

The Perception and Level of Understanding about Islam among New Converts in Perkim Langkawi

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to overlook the perception and level of understanding about Islam among new converts in PERKIM Langkawi. Researcher has focused on new converts who have registered as members in PERKIM Langkawi. Due to the reason that this study is more towards perception and knowledge level, researcher has used quantitative method (by the distribution of questionnaire forms) in order to obtain information needed from the respondents. Quantitative data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Software. Then, descriptive statistics were used to explain the background of the respondents, level of understanding and perception among new converts in PERKIM Langkawi. The results have shown that majority of the respondents understand Islam well and has performed the religious practices and rituals of Islam. They have made Islam a way to attain Allah's pleasures. The findings will not only contribute for a better understanding about Islam in PERKIM Langkawi but will implicate from the method used by PERKIM Langkawi in providing better understanding of Islam for the new converts. Based on the findings, few suggestions were put forward to address the issues related to new converts in PERKIM Langkawi.

Keywords: Perception, Level of Understanding, New Converts, PERKIM Langkawi.

INTRODUCTION

PERKIM for Kedah region has 9 branches which are PERKIM Langkawi, Baling, Ayer Hitam, Kuala Muda, Seberang Perak, Pendang, Pekan Kulim and Alor Setar (Muslim Welfare Organisation Malaysia). PERKIM Langkawi operates fully in al-Hana' Mosque, Mukim Kuah, Langkawi. The current chairman of PERKIM Langkawi is Dato' Mansor Haji Ismail. He was the former regional and land officials of Langkawi. He is also aided by few chief senior officers in terms of the management and launch of activities organized by PERKIM. Among the chief senior officers involved is Mohd Fadhil Aziz (Deputy President) and Mohd Ismail Eh Abdullah (Treasurer). Until Disember 2016, PERKIM Langkawi has 50 new converts registered members (Mansor Ismail 2016).

History of PERKIM Langkawi

Dato' Mansor Haji Ismail is the true born of Kedah state. He was born in 17th October 1951. His highest education is in University of Malaya in history field. After finishing his studies, he served

for the government and held position as Administration and Diplomatic Officer (PTD) in Sabah and Padang Terap. He was then appointed as the Senior Assistant Secretary of the state (Protocol Section), Private Secretary to Dato' Kamal Jaya (former Chief Minister of Kedah), Assistant District Officer of Kota Setar, Chief Assistant District Officer of Kubang Pasu and Chief Assistant District Officer of Kuala Muda. Next, he was appointed as Chief Assistant District Officer of Langkawi. At that moment, Langkawi was just recently being introduced as duty-free island and wanted to be transformed into a tourism center. After four years of serving as chief assistant district officer, he was appointed as Deputy President of Langkawi Municipal Council, then Deputy Management of Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) before on secondment to Kedah state government as Kedah tourism general manager. Later, he had been appointed as Kedah's assistant secretary in Kedah State Secretary Office, the president of Kulim Municipal Council and finally as Langkawi district officer other than the president of Langkawi Municipal Council until he retires. According to him, during his appointment as a district officer, he was automatically appointed as PERKIM Langkawi's chairman. Until now, he has held the chairman's position for almost 12 years. His contributions in serving the state government has earned attention from Sultan Kedah during that time which was Tuanku Abdul Halim ibni Almarhum Sultan Badlishah who was also the former Yang di-Pertuan Agong Malaysia from 1970 until 1975 and from 2011 until 2016. He has been awarded the medal of Darjah Dato' Setia Diraja Kedah (D.S.D.K) in the year of 2008. The award has given him the title of Dato' (Mansor Ismail 2016).

It can be perceived that he is an individual with extensive experiences in administration and management fields from the explanation above. This is because; as former senior officer, he has substantial experiences in organizing certain organizations including the government organizations and non-government organizations such as PERKIM. Therefore, he has his own objectives in leading PERKIM. Among of his objectives are to instill the spirit of unity among new converts, teaching constitutional knowledge and educate these new converts about Islam through historical events in Islam. From the objectives mentioned, he has implemented various social activities for instance the visit to hospitals and schools. Other than that, there are also religious based activities he has carried out such as by holding religious classes weekly and monthly, Ihya' Ramadhan program, the procession of the Maulud Nabi and Hari Raya celebration. Although there are various programs and activities being held, PERKIM Langkawi has somehow encountered few problems. One of the problems is the problem between PERKIM Langkawi and PERKIM in the state level especially PERKIM Kedah. PERKIM Langkawi that has multiple backgrounds of new converts requires serious attention from PERKIM in the state level. The new converts with various religion and culture backgrounds for instance Chinese, Indian and Siamese have made it quite difficult for them to really appreciate Islamic teaching. Moreover, the social condition and the freedom they had in their culture as a result of the tourism activities like drinking alcohol and gambling have made it worse. Incompetency of teaching staff in language has worsened the situation in delivering Islamic teachings to the new converts. The new converts are also involved with diverse problems for instance problems with family, work other than social problems such as gambling and alcohol. Malay communities are

also perceived to have less interest in helping the new converts to understand about Islam. According to him, the activities involving the new converts obtained less attention from Islamic society among Malays although they are invited to participate in the programs or activities. With no money launder, added with the malicious behaviors has led the activities of PERKIM Langkawi to be less welcomed among the Malay Islamic society (Mansor Ismail 2016).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research has used quantitative approach. Survey method was used to obtain the perceptions of new converts towards administration of PERKIM Langkawi. This research was also done to identify the level of understanding of Islam among the new converts in PERKIM Langkawi. The survey questions were constructed based on Likert scale. Respondents were required to evaluate and give their perceptions regarding the administration of PERKIM Langkawi and the new converts level of understanding about Islam. The questionnaires forms were focusing on the information related to respondents demographic, level of understanding on Islam which were consisted of three sections; section B aspect of creed (aqidah), section C aspect of worship, and section D aspect of moral. In the last section which was section E were questions regarding the new converts perception towards the administration of PERKIM Langkawi. Those aspects had few related variable items. For instances, creed aspect (aqidah) has 19 items, worship aspect with 13 items and moral aspect with 13 items. The review of new converts perceptions on PERKIM also had 10 variable items. The determination of the parameters of the measurement of the mean score on Islamic understanding of the new converts in PERKIM Langkawi can be explained as in Table 1.8.

Mean Value	Interpretation
1.00-1.80	Very Low
1.81-2.60	Low
2.61-3.40	Average
3.41-4.20	High
4.21-5.00	Very High

Table 1.8 Measurement Level of Mean Score

Source: Ghazali Darusalam Sufean Hussin, 2015. *Metodologi Penyelidikan Dalam Pendidikan: Amalan Dan Analisis Kajian*. Universiti Malaya: Kuala Lumpur.

Qualitative method (interview) was also done by interviewing three people from the management of PERKIM Langkawi; Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Treasurer. The purpose of the interview was to obtain information about the history of establishment of PERKIM Langkawi, organizational charts and activities other than challenges encountered by PERKIM Langkawi in managing the new converts in Langkawi.

Selection of Sample

The sample was selected from the population registered with PERKIM Langkawi. This was to obtain more clear and accurate perceptions from the new converts under PERKIM Langkawi.

According to Mohd Ismail Eh (2016), there were 50 people who have registered as new converts under PERKIM Langkawi, however this research only involved of 20 respondents. This was because these 20 respondents were selected by the management of PERKIM Langkawi to be involved in this research based on the frequency of their involvement in joining the classes and programs organized by PERKIM Langkawi.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Demography

The respondents demography of these new converts mentioned in this research consisted of their gender, race, age, marital status, education level, job and year of embracing Islam. The respondents demography is important to identify several vital information regarding the research.

1. Gender

In terms of gender, findings has displayed that most of the respondents consisted of female with 80% out of total respondents while there were 20% of male. This has shown that the female respondents were the majority in this research finding with 16 female from total of 20 respondents who are currently involved in studying Islam in PERKIM Langkawi (Table 1.1). In this research, the female new converts are more interested in studying and learning Islam in depth compared to the male new converts.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	4	20%
Female	16	80%

Table 1.1 Distribution of gender of the new converts respondents in PERKIM Langkawi

2. Race

In terms of race, the research findings has displayed that the Chinese preceded the number of the new converts who are learning and studying Islam in PERKIM Langkawi. 5 respondents (25%) were Chinese with the greatest number out of the total respondents, followed by Indian with 3 respondents (15%) and other races such as Siamese and Ibanese with 8 respondents and 1 respondent respectively (60%). Findings have demonstrated that the majority of the new converts in PERKIM Langkawi were Siamese while the least was Ibanese (Table 1.2).

Race	Frequency	Percentage
Malay	-	-
Chinese	5	25%
Indian	3	15%
Others	12	60%

Table 1.2 Distribution of new converts respondents in PERKIM Langkawi

3. Age

The information about the respondents age has been displayed in Table 1.3. The age of the respondents were categorized into five groups which are; 20 years old and below, 20-30 years old, 31-40 years old, 41-50 years old and 51 years old and above. The findings have indicated that out of total 20 respondents, the majority of them were from 51 years old and above which was 45% (9 respondents) followed by from age 41 to 50 years old which is 35% (7 respondents). Other than that, respondents aged from 21 to 30 years old and 31 to 40 years old were 2 respondents (10%) respectively. Research has shown that the new converts in the group age of 51 years old and above were at most and active in learning and studying Islam in PERKIM Langkawi whereas the least were the ones from the group age of 21 to 30 years old and 31 to 40 years old. However, according to Table 1.3, it is found that PERKIM Langkawi does not put age limit as one of the conditions if there is any new converts who wants to join any programs related to Islamic studies or learning organized by PERKIM Langkawi. As long as they are interested and are willing to give high commitment in the learning process, they are always welcomed there.

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
20 years old and below	-	-
21-30 years old	2	10%
31-40 years old	2	10%
41-50 years old	7	35%
51 years old and above	9	45

Table 1.3 Distribution of age group in embracing Islam among the respondents of new converts in PERKIM Langkawi

4. Marital Status

From the findings, Table 1.4 has demonstrated that majority of the respondents are married; 18 respondents (90%) and the other 2 respondents (2%) are widows. It was relevant if there were only 20 new converts who were active in joining programs organized by PERKIM Langkawi compared to the actual number of 50 people. The reasons are because most of the new converts have just gotten married and have their own responsibilities. They were busy with other problems as they have to earn for living and manage their family matters. Nevertheless, some of them were still able to put aside all the problems and managed to spare time in

learning Islam in depth by getting involved with the classes and programs organized by PERKIM Langkawi.

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Still Unmarried	-	-
Married	18	90%
Widower	-	-
Widow	2	10%

Table 1.4 Distribution of marital status of the new converts respondents in PERKIM Langkawi

5. Education Level

Findings related to education level are displayed in Table 1.5. It is demonstrated that the education level among the respondents varied. Majority of the respondents that were 7 of them (35%) had Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) followed by 4 respondents (20%) who had Lower Secondary Evaluation certificate (PMR/SRP), 6 respondents (30%) had Primary School Evaluation Test certificate while the other 3 respondents (15%) did not go to school. This means that the new converts in PERKIM Langkawi have gotten their education at the average and low levels which were in the level of primary and secondary school only.

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Did not go to school	3	15%
UPSR	6	30%
PMR/SRP	4	20%
SPM	7	35%
STPM	-	-
Diploma	-	-
Bachelor of Degree	-	-
Others	-	-

Table 1.5 Distribution of education level of the respondents

6. Job

In table 1.6, findings have shown that 10 respondents (50%) were self-employed to earn for living indicating the majority of respondents out of total of 20 respondents. Another 6 respondents (30%) worked with private companies while the other 4 respondents (20%) representing either those who did not work or full-time housewives.

Job	Frequency	Percentage
Government	-	-
Private	6	30%
Self-employed	10	50%
Others	4	20%

Table 1.6 Distribution of respondents jobs

7. Period of embracing Islam

In table 1.7, findings have displayed that 6 respondents (30%) have embraced Islam since 25 years ago while 4 respondents (20%) have embraced Islam since 2 years ago. Another 2 respondents have embraced Islam since 22 years ago (10%) and 19 years ago (10%) respectively. Others representing that another 6 respondents have embraced Islam since 3, 4, 26, 27, 30 and 45 years ago for each person. It means that the new converts who are registered under PERKIM Langkawi in average have embraced Islam for more than 8 years; 18 respondents whereas only two respondents who have embraced Islam less than eight years since. The time limit of 8 years was used as the measuring index for the understanding, consolidation and stability in the process of knowing Islam for new converts by perceiving the transition period of an individual from ‘mumaiyiz’ age until reaching his or her maturity age. It is a time frame where the learning and understanding process occurred before he or she is able to be held fully responsible for what he or she does in the name of Islam. The index measurement in determining the new converts time limit in Malaysia is significant to compare the new converts who really understand what are taught by Islam henceforth able to aid in terms of the alignment in the distribution channels of zakat aid to asnaf mualaf. (Azman, et al 2015).

Years of embracing Islam	Frequency	Percentage
3	1	5%
4	1	5%
19	2	10%
20	4	20%
22	2	10%
25	6	30%
26	1	5%
27	1	5%
30	1	5%
45	1	5%

Table 1.7 Respondents period of embracing Islam

Analysis Of The Level Of Understanding In Islam Religion Among The New Converts Of Perkim Langkawi

Researcher has analyzed the level of understanding in Islam religion after embracing Islam. The analysis was done to know whether they have full understanding about Islam after they joined the classes of religious studies and programs organized by PERKIM Langkawi or not. Therefore, this analysis was based on the questionnaire forms distributed to the 20 respondents consisted of new converts in PERKIM Langkawi.

Creed Aspect (Aqidah)

There were 19 variable items used to measure the level of appreciation of creed towards the new converts. The sections were divided into 6 sub-sections. Item 01 to 04 were the variables to measure the level of understanding towards Allah, item 5 to 7 were meant to measure the level of understanding towards Angels (Malaikat), item 8 to 10 measured the level of understanding towards our Messenger (Rasul), item 11 to 13 measured the level of understanding towards Al-Quran while item 14 to 16 measured the level of understanding in Hereafter (Hari Akhirat) and item 17 to 19 measured level of understanding towards Qada' and Qadar. Emphasizing on the creed aspect of the new converts is vital as creed is the primary aspect in Islam religion.

The findings in terms of creed aspect done by PERKIM Langkawi in Table 1.9 have demonstrated that variable items to measure the level of understanding of the new converts in creed aspect showed positive response as majority of the respondents response to 'agree' and 'strongly agree' options. Majority of the respondents have mean value or score from 4.35 to 4.70 towards the four variable items to measure their faith and believe in Allah. Next, the item used to measure their understanding towards Angels (Malaikat). Most of the respondents have answered 'agree' and 'strongly agree' to the 3 variable items asked. The mean score on the understanding towards Angels (Malaikat) showed value from 4.45 to 4.60. Besides, respondents have also given positive response towards another 3 variable items asked to measure the level of understanding towards Messenger (Rasul). The mean score is between 4.45 to 4.50. The other 3 variable items used in measuring the level of understanding in Al-Quran have also accepted positive response from the respondents where the mean score is from 4.50 – 4.70. As for the variable items used to measure the level of understanding in hereafter, they displayed the mean score of 4.20 of those who agreed on the questions or items asked. Last but not least, the variable items towards the understanding of Qada' and Qadar have demonstrated a slight disparity in the respondents responses. The mean score in this sub-section is from 2.10 to 4.55.

The findings of this research have indicated that majority of respondents are able to master and understand the set of variable items asked to them. This is fundamental to the new converts so that with the profound understanding and mastery of the faith, it will be able to aid them in adapting themselves to the obstacles and challenges faced in society.

No.	Questions	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
1.	<i>Allah SWT is the only God to be worshiped</i>	STS	-	-	4.70
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	6	30%	
		SS	14	70%	
2.	<i>The goal of human's life is to worship Allah</i>	STS	-	-	4.45
		TS	1	5%	
		TP	-	-	
		S	8	40%	
		SS	11	55%	
3.	<i>I can feel the peace when I put my trust in Allah</i>	STS	-	-	4.60
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	8	40%	
		SS	12	60%	
4.	<i>I think of Allah's creatures around us.</i>	STS	-	-	4.35
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	13	65%	
		SS	7	35%	
5.	<i>Angels are present in the occasions of remembering Allah</i>	STS	-	-	4.60
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	8	40%	
		SS	12	60%	
6.	<i>I feel afraid when I am reminded that Angels will record all of our deeds.</i>	STS	-	-	4.45
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	11	55%	
		SS	9	45%	
7.	<i>I remind myself that Raqib and Atid will record all of my deeds.</i>	STS	-	-	4.45
		TS	1	5%	
		TP	-	-	
		S	8	40%	
		SS	11	55%	
8.	<i>All the Messengers are sent to establish Allah's</i>	STS	-	-	

	Religion	TS	1	5%	4.45
		TP	-	-	
		S	8	40%	
		SS	11	55%	
9.	<i>I feel excited to listen to the stories of the Prophets and Messengers</i>	STS	-	-	4.45
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	11	55%	
		SS	9	45%	
10.	<i>I mention the 'selawat' to the Prophet every time his name is called</i>	STS	-	-	4.50
		TS	-	-	
		TP	2	10%	
		S	6	30%	
		SS	12	60%	
11.	<i>Al-Quran teaching can shape an individual's personal attitude.</i>	STS	-	-	4.70
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	6	30%	
		SS	14	70%	
12.	<i>I am impressed with the teenagers who have memorized Al-Quran</i>	STS	-	-	4.65
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	7	35%	
		SS	13	65%	
13.	<i>I learn 'tajwid' to deepen the knowledge of the Quran.</i>	STS	-	-	4.50
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	10	50%	
		SS	10	50%	
14.	<i>All human action and deeds must be repaid in Hereafter.</i>	STS	-	-	4.20
		TS	2	10%	
		TP	-	-	
		S	10	50%	
		SS	8	40%	
15.	<i>I am worried that I have done great sins</i>	STS	-	-	

	<i>without realizing it.</i>	TS	-	-	4.20
		TP	2	10%	
		S	12	60%	
		SS	6	30%	
16.	<i>I think about death every time I want to go to sleep.</i>	STS	-	-	4.20
		TS	-	-	
		TP	4	20%	
		S	8	40%	
		SS	8	40%	
17.	<i>Humans are free to embrace any religions as long as they believe in Allah.</i>	STS	-	-	2.10
		TS	2	10%	
		TP	4	20%	
		S	6	30%	
		SS	8	40%	
18.	<i>I accept it wholeheartedly of the sustenance given by Allah to me.</i>	STS	-	-	4.55
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	9	45%	
		SS	11	55%	
19.	<i>I work very hard to succeed in my career.</i>	STS	-	-	4.35
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	13	65%	
		SS	7	35%	

Table 1.9 The Level of Understanding of the New Converts in Islam: Creed Aspect

Worship Aspect

To measure the understanding in Islam from the worship aspect, there were 13 variable items used and the variable items were divided into 5 categories. The items 20 and 21 were referring to the variable in measuring the understanding regarding the 'syahadah'. Item 22 was referring to the variable in measuring the understanding about prayer (solat) and item 23 to item 26 were referring to the understanding about the fasting practice. Items 27 to 29 were referring to the variables in measuring the understanding of 'zakat' and lastly the items 30 to 32 were referring to the variables in measuring the understanding towards pilgrimage.

Research findings in terms of worship aspect done by PERKIM Langkawi in Table 1.9 have indicated that variable items to measure the understanding of worshipping have obtained positive responses from the respondents where majority of the respondents gave 'agree' and 'strongly agree' answers. The majority of respondents with mean score of 4.00 to 4.15, agreed to 2 variable items to measure the understanding about 'syahadah'. Next, the item for measuring the understanding regarding payer (solat) among the new converts, most of them have responded 'agree' and 'strongly agree' with the mean score of 4.40. For variable items of

fasting practice, the mean score is from 2.6 to 4.45. The item to measure the understanding on 'zakat' meanwhile has still indicated high mean score from 4.25 to 4.55. Finally, the item to measure the understanding related to pilgrimage, the mean score is from 1.30 to 4.65.

Findings above demonstrated that majority of the respondents are able to implement the 13 set of variable items asked to them related to the worship that has been done by PERKIM Langkawi.

No.	Questions	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
20.	<i>Pronouncing the syahadah does not necessarily make a believer.</i>	STS	-	-	4.00
		TS	-	-	
		TP	4	20%	
		S	12	60%	
		SS	4	20%	
21.	<i>I pronounce syahadah to renew my faith.</i>	STS	-	-	4.15
		TS	-	-	
		TP	3	15%	
		S	11	55%	
		SS	6	30%	
22.	<i>Prayer avoid individual from abusive acts.</i>	STS	-	-	4.40
		TS	-	-	
		TP	2	10%	
		S	8	40%	
		SS	10	50%	
23.	<i>Fasting can subdue one's desires out of vile Qualities.</i>	STS	-	-	4.15
		TS	-	-	
		TP	2	10%	
		S	13	65%	
		SS	5	25%	
24.	<i>I am excited to welcome Ramadhan(the holy month).</i>	STS	-	-	4.45
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	11	55%	
		SS	9	45%	
25.	<i>There were times I did not fast intentionally.</i>	STS	5	25%	2.65
		TS	6	30%	
		TP	-	-	
		S	-	-	
		SS	9	45%	
26.	<i>I avoid from saying bad words when I'm</i>	STS	-	-	

	<i>fasting.</i>	TS	-	-	
		TP	2	10%	4.05
		S	15	75%	
		SS	3	15%	
27.	<i>Paying 'zakat' can clean one's soul from being stingy.</i>	STS	-	-	
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	4.55
		S	9	45%	
		SS	11	55%	
28.	<i>I am impressed with the 'zakat' system implemented in Islam.</i>	STS	-	-	
		TS	-	-	
		TP	2	10%	4.30
		S	10	50%	
		SS	8	40%	
29.	<i>I give alms to the poor.</i>	STS	-	-	
		TS	-	-	
		TP	2	10%	4.25
		S	11	55%	
		SS	7	35%	
30.	<i>Pilgrimage must be done even with illegal income.</i>	STS	-	-	
		TS	1	5%	
		TP	1	5%	1.30
		S	1	5%	
		SS	17	85%	
31.	<i>I am excited to hear talbiah (Labbaikallah) when people are circumambulating in the haj season.</i>	STS	-	-	
		TS	-	-	
		TP	2	10%	
		S	7	35%	4.45
		SS	11	55%	
32.	<i>I am determined to perform the Hajj . pilgrimage</i>	STS	-	-	
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	4.65
		S	7	35%	
		SS	13	65%	

Table 1.10 The New Converts Understanding in Islam: Worship Aspect

Moral Aspect

In order to measure the understanding on Islam from the moral aspect, there were 13 variable items used and the variable items were divided into 5 scopes. The scopes are; the item 33 to item 35 are referring to the variables in measuring the appreciation of morals towards oneself. Meanwhile, item 36 to 38 are referring to the variables measuring the appreciation of morals towards the parents and item 39 to item 40 are referring to the variables in appreciating the morals towards society. Item 41 to 42 are referring to the variables in measuring the appreciation of morals towards the country and last but not least, item 43 to 45 are referring to the variables of appreciation of morals towards the environment.

The findings from the moral aspect done by PERKIM Langkawi in Table 1.10 showed that variable items to measure the understanding towards the worship have demonstrated positive response where most of the respondents gave 'agree' and 'strongly agree' answers to the questions asked.

Majority of the respondents with the mean score of 3.85 to 4.40 have agreed on three variable items to measure the matter regarding the appreciation of moral on oneself. Next, item to measure the matter pertaining appreciation of moral towards the parents showing that majority have answered 'agree' and 'strongly agree' for the questions asked with the mean score between 4.55 to 4.65. For variable item of moral appreciation towards the society, the mean score is between 3.70 to 4.30. Meanwhile, the item for moral appreciation towards the country has still displayed a high mean score which is 4.30. Finally, the mean score between 4.20 to 4.40 is the result of the items in measuring the moral appreciation towards the environment.

Findings have indicated that majority of the respondents are able to implement the 13 set of variable items asked to them regarding the moral aspect done by PERKIM Langkawi.

No.	Questions	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
33.	<i>Avoid from doing illegal things can protect someone from doing evil things.</i>	STS	-	-	4.40
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	12	60%	
		SS	8	40%	
34.	<i>I am satisfied if I can find other people's faults.</i>	STS	-	-	1.10
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	2	10%	
		SS	18	90%	
35.	<i>I choose those who are obedient to religion as my friends.</i>	STS	-	-	3.85
		TS	1	5%	
		TP	4	20%	
		S	12	60%	
		SS	3	15%	

36. <i>Children are a trust from Allah to the parents.</i>	STS	-	-	4.55
	TS	-	-	
	TP	-	-	
	S	9	45%	
	SS	11	55%	
37. <i>I feel sorry if I ever being rude to my parents.</i>	STS	-	-	4.65
	TS	-	-	
	TP	-	-	
	S	7	35%	
	SS	13	65%	
38. <i>I show my respect to both of my parents by practicing hand kissing cheek kissing or hugging.</i>	STS	-	-	4.55
	TS	-	-	
	TP	-	-	
	S	9	45%	
	SS	11	55%	
39. <i>A Muslim must have a sense of love to all Muslims regardless of their races.</i>	STS	-	-	4.30
	TS	-	-	
	TP	2	10%	
	S	10	50%	
	SS	8	40%	
40. <i>I am brave enough to report to my head if there is any of my friend who made mistakes, stealing or lying.</i>	STS	-	-	3.70
	TS	6	30%	
	TP	2	10%	
	S	4	20%	
	SS	8	40%	
41. <i>Protecting the country from enemy of Islam is a must for all citizens</i>	STS	-	-	4.30
	TS	-	-	
	TP	2	10%	
	S	10	50%	
	SS	8	40%	
42. <i>I obeyed the orders of my head while not involves disobedience.</i>	STS	-	-	4.30
	TS	-	-	
	TP	2	10%	
	S	10	50%	
	SS	8	40%	
43. <i>Environment is a trust from Allah to everyone.</i>	STS	-	-	4.20
	TS	-	-	
	TP	2	10%	
	S	12	60%	
	SS	6	30%	

44.	<i>I feel frustrated to see people who did not care for the cleanliness.</i>	STS	-	-	4.30
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	14	70%	
		SS	6	30%	
45.	<i>I helped in switching off the unused lamp and fans or closing off the unused water pipe.</i>	STS	-	-	4.40
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	12	60%	
		SS	8	40%	

Table 1.11 The New Converts Understanding in Islam: Moral Aspect

The New Converts Perceptions on PERKIM Langkawi

There were 10 variable items used to perceive the perceptions of the new converts on PERKIM Langkawi. Findings have shown that the perceptions of the new converts on PERKIM Langkawi are at the highest level. Table 1.11 indicates that variable items used to perceive the perceptions showed positive response as majority of the respondents answered ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’.

However, although the data have demonstrated positive response, there are still rooms for improvements to be made. This is because, even though it seemed that most of them were satisfied with the administration of PERKIM Langkawi, some of them still felt dissatisfied in several matters. This matter can be seen on items related to the learning method in religious classes, modules and subjects that are taught, the ability and competency of the teaching staff, relationship between the teaching staff and the new converts and the way how PERKIM entertains the new converts compared to others. The five items out of the total of 10 items showed negative responses and this probably will require appropriate attention from PERKIM.

Nevertheless, findings demonstrated that majority of the respondents are able to execute 10 set of variable items asked to them pertaining their perceptions on PERKIM Langkawi. This is very important for the new converts and the administrators of PERKIM Langkawi so that they are able to improve and strengthen their efforts together in the efficiency of spreading the propagation of Islam.

No.	Questions	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
46.	<i>The learning methods in religious classes of PERKIM are very suitable for the new converts.</i>	STS	-	-	4.00
		TS	2	10%	
		TP	-	-	
		S	14	70%	
		SS	4	20%	

47.	<i>Modules and subjects taught in the classes are easily understood.</i>	STS	-	-	3.80
		TS	4	20%	
		TP	1	5%	
		S	10	50%	
		SS	5	25%	
48.	<i>The activities organized by PERKIM are very helpful in understanding the religions of Islam.</i>	STS	-	-	4.30
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	14	70%	
		SS	6	30%	
49.	<i>PERKIM really helps me in understanding Islam.</i>	STS	-	-	4.30
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	14	70%	
		SS	6	30%	
50.	<i>The teaching staff for the classes are really competent.</i>	STS	-	-	4.10
		TS	2	10%	
		TP	-	-	
		S	12	60%	
		SS	6	30%	
51.	<i>I am very close to the teachers.</i>	STS	-	-	3.95
		TS	2	10%	
		TP	-	-	
		S	15	75%	
		SS	3	15%	
52.	<i>PERKIM has provided good service to the new converts.</i>	STS	2	10%	4.05
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	11	55%	
		SS	7	35%	
53.	<i>PERKIM always take care of the new converts welfare.</i>	STS	2	10%	3.85
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	15	75%	
		SS	3	15%	
54.	<i>PERKIM is a suitable place for the new converts.</i>	STS	-	-	4.35
		TS	-	-	
		TP	-	-	
		S	13	65%	
		SS	7	35%	

55.	<i>PERKIM is an NGO that has done a lot of propagation activities.</i>	STS	-	-	4.05
		TS	-	-	
		TP	4	20%	
		S	11	55%	
		SS	5	25%	

Table 1.12 Perception of the New Converts on PERKIM Langkawi

Discussion And Suggestions

In order to measure the quality of life of the Muslim community, it is not only physical but spiritual aspect is also taken into consideration as one of the qualities of life. PERKIM Langkawi has been trying very hard to take good care of the welfare of the new converts so that they would not feel marginalize from the rapid development of Langkawi. This is parallel with the guidelines of holistic development concept (total development) in Vision 2020. Holistic development consists of improvement in living standards aspect and quality of life in terms of economy, social, politic as a whole. Furthermore, emphasis is also given on the development of spiritual, culture and psychology. Therefore, in the development context, modernization is not change wholly, amended or replaced with a new one but the original good values and norms are still maintained (Yahaya Ibrahim 2007).

The discussion above first explained that the research findings demonstrated the new converts in PERKIM Langkawi have high level of understanding of Islam. Despite of the differences in the religions backgrounds for instances Buddha and Hindu; they have shown their intense efforts in learning and strengthening their knowledge in Islam after embracing Islam. They are also from multi-racial and come from various backgrounds such as from urban and rural areas, primary, secondary or tertiary levels of education, high and low income groups and so on. Other than their efforts in strengthening their knowledge in Islam through learning and teaching activities, they are also exposed to the volunteering and community services organized by PERKIM Langkawi.

Second, the research findings have indicated that the teaching and learning methods organized by PERKIM Langkawi have succeeded in shaping the understanding of Islam of the new converts. Apart from that, through the exposure of the activities such as volunteering and community services organized by PERKIM Langkawi led the new converts to be exposed to the outside society especially those consist of Islamic society and acknowledge on their existence. This has created close relationship between Malay Islamic Society and the new converts. The reason for this is to avoid gap among them and more or less aid in the success of the activities organized by PERKIM Langkawi.

Third, in terms of administration on the other hand, although the new converts holistically have given positive responses on the activities organized by PERKIM Langkawi, there are some of them who gave responses for better improvement of the management department. Part of the respondents exhibited dissatisfaction on few matters. This can be seen through the item asked about the method of learning in the religious classes, modules and subjects that are taught, competency and ability of the teaching staff, relationship between the teaching staff and the new converts, other than the services provided by PERKIM to the new converts.

Hence, it is suggested that interaction between PERKIM in the state level and the branch level occurs frequently to enliven the programs organized by PERKIM Langkawi and are able to attract the new converts to be more active in the involvement of the activities that have been organized. Besides, as one of the efforts to attract Malay Islamic Society in Langkawi to join the new converts and be involved with activities organized by PERKIM, the following steps should be taken into consideration;

- a) Fostering awareness of the Muslim community of Langkawi on the importance of their involvement in the activities organized by PERKIM. In addition to assisting the management of PERKIM, they can learn the techniques of preaching to the new converts and befriended with them so that the new converts would not feel isolated.
- b) Ensuring the community activities involve everyone despite of ethnic and culture. Apart from strengthening the understanding of Islam of the new converts when they mingle with the Muslim people itself, they will also be exposed to the social life consisted of various ethnics and cultures.
- c) Executing various activities involving the communities for instance associations, clubs and many more functioning as supporters and moving force on all the activities organized by PERKIM Langkawi.
- d) Establishing administration center and building own by PERKIM Langkawi. This is because, all of the activities and the administration office of PERKIM Langkawi itself are located in Al-Hana' Mosque at the moment and it is a little bit of inappropriate and probably makes it uncomfortable for the execution of the activities and program.

Conclusion

The necessity of guidance for the new converts can be perceived in terms of providing the basic knowledge of Islamic teachings. Moreover, the words of motivations and exuberance for them in leading their life ahead as Muslims, assistance and support given when they are struggling with their lives are considered as a noble charity in the sight of Allah. Spiritual aspect is also taken into consideration other than physical aspect in measuring the quality of life of Islamic society. In the presence of modernization of Langkawi from time to time, PERKIM Langkawi should work hard to take care of the welfare of the new converts so that they would not feel isolated or marginalized from the rapid development.

Furthermore, the surrounding communities should feel responsible in the togetherness of preaching and spreading the propagation of Islam. This is because; propagation of Islam is not only accounted for certain organizations or individuals but all Muslims. The obligation for the preaching is a must for everyone can be understood based on hadith from Abdullah ibn Amr that Rasulullah SAW:

“Tell me even a verse.”

(HR al-Bukhari)

In the context of social life, Islam has set that there is a need to have groups who are responsible in spreading the propagation of Islam. The word of Allah SWT:

“And let there be [arising’ from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful.”

(al-Imran, 3:104)

Based on the verse, the responsibility of propagation consists of three sections which are; First: The obligation to call on virtue is the responsibility of every Muslim. Second: The obligation to ask for the good that is to use the power of influence that we have. Third: The obligation to prohibit or prevent from doing all the prohibitions prohibited by Allah SWT. The three areas of propagation need to be implemented together to ensure the survival of Muslim societies to the command of Allah SWT.

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