for them to reject Islam.

3. Disappointment with the Malay community

History of sorrow among indigenous people and Muslim societies has always been read and repeated since ancient times by the indigenous leader on how and why they reject the teaching of Islam. There are existing Malay community whom dealing with them in business transaction and some of them are dishonest in the business making the Indigenous had lost confidence in the Malays. This is indirectly causing them to reject Islam as they thought Islam is the religion of Malays.

History of sorrow among indigenous people and Muslim societies has always been read and repeated since ancient times by the Indigenous leader on how and why they reject the teaching of Islam. There are existing Malay community whom dealing with them in business transaction and some of them are dishonest in the business making the Indigenous had lost confidence in the Malays. This is indirectly causing them to reject Islam as they thought Islam is the religion of Malays. The view towards the Malay community is a perception that Malays like to oppress, unfair, unethical and so forth (Abdullah Muhammad Zin 1995). They also do not want to be associated with the Malays, let alone they understand that entering Islam means entering the

Malay community. They believe in embracing Islam, they are no longer an indigenous but as a Malay. The dakwah (Islamic missionary activities) in the process of Islamization is an act of stirring energy, mind and material towards the achievement of certain goals. It requires the enthusiasm among the PMOA to deal with target groups based on specific methods. PMOA efforts in the process of Islamization of indigenous communities in peninsular Malaysia require a lot of approaches that can attract the attention among the community members. In the effort of improving the Islamization process towards the indigenous community, PMOA has provided material and moral support continuously to this community so that they feel safe and attentive. In fact, the PMOA strives to entertain the indigenous people by providing them with the opportunity to improve their skills in the desired areas as well as how to properly plant the trees so that the planted crops can be fruitful and could bring benefits to the community itself. The PMOA is also working to enhance Islamization among indigenous community by conducting programs with other NGOs so that their beliefs could be changed from Animism to Islam.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section discusses the findings of descriptive means values. A Likert scale from 1 to 5 was used in the instruments. In determining the level of the mean value for each variable, means some are categorized mean scores into 5 levels as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Mean score interpretation for reporting statistical descriptive findings

Mean Scores	Interpretation
1.00 – 1.80	Extremely Low
1.81 – 2.60	Low
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
3.41 – 4.20	High
4.21 – 5.00	Extremely High

Source: Alias Baba 1997

PMOA READINESS

The findings on the aspect of PMOA readiness in relation to dakwah towards the indigenous community are shown in Table 2 as below:

TABLE 2. Mean value of PMOA readiness in relation to dakwah towards the indigenous community

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	I master the science of religion well	3.91	0.51	High
2	I can read jawi text well	4.20	0.64	High
3	I can master the Quranic reading well	4.00	0.51	High
4	I have a good relationship with indigenous	4.27	0.62	Extremely High
5	I can speak in indigenous languages well	3.38	0.80	Moderate
6	I was given training and exposure before being placed on site	4.09	0.84	High
7	I always get regular training related to dakwah from time to time	4.18	0.64	High
8	I am willing to take the training offered to improve knowledge and skills related to dakwah	4.54	0.54	Extremely High
9	I was provided with special and standard religious teaching materials in guiding the community	3.70	0.81	High
10	I was provided with special and standard teachings of Quran	3.52	0.83	High
11	I followed the Quranic teachings and learning methods	3.82	0.69	High
12	I have an initiative to improve knowledge and skills related to dakwah	4.20	0.55	High
	Total	3.98	0.38	High

Source: Questionnaires (2017)

Based on the findings in Table 2, it shows that PMOA has enough preparedness in the context of implementing dakwah against the indigenous. The score for their preparations for preaching is at a high level of 3.98. Knowledge and practice are two important elements of helping the dakwah preparatory to the indigenous community.

SELF-ATTITUDE AND MOTIVATION

Concerning the attitude and motivation of PMOA, it can be seen in Table 3 below:

TABLE 3. Mean value of attitude and motivation of PMOA

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	I accept the position of PMOA sincerely and willingly	4.66	0.48	Extremely High
2.	I realized the responsibility and trust of the PMOA	4.68	0.47	Extremely High
3.	I understand and recognize the role as dai'e	4.55	0.50	Extremely High
4.	I am always eager to carry out dakwah tasks	4.59	0.50	Extremely High
5.	Slow claims payment affects my focus and performance	3.61	1.23	High
6.	I consider my duty as PMOA as a worship	4.84	0.37	Extremely High
7.	Bureaucratic affects my work	3.73	0.84	High
8.	The status of the contract employment affects my motivation	3.91	1.12	High
9.	My leader always motivates and stimulates my quality of work	4.16	0.68	High
10.	My burden is worth the job	3.46	0.93	High
11.	The promotion motivates me to improve my work performance	3.91	1.24	High
12.	The Excellent Service Award is able to motivate me	4.32	0.81	Extremely High
13.	I always try my best to improve the welfare of indigenous people and their villages	4.50	0.57	Extremely High
14.	I feel guilty if I do not finish my job well	4.63	0.52	Extremely High
15.	I try hard to improve my work performance	4.57	0.50	Extremely High
16.	I prioritize work rather than personal affairs	4.32	0.54	Extremely High
17.	I am willing to work overtime	4.48	0.57	Extremely High
18.	I will accept another job offer if I have the opportunity	3.30	1.13	Moderate
	Total	4.24	0.30	Extremely High

Source: Questionnaires (2017)

Table 3 shows the results of the PMOA motivation levels at very high with a mean score of 4.24. Of the 18 items in this motivational construct, 11 of them showed a very high score of 4.21. Generally, based on the findings as shown in the table above, it can be concluded that the PMOA recognizes and understands their duties and responsibilities well. It showed that PMOA had tackled their training session equipped with physical, mental, emotional and managerial preparations before serving to the duty as PMOA.

Based on the findings as shown in Table 4, the PMOA is of the opinion that convenience infrastructure in the indigenous villages are sufficient with a total mean of 3.46 which is at high level. This has made it easier for them to carry out their daily tasks in the villages. A distance away from home with another in their village does not prevent the service within the community.

DAKWAH CHALLENGES

CONVENIENCE INFRASTRUCTURE

The findings of the convenience infrastructure in the Indigenous villages are shown in Table 4 as below:

The PMOA's dakwah challenges are shown in Table 5 below:

TABLE 4. Mean value for convenience infrastructure

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	The village where I work is easy to reach by transportation	4.23	0.81	Extremely High
2.	The village where I served is provided with the PMOA house	3.11	1.52	Moderate
3.	The village where I work has basic facilities (mosque, hall, kindergarten, electricity, water supply)	3.70	1.26	High
4.	The village where I was assigned is easily accessible with the communication line	3.86	0.98	High
5.	The office equipment and facilities in my office are sufficient and usable	3.05	1.10	Moderate
6.	The distance between one house and another in the place where I work is far thus making difficulties in dakwah movement	2.86	0.94	Moderate
	Total	3.46	0.70	High

Source: Questionnaires (2017)

TABLE 5. Mean values for dakwah challenges

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	There is a conflict or a leadership crisis where I work	3.09	1.12	Moderate
2.	There is a social problem in the village where I work	3.48	0.85	High
3.	There is a Christianization movement in the village where I work	3.11	1.06	Moderate
4.	There is a misguided lesson in the village I was in charge	2.13	0.94	Low
5.	The animism belief in the village where I was in charge is still strong	3.52	1.10	High
6.	My job is very tough and challenging	3.84	1.01	High
7.	The neighborhoods in the village where I work do not play a role in preaching the indigenous people	3.73	0.94	High
8.	The neighbors in the village where I served do not show a good example to Indigenous people	3.82	0.88	High
9.	The culture and attitude of indigenous affecting/lowering the dakwah efforts	3.59	1.06	High
10.	The poverty factor affects the presence of indigenous people in the program	3.59	0.91	High
11.	The distant and unreliable location of the village affects the efforts of dakwah	2.84	1.14	Moderate
12.	There are some of indigenous people who oppose the dakwah efforts	3.54	0.97	High
13.	Language and communication problems are of barrier to dakwah efforts	3.00	1.08	Moderate
14.	The thick traditions and customary beliefs are of barrier to dakwah efforts	3.30	0.95	Moderate
	Total	3.32	0.53	Moderate

Source: Questionnaires (2017)

In terms of challenges, The findings on Table 5 showed a moderate level of scores. In some items such as social problems, the still-resistant animism and poor participation from neighboring communities in assisting the indigenous showed high scores on the dakwah challenges faced by the PMOA with mean scores of 3.48, 3.52 and 3.73 respectively. This finding is well supported by Syed Abdurahman (2012) research on the problems and obstacles in the propagation of indigenous people in Malaysia. He stated that all the problems and obstacles can be categorized into the internal and external challenges. There are three main problems and obstacles that deliberate the dakwah efforts of this group. Firstly, problems and obstacles related to dakwah institutions and preachers themselves. Secondly, problems related to Muslim community in particular with the neighboring villages of indigenous peoples. Finally, problems related to dakwah own targets. The author also added that the external problem such as the dissemination of Christianity, the interference of Chinese traders and those who are irresponsible in taking opportunities on the deterioration of indigenous community.

DAKWAH APPROACHES

The dakwah approaches used by PMOA based on the findings displayed on Table 6 below. PMOA has used various debates in preaching the Indigenous community such as visiting and helping the sick, conducting community activities such as the 'gotong-royong' (helping each other) program and demonstrating a good example. The average means for those items are at extremely high level with a mean value of 4.24. Understanding and appreciation of the new Muslim indigenous towards Islam is still at a minimum level. Generally, Muslim indigenous community knows the necessity and importance of worship. However, based on our experience, from the aspect of appreciation, they faced problems in performing special worship such as prayer and fasting. There is a study conducted by Aisyah (2013) related to the improvement of life quality among the converted indigenous people, a case study in Gombak, Selangor. The study aims of assessing the level of improvement the life quality among the new Muslim indigenous in terms of the appreciation towards Islam is at a moderate level. It is assumed

TABLE 6. Mean value of dakwah approaches

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	I often visit the indigenous people	4.41		Extremely High
2.	I invite PMOA colleagues to join in visiting activity among indigenous people	4.30	0.60	Extremely High
3.	I am always concern about the indigenous welfare	4.27	0.56	Extremely High
4.	I visit the sick among the indigenous community	4.30	0.60	Extremely High
5.	I help the sick among indigenous community to go the nearby clinic/hospital	4.23	0.63	Extremely High
6.	I visit and take care of indigenous people who died	4.43	0.63	Extremely High
7.	I organize and participate in community programs with indigenous communities such as gotong-royong, telematch and others	4.48	0.60	Extremely High
8.	I organize a fardhu ain class in the indigenous village	4.43	0.54	Extremely High
9.	I organize a Quranic class in the indigenous village	4.18	0.79	High
10.	I activate the Islamic activities in the indigenous mosque	4.13	0.96	High
11.	I always interact and discuss religious matters with indigenous community	4.13	0.74	High
12.	I use the wisdom approach in guiding indigenous people	4.46	0.50	Extremely High
13.	I organize some activities in conjunction with the greatness of Islam the indigenous village	4.09	0.58	High
14.	I always show good examples to indigenous people	4.54	0.50	Extremely High
15.	I use/practice the Islamic medicinal approach in treating indigenous people	3.39	1.06	Moderate
16.	I invite neighbors to preach to the other indigenous people	4.07	0.60	High
	Total	4.24	0.43	Extremely High

Source: Questionnaires (2017)

that the indigenous community in Gombak is among the advanced communities.

Therefore, it is assumed that those who are in the region may be at their lowest level of understanding and appreciation. Ashrap (2017) thinks that among the factors that preventing the improvement of the life quality and the implementation of religious teachings in life is due to their bounding to the old beliefs. This includes the Indigenous community. Understanding and appreciation of Islam among the indigenous is important in the context of the dakwah among them. This is because new Muslim indigenous who have embraced Islam are considered as role models to the Muslim and non-Muslim communities. There are cases where non-Muslim indigenous were invited to convert to Islam, but they refused with argument that the existing Muslim indigenous fail to understand and appreciate Islam.

In peninsular Malaysia, the task of providing understanding and ensuring the appreciation or religion practices among the indigenous lies at its best becomes the responsibility of the Islamic Religious Council. The indigenous is included in the dakwah responsibilities (Aisyah 2013). Problems related to the understanding and appreciation of Islam among the new indigenous Muslim is due to several factors:

1. The indigenous attitude communities' have no interest in learning fardu ain and al-Qur'an. This attitude has caused them to remain ignorant of the fundamental teaching of Islam and thus lead to their failure to practice the Islamic way of life. Their Islam is merely a name and always shown by the practice of giving and answering Salam.
2. The problem of religious teachers – The problem of religious teachers stems from whether there is no religious teacher or the existing religious teachers are not committed to guide the Indigenous community. This is due to the lack of experienced amongst teaching staffs by the Department of Islamic Affairs or the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM). In some cases, for example, PMOA of JAKIM is responsible for 2 or 3 indigenous settlements. This has led to the ineffective religious teaching and learning efforts.
3. There is no specific curriculum/module/ mentoring or teaching material in guiding new Muslim indigenous to understand the teaching of Islam. The teachers/instructors teach at their own discretion and intelligence.

4. Busy with daily works. The indigenous people generally live below poverty. Over 90% of them are categorized as hardcore poor. Hence, the time for them to study is limited.
5. Lower education levels also make it difficult for them to understand what is being taught. It also influences their level of appreciation towards the religion.
6. The neighboring communities. The neighbors meant are Malay or Muslim communities live in the indigenous settlements. As mentioned earlier, neighboring Malay communities will be the main assets or agents that will help in facilitating the preaching of the indigenous if they are able to be an example that shows the beauty of Islam.

Unfortunately, so far all the discussions and comments on the situation of the Malay community neighbors of the indigenous community are more concerned with the more prominent things that negatively affect the Muslim community and dakwah instead of contributing to the bad impression of Islam itself. The misconception of the Indigenous is still present towards the Malays from the past. They argued that the Malays became models of Islam. If bad examples are displayed by the Malays to them, then it will be an example and an image of Islam. Various images of neighboring Malays have been the cause of allowing or removing the indigenous people from Islam. Among them are said to have many negative traits such as oppressing or exploiting them for example plowing or buying fruits from them on a debt but thereafter not had been paid. They claim Malays are unfair, unfaithful, neglected promises, teasing their wives, stealing fruits and their plants, not fasting in Ramadan and others.

7. There are no models or religious indigenous leaders who can guide the indigenous community towards understanding and appreciating Islam. This problem can be minimized if the following points are addressed and acted accordingly:
 - a. Find a solution to motivate the indigenous community to learn the basics of Islam and Qur'anic teachings. According to a study by Mariam (2014), the efforts to attract Indigenous through the planning of various activities relevant to them are among the challenges in the context of dakwah among the new Muslim indigenous.
 - b. Formulate action plans to address the problem of indigenous religious teachers.

The Islamic Religious Department (in this case of Selangor) for example may appoint public dakwah volunteers who have religious fundamentals and are interested by providing incentives that can induce them to carry out dakwah duties to guide the new Muslim indigenous community.

- c. Build a module or syllabus that fits the level of thinking and reality of the indigenous community.
- d. The responsible authorities can take the initiative to create a socio-economic development program that can improve the living standard of the indigenous community. This may influence them to have more time to pursue religious studies.
- e. School teachers can play a role in providing understanding and appreciation of Islam and become models to the indigenous. This is because school teachers are among the most trusted and respected people.
- f. Potential of local indigenous can be trained to become religious leaders among their communities. This will make it easier for the Indigenous community to understand Islam through the use of the language that suits them.

CONCLUSION

The PMOA has played an important role towards the Indigenous community and contributed greatly to the development of dakwah among the indigenous in Peninsular Malaysia. The study found that there were suggestions for the purpose of enhancing the dakwah effectiveness among the indigenous community including; organising the indigenous language courses, leadership and personality courses, IT courses, Islamic medicine courses for PMOA, increasing the travel allowance (no limit), increasing the number of PMOA – one village for a PMOA, paying the travel allowances on time, providing proper allocation for the mosque, adjustment of facilities such as home (existing home also need repair), adequating office equipment (laptop, printer and etc) and basic equipment at the Indigenous village for

PMOA, synchronizing financial applications to host a program at indigenous village, providing inland allowance or critical allowance for PMOA, setting the PMOA's status scheme, providing employee card and vehicle sticker of JAKIM, strengthening the selection of PMOA, reinforcement the allocation for dry goods to assist dakwah efforts in POA and amplifying the dakwah programs in Indigenous village which need financial allocation to run the program.

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Abdul Ghafar Don
Program Dakwah & Kepimpinan,
Pusat Kesejahteraan Insan & Komuniti,
Fakulti Pengajian Islam,
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
43600 Bangi, Selangor MALAYSIA
Email: a.g.don@ukm.edu.my

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