

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Orang Asli community life which falls far behind in all fields requires help and serious attention to assist them raise their living standard and introduce the teachings of Islam among them. This community does not only require direct guidance, this Orang Asli, has evolved longer than the Malays and they have been observing the Malay people with the image of Islam for a long. Furthermore, with the typical hold of animism which has been inherited for generations, this community is in a dilemma between changing their way of life completely or accepting Islam which is still mixed with the practice of animism. Therefore, preaching to the community is too challenging for Muslims, especially in Malaysia and the approach or methodology of preaching to the community needs to suit them and be effective.

Nowadays, there are many da'wah organizations, either government or the non-government organization, which contribute to the Orang Asli community, including Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM), Majlis Agama Islam Negeri (MAIN), Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri (JAIN), Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia (PERKIM), Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli (JAKOA)) and many others who hold a special interest in their preaching agenda. According to Ruhiah Abd. Rahman (2003) those organizations have planned and held various programs to ensure that the Orang Asli community is not left behind in the aspect of religion, social, and economy. In addition to that, every program planned should be appropriate and suit the level of acceptance of the target group.

The Orang Asli community is part of the population that makes up Malaysia. According to the Ministry of Rural Development (2018) shows the number of Orang Asli in Peninsular Malaysia is 178,197. There are varieties of religions followed by Orang Asli such as Islam, Hindu, Animism, Bahai, Buddha, Kristian, and Atheist. From that, the number of Muslims is 35,975, Kristian with 17,351, Animism with 58,043, and Atheist with 42,757. With the high number of Muslims, it shows the potential to attract others to convert to Islam. However, there should be an appropriate method to attract them.

This is supported by Hairunizam Wahid and Radiah Abdul Kader (2010) that said religious factors are among the crucial factors because they can affect mental health, changing individual attitudes and also leading to a positive life that can long-term influence individual changes in lifestyle and economics.

According to Halim Mokhtar (2002), the majority of the Orang Asli still adhere to animism, or in other words it called as religious beliefs inherited from their grandparents. He said, only about 8% of those who accept the da'wah term become Muslims. Thus, it clearly shows that only a small number of the Orang Asli converted to Islam which indicates that the development of Islamic preaching is still not favorable. Therefore, a preacher must use good communication techniques to achieve his target mission in conveying the message of da'wah.

In the context of preaching knowledge, it includes Islamic teachings from various aspects of Islam regarding the faith, syariah, morals, and historical aspects of prophetic biography (Abd al-Karim Zaydan 1993). In other words, we need to apply these aspects of the process of becoming a perfect Muslim. In addition, the preachers can use appropriate communication as a medium to ensure the Orang Asli will understand, accept and adhere

to Islam to achieve happiness in the world and the hereafter (Kustadi 2013). What we can understand from this statement the main purpose of preaching is to make sure our Mad'u accept our content of da'wah and all preacher must know how to use appropriate methods.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Nowadays the welfare of the Orang Asli community has become a subject of concern among Malaysians. Therefore, many NGOs have taken steps to help Orang Asli in improving their understanding of Islam. Based on Engku Ahmad Zaki Engku Alwi (2014) the life of the Orang Asli community, which is far behind in all areas, requires them to be helped and given serious attention as well as to improve their living standards and introduce the teachings of Islam among them. This race not only needs direct guidance, but all this time this race which has evolved longer than the Malay race observes and evaluates the Malays with their Islamic image. However, according to statistics released by the Ministry of Rural Development (2018), the number of Orang Asli who embrace Islam (35975) is lower than Orang Asli who embrace Animism (58043) and those who have no religion or atheists (42757). Overall, the number of Orang Asli who embrace Islam is at a worrying level.

Based on the researcher's own experience, that research needs to be highlighted because when the researcher conducted an interview session to collect data for research at the Bachelor's level, at that time the researcher wanted to study the taboos and customs of Orang Asli and it was found that some respondents gave unfavorable opinions about preachers who did not help in the Orang Asli Islamic affairs in his village. This matter is also supported by research conducted by Asmadi Abdul Rahman and Ramlan Mustapha

(2020) there are internal problems experienced by preachers that are divided into two parts. The first is a lack of commitment to carrying out preaching to Orang Asli. Some Preachers are known as Penggerak Masyarakat Orang Asli (PMOA) who always enter the Orang Asli Village. This may be because they do not like to preach but they are forced to do it for the sake of getting a salary to cover their daily needs. As a result, there are many mosques abandoned, hence, causing severe damage. Second, the preacher's behavior does not show the attitude of a preacher. When carrying out preaching activities in a village, there are a few preachers who are not fully involved with the program and these people only turn up at the end of the program to show that they are on the higher rank. And according to Ahmad Redzuan (2006), some preachers smoke in public and some do not pray in the congregation of the Orang Asli population. The research on the preacher's problem has been done by Ahmed Redzuan Mohd Yunus (2006). The same situation is still ongoing currently, though not as bad as in 2006.

Apart from the weaknesses shown by the preacher, there is also a problem between the preacher and the Orang Asli. A very significant problem is a language problem or communication issue. According to the Orang Asli Development Department (JAKOA), the Orang Asli in Malaysia has 3 main tribes which are:- 1) Negrito 2) Senoi, and 3) Proto Malay. Each Tribe has a breakdown of up to 18 types of tribes. Each tribe has a different Orang Asli language. According to Ramlan Mustapa (2020), the young people of the Asli people easily understand the Malay language, but the old people, it is difficult for them to speak Malay well. Most of the Orang Asli who are old, prefer to speak Orang Asli because they use the Orang Asli language as their daily communication. This matter is also stated in the study of Nur Damia Husna and Zulkifli Aini (2017) there are a few preachers who

use English such as pluralism, vandalism, and secularism which are seen as inappropriate because they cause difficulties among the indigenous community to understand it. This study is in line with the study of Abdul Razaq & Zalizan (2009) who also found that the method of using words that are difficult to understand for the Orang Asli is not appropriate considering their thinking power which is still at a weak level.

Nowadays, there are many preaching organizations, whether the government or non-government Organizations (NGOs), that contribute to the Orang Asli community. Among them are Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM), Majlis Agama Islam Negeri (MAIN), Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri (JAIN), Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia (PERKIM), Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli (JAKOA) and many others which make the Orang Asli community a target in their preaching agenda. These organizations have planned and held various programs to ensure that the Orang Asli community does not leave behind in religious, social, and economic aspects. However, the Orang Asli's understanding of Islam is still at a worrying level and according to Abdul Ghafar (2014), one of the main problems of the Orang Asli group is from the point of view of faith and worship. There is still belief in animism and the supernatural such as belief in river and forest spirits. In addition, there are also Orang Asli who prefer Christian missionaries to Islamic preachers. According to Asmadi Abdul Rahman (2020), most of the poor Orang Asli are so easily deceived and influenced by the material elements provided by the Christian missionaries, and the Orang Asli are also incited not to participate in any activities organized by the preachers. In past studies, the researcher found that the preaching methods and theories used by the preachers were irrelevant and ineffective for Orang Asli and other religions

began to lead the Islamic preachers in helping the Orang Asli and indirectly gave the Orang Asli more opportunities to love other religions, especially Christianity.

Based on this problem, the researcher believes that preachers need to have a certain number of skills to complete the preaching work done to the Orang Asli community. Among the skills needed by preachers is communication skills. The main focus of this study is the preacher's skill in choosing the appropriate form of communication before starting the da'wah process with the Orang Asli community.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the types of da'wah communication used by preachers toward orang asli?
- 2) What are the obstacles to da'wah communication towards orang asli?
- 3) What are the preparations for da'wah communication towards orang asli?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study the da'wah communication method used by the preachers.
- 2) To understand the obstacle of da'wah communication towards orang asli.
- 3) To clarify the preparation of da'wah communication towards Orang Asli.

1.5 SIGNIFICANT OF THE RESEARCH

This research examined statistics released by the Ministry of Rural Development (2018) that indicate that the number of Orang Asli Muslims in Selangor is 3,268 fewer than those who practice Animism, which totals 5,996 individuals. It was also found that in Selangor, Orang Asli individuals who practice Islam follow "Suku Adat" or cultural practices more closely, as their cultural identity holds greater significance than their religious affiliation. This research aims to investigate the types of da'wah communication utilized by preachers to reach out to the Orang Asli community. This research found statistics released by the Ministry of Rural Development (2018) that the number of Orang Asli Muslims is 3,268 less than Animism 5,996 in Selangor. Based on statistics Orang Asli in Selangor follow "Suku Adat" or Culture because their religion is higher than Islam. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to find out what type of dakwah communication has been used by preachers toward Orang Asli

Preachers have been discussing the act of preaching to the Orang Asli for a considerable amount of time, to the point that an organization has been established to specifically focus on preaching to this community. Given the variety of preaching methods employed when addressing the Orang Asli, it is crucial to understand the community's perception of the preacher. This understanding can help to improve the way the community treats the Orang Asli, even if they differ in religion and ethnicity.

This research is also significant in promoting the use of appropriate preaching methods for the Orang Asli in Malaysia. It is well-known that this group needs to be taken care of to ensure they accept the progress made by Malaysians, especially in terms of accepting Islam

as the official religion in Malaysia. Preachers must play a critical role in ensuring that their preaching reaches the Orang Asli using the right method and approach.

This research can also benefit the government, state religious departments, and NGOs by guiding effective communication techniques in their da'wah work with the Orang Asli. Many religious organizations, including government and non-government organizations such as Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM), Majlis Agama Islam Negeri (MAIN), Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri (JAIN), Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia (PERKIM), and Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli (JAKOA), contribute to helping the Orang Asli community.

As such, this research is essential and can serve as a reference point for state religious departments to improve their preaching to the Orang Asli. Furthermore, it can also serve as a research center for future researchers.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research aims to investigate the types of da'wah communication used by preachers when preaching to the Orang Asli, as well as to identify the obstacles and challenges they face in carrying out their da'wah activities. The researcher plans to gather information from various sources, including articles, journals, books, library studies, and past studies. To supplement this, the researcher will conduct interviews with nine preachers from Selangor and the Klang Valley who are members of the *Pengerak Orang Asli Community* (PMOA). The selection of these preachers was random, with no criteria established for what constitutes a "good" preacher when it comes to preaching to the Orang Asli.

Furthermore, this study also aims to examine the preparation undertaken by preachers before and after preaching to the Orang Asli. Many of these preachers have extensive experience in the field of preaching to the Orang Asli, with each Orang Asli village having a preacher to provide support and assistance to the community. In Selangor, 76 Orang Asli villages are supervised by the Orang Asli Community Coordinator (PMOA), but only 44 of these have a *surau* or mosque where the Orang Asli community is active. For example, Kampung Orang Asli (KOA) Ulu Klang, KOA Ulu Batu, KOA Batu 12 Gombak, KOA Tongkah, KOA Pulau Kempas, KOA Bukit Serdang, KOA Kepau Laut, KOA Sg. Judah, KOA Kolam Air, KOA Sg. Pelek, KOA Rasau Hilir, KOA Desa Temuan, KOA Bukit Bandaraya, KOA Tun Abdul Razak, KOA Sg Jang, KOA Broga, KOA Sg Gabai, KOA Pangsun, KOA Sg Lalang and so on. This suggests that there is still much work to be done in terms of preaching activities in the Klang Valley.

Therefore, this research aims to shed light on the types of preaching communication used, the obstacles faced by preachers, and the preparation required for preaching to the Orang Asli. Ultimately, this research is crucial for the Pengerak in ensuring that da'wah activities can continue and that the Orang Asli community can better understand the teachings of Islam.

SUMMARY OF INFORMANT

Informant	Gender	Experience as Preacher(Years)	Area in Selangor	Kampung Orang Asli (KOA) Seliaan
1	Male	27	Hulu Selangor	-Bukit Manchong - Sungai Garing - Sungai Kelubi
2	Female	12	Sepang	- Kampung Jambu - Kampung Bakok - Kampung Sungai Melut - Kampung Kelingsing
3	Female	20	Gombak	-Bukit Lagong - Sungai Buloh
4	Female	5	Sepang	-Bukit Dugang -Bukit Unggul - Sungai Buah
5	Male	5	Hulu Selangor	-Kampung Pertak - Buloh Telor - Gerachi Jaya
6	Male	11	Kuala Langat	-Taman Desa Kemandol - Bukit Perah

				- Bukit Kecil
7	Male	11	Selangor	- Air Terentang - Bukit Damar - Bukit Baja
8	Male	4	Kuala Langat	- Tanjung Sepat - Sungai Bumbun - Tongkah - Morib
9	Male	6	Selangor	- Kolam Air Bangkong - Bukit Tampoi - Seberang Tasik

Table 1.1

1.7 DEFINITION OF KEYWORDS

1) Orang Asli

The existence of the Aboriginal Peoples Act 1954 (Act 134) under the Aboriginal Peoples Ordinance No. 3, 1954 which was amended in 1974, setting the terms and qualifications to state the Orang Asli community have been described in detail. Based on Section 3 in the Aboriginal Peoples Act 1954 (Act 134), the Orang Asli is defined as follows:

- 1) Any of which the father is a member of the Orang Asli ethnic group, who speaks the Orang Asli language and follows the way of life of the Orang Asli and traditions of the Orang Asli beliefs and includes the descent through the man.

2) Any person of any race was to be adopted as a child by the Orang Asli and raised as an Orang Asli, habitually speaks the languages of the Orang Asli, follows the way of life of the Orang Asli and traditions of the Orang Asli and becomes a member of the Orang Asli community

3) Children of any union between an Orang Asli woman and a man from another race, provided that the child habitually speaks the Orang Asli languages and beliefs of the Orang Asli and is still a member of an Orang Asli community.

2) DA'WAH

According to Noresah Baharom (2005), the concept of da'wah in Islam is subsumed under the Arabic word "da'wah" a noun formed from a root composed of radicals د-ع-و. In its verbal form, this word has as its basic meaning "to call," "to summon", and "to invite". "Da'wah" thus becomes "a call" or "an invitation," and, in specialized usage, "missionary activity." In the Quran the concept appears in such passages as Sura 16:125: "Call unto the way of the Lord with wisdom and exhortation, and reason with them in the better way.

The word da'wah (دعوة) and the verb da'a (دعا) from which it is derived, is used with different meanings in the Qur'an as well as in ordinary speech. It signifies an "act of invitation". Its lexical meanings include the concepts of summoning, calling on, appealing to, invocation, prayer, propaganda, missionary activity, and finally legal proceedings and claims.

3) COMMUNICATION

Communication can be defined as the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another (Keyton, 2011). The word communication is

derived from the Latin word, *communis*, which means *common*. The definition underscores the fact that unless a common understanding results from the exchange of information, there is no communication. Figure 1 reflects the definition and identifies the important elements of the communication process (Cheney, 2011)

According to Velentzas, Mamalis, and Broni (2010) the term "communication" has been derived from the Latin "communis," which means "common". Thus "to communicate" means "to make common" "to make known", and "to share" and includes verbal, non-verbal, and electronic means of human interaction. Scholars who study communication analyze the development of communication skills in humans and theorize about how communication can be made more effective.

1.8 CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study is to investigate the types of preaching communication utilized by preachers when delivering their message to the Orang Asli and to identify the challenges they encounter while conducting their preaching activities. The research was carried out in the Klang Valley, and a preacher affiliated with the Penggerak Masyarakat Orang Asli (PMOA) was selected as the research subject. Additionally, this study aims to examine the preparation process undertaken by preachers before and after preaching to the Orang Asli.