

ISLAMIC EDUCATION MODEL IN IMPROVING THE PRACTICE OF WORSHIP OF THE MUALAF COMMUNITY IN CENTRAL SULAWESI

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Abstract

This research aims to discuss the model of Islamic education in the practice of worship in Palau Village, Donggala Regency. This research employs a qualitative research approach, utilizing a case study type and a naturalistic paradigm. And the results of this study found that education was carried out starting from three things, such as prayer education. In that place, prayer education was held considering that prayer is a pillar of religion that must be carried out by a Muslim five times a day. Then, in Al-Qur'an reading and writing education, the Al-Qur'an is a guide to life for Muslims that must be known, so that loyal Muslims must be able to read the Al-Qur'an as well as understand what the Al-Qur'an conveys. Furthermore, in Islamic moral education, as Muslims, we must maintain noble morals. Even in a hadith, Rasulullah SAW said that he was sent to this earth to destroy morals. While the implications of each education that is applied on average already have pretty good results, although there are still many things that must be improved again to be able to achieve maximum results, fostering converts does have a big challenge, but behind that, Allah will reward great rewards for the coaches if they continue to be patient.

Keywords: Islamic Education Model, Practice of Worship, Mualaf Community

Introduction

The educational model conceptualises learner development as a process that results from learning learner skills and behaviours that characterise higher levels of developmental functioning. Consequently, the educational model conceptualises early intervention primarily as a process by which educators systematically teach learners the developmental skills and concepts that characterise advanced functioning (Mahoney, 2011).

The social cognition model shares many characteristics with the educational and behavioural models. Like the educational approach, it is concerned with beliefs, but like the behavioral approach, it is also interested in predicting how a person will act (Kent, 1998).

The Qur'an explains that the main purpose of human existence is to devote himself to Allah, as in Surah al-Dhariyat verse 56. The function of humans is to be servants of Allah in the perspective of vertical relations (habl min Allah) and khalifah Allah in the perspective of horizontal

relations (*habl min al-nas*). Divine guidance from the Qur'an and Sunnah, under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and the previous caliphs, must guide the development of human values. Thus, the treatise of Islam was conveyed to mankind through its gradual preaching. As a result, many embraced Islam because they found truth and peace in life. However, we must continue to focus on this group of our brothers throughout their lives, enhancing their welfare, knowledge, guidance, and other aspects, to position them as superior role models for Muslim human resources (Abdullah, 2023).

According to Qardawi, converts are those who are expected to increase their inclination or belief in Islam, prevent their evil intentions against Muslims, or hope for their usefulness in defending and helping Muslims from enemies (Qardawi, 2002). Converts seeking peace and prosperity face many challenges. Their newness in adapting to a new faith and way of life puts emotional stress on them (Abdullah, 2023). As converts have little experience with religious life in Islam, they depend on the guidance of Muslims. Unfortunately, it is quite difficult for Mualaf to abandon practices and customs that were common before Islam. The failure of Muslims to provide the best Islamic education and guidance to converts is the root of this problem. Thus, failure to provide good commitment in these inter-ethnic marriages can lead to divorce. Furthermore, there are instances of converts who, dissatisfied with this family's failure, decide to return to their previous teachings or apostatize (Awang, 2022).

Mualaf before adopting hope to continue learning about Islam, although they realise it will be difficult due to the uncertain situation (Abdullah, 2023 ; Krstic, 2009). To fully understand and practice the Islamic faith, converting to Islam requires a specific educational programme (Abdullah, 2023 ; Winchester, 2008). Classroom-based teaching can enhance religious understanding among good converts. Careful curriculum planning for converts is necessary to maximise learning (Bakar, 2018). The focus of the class is on the initial guidance of our brothers and sisters on *taharah*, *dua amalan*, *tawhid*, and examples of *sirah* or *surah*. *Sirah* is a chapter in the Qur'an that describes the Prophet's *da'wah* (Abdelaal & Rashid, 2015). Tailoring learning sessions to the abilities of converts will enhance their comprehension of the teachings.

The same problem is experienced by the convert community in Palau Village, Central Sulawesi Province. In the past, they did not receive good Islamic education services, so their faith was very weak, resulting in the re-emergence of old cultures before embracing Islam. The community of converts possesses a strong desire to learn, but their disappointment arises when other Muslim brothers fail to facilitate their enthusiasm. From this, an ignorant religious pattern is formed, which forms an *abangan* Islam and even tends to want to return to the previous religion.

In order to overcome the above problems, attract the attention of Muslims so that these problems do not persist. As soon as possible, carry out guidance by starting with the cultivation of Islamic educational values. Islamic education that is carried out focuses on increasing the experience of worship, because in Islamic teachings, worship and awareness of the importance of worship are very important things as pillars of religion.

Previous studies related to education for the convert community are still few. This is an illustration of the researchers' lack of attention to the problems of the convert community, particularly in Indonesia. Indonesia is a Muslim-majority country, with a very large percentage of converts per year. It is unfortunate if there is no clear follow-up related to converts. So as to reduce the enthusiasm of converts struggling to adjust to their new religion, namely Islam. The presentation of previous studies can be seen in the following visualisation of open knowledge map analysis:

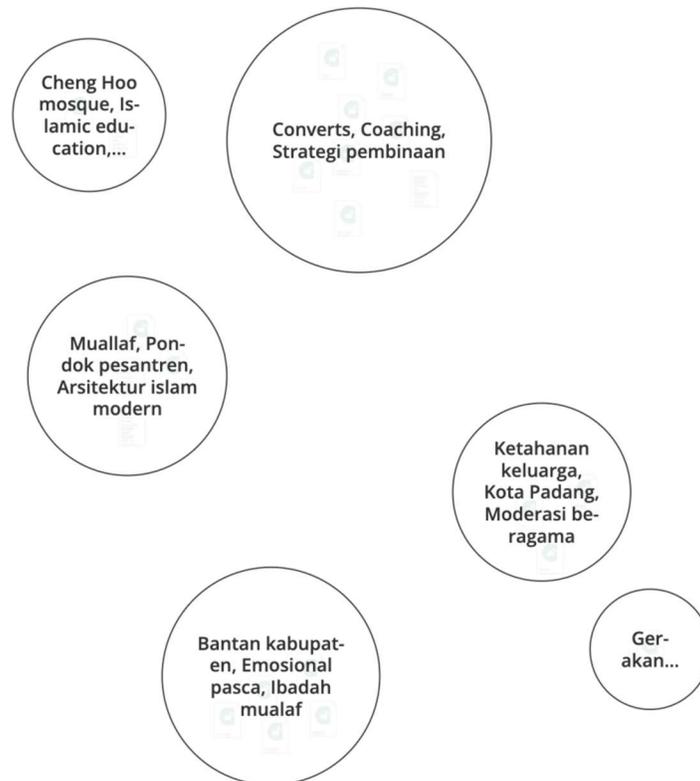


Figure I Visualization of OKM Analysis

The visualization of open knowledge maps above explains that research related to coaching focuses more on the strategies carried out than on specific objects, such as the convert community. Compared to the study of coaching strategies, research on the guidance of converts' worship receives less attention.

The above visualization of open knowledge maps demonstrates that there is no connection at all between one coaching-related study and another. So it looks like the position of the circle is far apart. Thus, it becomes clear that research related to improving the worship experience raised in this study is still very limited and still has a lot of room for other researchers to take part in or contribute to research related to the convert community.

Therefore, this research was conducted with the title "Islamic education model in improving the practice of worship in the convert community in Central Sulawesi." With the

formulation of problem (1), how is the Islamic education model improving the experience of worship in the convert community in Central Sulawesi? (2) What are the implications of the Islamic education model for improving the practice of worship in the convert community in Central Sulawesi?

Theoretical Framework

Islamic Education Model

Education has various material or human facilities that have a significant impact, such as mosques, educators, families, and schools. These facilities are called "educational tools." There are also meaningful and psychological means, such as educating through stories and dialog. We refer to these meaningful methods as "educational methods" (An-Nahlawi, 1996 ; Aslan, 2019 ; Syakhrani, 2021). Educational tools are tools that not only create conditions that allow the implementation of education but are also realized in the form of actions and situations that help achieve goals (Syakhrani, 2021).

Islamic education is an educational process that adheres to the values found in Islamic teachings. The material provided is based on several main sources, such as the Qur'an, Hadith, and the opinions of the 'ulama (Faisal, 1995 ; Nata, 2005). Islamic teachings distinguish themselves from other forms of education. If other education is based on rational, secular, and impractical thinking alone, Islamic education is based on rational and empirical thinking and must be based on two main sources, namely the Qur'an and Hadith.

From the above understanding, it can be concluded that the Islamic education model is a form or method carried out by educators for students to become ideal individuals according to Islamic values by conducting Islamic studies and training related to Islamic values and teachings.

Practice of Worship

Worship is one of the important religious ritual behaviours for adherents of a religion. This worship is also like the process of uniting the soul and mind in humans to get closer to the Creator. The definition of worship, aspects of worship, and function of worship in Islam have a very broad scope. However, the purpose of worship remains the same, namely to get the pleasure of Allah SWT. Islam is a universal religion that contains instructions for carrying out daily activities, including prayer (Khoiruman, 2019).

Every nation in the world practices worship in accordance with their respective beliefs. If you pay close attention to everyday life, you will see the forms and patterns of practice between one religion and another. Islam, for example, has many forms in its practice (Darfin, 2022).

Among the Islamic community, there is an assumption that all Muslims who perform worship, especially prayer, must have a good personality; their behaviour is smooth; and their traits are praiseworthy according to Islamic teachings. The reality today is that there are still many Muslims who pray, but their mentality is damaged, dilapidated, their hearts are dirty,

untrustworthy, and so on. This is due to a lack of understanding of the teachings of Islam and a lack of education, guidance, and direction, both directly and indirectly, so that the practice carried out is less appreciated (Darfin, 2022).

The Muallaf Community

Muallaf is someone from another religion who embraces Islam but is still weak in faith and lacks knowledge of Islam (Nasution, 1993). Muallaf people need to get guidance from religious leaders in the area (RI, 2012). Muallaf must learn the teachings of Islam from the basics so that their religiosity becomes better. Such as learning to pray, do wudlu, recite short letters, and pray.

The word muallaf is a non-Muslim person who has just embraced Islam, and in the meaning of the language of converts, it means people who are tamed so that they embrace Islam (for non-Muslims) or so that they become stronger in their faith in Islam (for Muslims). The contextualization of the virtues of being a convert explains that the prophet was commanded by Allah to convey them to the disbelievers. When they stop their disbelief and enter Islam, their sins will be forgiven in the hereafter and also in the world, and they will not be subject to Islamic penalties.¹

The phenomenon of converts is not new; since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the conversion from paganism (pre-Islamic beliefs that existed in the Arabian Peninsula) to monotheism has occurred in the people who were preached by the Prophet. A person who decides to embrace Islam based on the arguments in the Qur'an is under the guidance of Allah.

Methodology

The research took place in Palau Village, Donggala Regency, Central Sulawesi, on July 15, 2023. Data analysis in this study used single data analysis (individual case analysis) with a data analysis model from Miles and Huberman through three lines of activity that occur simultaneously, namely: (1) data reduction, carried out continuously during the research, even before the data is completely collected. (2) data presentation, carried out to find Islamic values taught in the family, such as reciting the Koran, aqidah, worship, and morals. (3) conclusion drawing or verification, conducted during data collection and afterwards to draw conclusions so as to find patterns in the events that occur. Data collection techniques in this study include observation, interview, and documentation methods. This research uses a naturalistic paradigm, also called the social definition paradigm (Thabrani, 2001). Some of the provisions of naturalistic research are: natural context, humans as instruments, and the utilisation of unspeakable knowledge (Hibana et al., 2015). Researchers limit cases by time and activity, and use various data collection procedures to gather complete information within a predetermined timeframe (Creswell, 2016). This study employs

¹ KAMIL, RIDWAN (2021) *Konsep Muallaf Dan Keutamaannya Dalam Al-Qur'an*. Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember.

qualitative research methods. methods for exploring meaning by a number of individuals or groups ascribed to social or humanitarian problems (Creswell, 2016).

Result and Discussion

Islamic education is a basic knowledge that must be possessed by all people who embrace Islam, especially converts who are very new to Islam. A convert who is still unfamiliar with Islam certainly needs Muslim brothers and sisters to guide converts to understand and implement Islam in life. Bakar & Siti (2018) asserted that careful curriculum planning for converts is necessary to maximise learning. In Malaysia, in addition to receiving education on the basics of Islam, Fardu-Ain guidance classes are also held for converts (Bakar & Siti, 2018). In Indonesia, Islamic education for converts is still very limited. The lack of facilities provided by Muslim brothers leaves converts disappointed and leads to the emergence of a religiously ignorant population. This is evidenced in Figure 1, where research on increasing the worship experience of the convert community is very minimal and is exacerbated by the lack of facilities for converts to deepen their knowledge of Islam.

Islamic education in the practice of worship is carried out in one of the convert communities in Palau Village, Donggala Regency, Central Sulawesi. This educational process can occur because of the direct concern of the local village head; he is the one who started the coaching until now. In the coaching process, the village head is greatly helped by his wife, who is also a convert. Currently, the members of the converts who are fostered are approximately 30 heads of families. The village head is also assisted by two members of Islamic organisations who faithfully assist in the education process. Among the biggest obstacles faced by the coach are the unfavourable economic conditions, which make it difficult to fulfil the needs of the education process.

Islamic Education Model for Improving Worship Experience in the Muslim Community

1. Prayer education

Every education or coaching, especially for the convert community, will certainly start with the most basic things. In Islam, everyone agrees that the most fundamental issue is the establishment of prayer. Prayer is a pillar of religion; when a person's prayer is good, then all his deeds are good, but if a person's prayer is bad, then all his deeds are bad (rejected).

The issue of the importance of prayer as one of the most basic things for Muslims is well realised by educators in the convert community, so as a result of our research in the convert community of Palau Village, Donggala Regency, in conducting education, they prefer to start by mastering prayer movements and slowly memorising prayer recitations (two participants).

Until now, educators in the convert community still continue to emphasise mastery of the prayer movement because each member of the community does not have the same understanding power, so there are still many members who have not really mastered the prayer movements taught, especially the recitations (one participant).

2. Al-Qur'an Reading and Writing Education

Another fundamental thing that must also be emphasised for Muslims is reading and writing the Qur'an. Especially reading the Qur'an is one that is very obligatory to learn because, in prayer, reading Surah Al-Fatihah is one of the pillars of prayer, and if it is wrong to read it, then the consequence is that our prayer is canceled. Moreover, the Qur'an is the holy book of Islam, which is a guide to life in the world and the hereafter, so it is impossible for someone to be truly guided in living life if he himself cannot read the Qur'an (as well as understand it).

Educators in the community of converts to Islam in Palau Village, Donggala Regency, understand the importance of Qur'anic reading and writing education. So according to the results of our interview with the head of the convert community coaching, he directs his members to provide learning on how to read the Qur'an, starting from the basics (one participant).

As with prayer education, Al-Qur'an reading and writing education is also still ongoing. Given that each member does not have the same understanding power and the continued increase in new converts, they immediately adjust to the existing educational process. As said by one of the educators, there are currently many new members joining; they are new converts (one participant).

3. Islamic Moral Education

Morals is also one of the issues that are very basic in Islam. Even in a hadith, the Prophet Muhammad SAW once said that he was sent to this earth to perfect morals. Islam is a religion that strongly upholds noble moral values, so it is mandatory for a Muslim who is truly in his faith to maintain noble morals.

As an educator, this is also very important to realise, so that in the education process, the educators do not forget to start introducing noble moral values to students (one participant). As we observed in the field, educators are very enthusiastic about introducing noble moral values so that, in addition to being practiced, it is also evidence to new converts that Islam is a very peaceful religion that upholds noble morals.

Implications of the Islamic Education Model for Improving the Practice of Worship in the Muslim Community

1. Prayer Education

For every implementation of an education, the thing that should not be forgotten is to know the implications of the education that has been carried out so that educators know the extent of their success so far. In the education carried out for the convert community in Palau Village, Donggala Regency, it can be seen that currently many of the converts are able to pray, although in terms of reading they are not too fluent, but in terms of movement they are fairly mastered.

Regarding this matter, it is also said by the coach that many of their members have managed to master the movements of prayer, all because they are often repeated in the education process. However, until now, they have continued to be guided and not just let go because they are not too fluent in memorising the recitations in prayer (two participants).

According to the members who are coached, although they have a little difficulty, for the prayer movements they can master them, which is a big challenge for them precisely in the prayer recitations because they are still unfamiliar with Arabic lafadz. Even so, they will continue to do their best to continue learning until they are truly confident in praying.

2. Qur'an Reading and Writing Education

As for the Qur'an reading and writing education carried out in Palau Village, Donggala Regency, there are already some of the members who already know the hijaiyah letters. This development is considered a very good development, considering that previously they were converts who certainly had great difficulty pronouncing the hijaiyah letters properly and correctly.

The presence of several members who have begun to recognise hijaiyah letters has become a great source of gratitude for the coaches. However, until now, the quality of education has continued to improve considering that there are still many members who do not know well all the hijaiyah letters, so that all members who are fostered can really recognise the hijaiyah letters as a whole (two participants).

3. Islamic Moral Education

Furthermore, in Islamic moral education carried out in Palau Village, Donggala Regency, almost all existing members have really understood what Islamic morals are. This is known from the question-and-answer session about Islamic morals conducted by the coaches. They even have their own happiness when they know good and right behaviors, as taught in Islam.

Regarding this, as stated by the educators, the members really welcome Islamic moral education because, for them, the values taught by Islam are so peaceful and very soothing. There are many things that they only know now, in addition to other positive and logical things that had previously encouraged them to embrace Islam (three participants).

Final Considerations

Many of us find in various places where there are our brothers who have just converted (converts to Islam) and then lack the attention of Muslim brothers in terms of education and guidance for their new converts, making it difficult for those new converts to learn Islam, especially in doing the practices that are their obligations as a Muslim. We as Muslims must really pay attention to our newly converted brothers and sisters; we welcome them and give them the items they need as Muslims, such as prayer clothes, prayer mats, complete Qur'ans with translations, etc. And above just giving them things, we must also direct and help

them to study and deepen the religion of Islam so that they can quickly have good insight and can practice the practices solemnly.

In the research that we conducted in the community of converts in Palau Village, Donggala Regency, Central Sulawesi, education was carried out starting from three things, such as prayer education, where prayer education was held considering that prayer is a pillar of religion that must be carried out by a Muslim five times a day. Then, in Al-Qur'an reading and writing education, the Al-Qur'an is a guide to life for Muslims that must be known, so that loyal Muslims must be able to read the Al-Qur'an as well as understand what is conveyed by the Al-Qur'an. Furthermore, in Islamic moral education, as Muslims, we must maintain noble morals. Even in a hadith, Rasulullah SAW said that he was sent to this earth to destroy morals. While the implications of each education that is applied on average already have pretty good results, although there are still many things that must be improved again to be able to achieve maximum results, fostering converts does have a big challenge, but behind that, Allah will reward great rewards for its coaches if they continue to be patient.

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