



A Study on Factors that Encourages Chinese Muslim Community within Dialogue of Life

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ABSTRACT

The life of dialogue within the community that had converted to Islam showed two different types of relationships such as the inter-ethnic relationship that shared the same religion and the relationship among ethnic of different religion. Factors such as interactions, marriage, social relationship and the encouragement of family members in converting to Islam was seen as the dialogue of life factors that was closely related to the understanding, learning and exploring of Islam. The newly converts showed family-bonds, the need to rectify the misunderstandings and the motivation from da'wah organisations were seen as factors to the involvement for this community in the dialogue of life after converting Islam. The objective of this study is to see what factors are leading for the Chinese community to be involved in the dialogue of life before and after converting Islam. This descriptive study uses the qualitative method with the distribution of questionnaires to Chinese Muslim converts. Findings have shown that the involvement factor of the Chinese community in the dialogue of life before and after converting is at a moderate scale for shared activities and motivation from da'wah organisations. Whereas, the involvement of the Chinese community in the dialogue of life after converting Islam is high for factors such as interactions, family relationships and the relationship ties of Muslims.

KEYWORDS: Factor, Chinese Muslim, Non Muslim, Dialogue of Life, Terengganu.

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is a country that is made up by multi-ethnicity and every ethnicity has its own background of religion, language, belief, culture and way of life. At times this multi-ethnicity is a hindrance or a barricade towards the process of integration if it is not dealt with accordingly. These existing differences make the 'dialogue' as a need to rectify the misunderstandings, explaining the truth and to undo issues especially relating to coexistent. Therefore, it is of the right choice for humans to establish relationships with one another in order to enjoy a peaceful and harmonious life. The dialogue of life is a discipline and a medium of interaction that is based on spiritual values and the coexistence of life with other religion, we would surely work our way to interact and help one another. This act is done not only for the purpose of manners and ethics in interactions but is also every religious claims [1]. In other words, dialogue of life does not only involve religious community leaders, but moreover it involves every individual that exist in the community [2]. In [3] has emphasised that inside this dialogue which is informal, it can take place anywhere and is opened to anyone. In [4] stated that it is a community dialogue that covers the non-structure interaction that happens within a community of different religious tradition and culture. In regards to this, in [5] stated the dialogue of life is an element of non-verbal interaction which is effective in explaining the differences of values that existed in a religion. This means that every human being that comes to follow the religious practises on ones' religion is able to answer the issues pertaining to the diverse cultural life. Besides, the activities that usually occurred within the community, dialogue of life also have the expression of conscience, soul and feelings. These are the things that were said by [6] while stating the dialogue of life as experiencing together all aspects of human life. The implication of sharing eases off every family members that understood the issue of differences in religion with an open heart. The interactions that occurred within the community of different religion have made the culture within the everyday interaction a step into building a pattern in social relationship. It is then bonded closer towards friendliness with one another.

In [7] explained the factor towards conversion which is due to the existence of experiences of before and after converting in the relationship between religion and the newly converts. In [8], there was four factors on the occurrence on religious conversion that is spiritual conflict, influences of relationship with tradition and the

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environment, persuasion and emotional unstable. Moreover, there is a strong relation between the involvements in the daily activities with the factors for conversion. For instance, in [9] explained that there is the presence of religious conversion in Brunei is due to factors such as interaction among peers of different religion, marriage and family encouragement. Previous study has also shown that the conversion of religion occurred was caused by the desire to marry their partners who was of different religion [10]. In [11] stated that factors such as environment, peers and interactions had influenced the process of religious conversion within the newly converts. Findings from the study showed that there was the occurrence of social relationship based on the dialogue of life before the conversion took place. According to [12], the factor on social played a vital role in building the confidence and religious practises that was further deeper. The same suggestion was forwarded by [13] by stating that social or environmental factors played a role in helping the spreading of the religion. Social factor usually covers inter-family relationships, peers and the surrounding community. In the context of Islamic religious conversion in Malaysia, the newly converts community are usually attracted to the life of the Malays Muslim who often lend their hands to one another, adopting the concept of cooperation, harmonious, the act of gotong-royong (Malays Muslim tradition helping), kenduri (Malays Muslim fiesta) and others. Sociological paradigm which was told has proven the interaction between Muslim-non-Muslim that contributed towards the religious conversion to Islam. In [7] stated that through this process, dialogue of life took place between the newly converts and the Muslim community which ended up in fostering the friendship and the close-bonds with people of different religion. In this matter, dialogue of life is seen as a role to the occurrence of conversion which is through interactions, marriage relationship ties among Muslim and non-Muslim which lastly cause the religious conversion. The dialogue of life of the newly converts showed the reality of the newly converts on the process of conversion as a Muslim. During this period, in [14] stated that Chinese Muslim converts is placed in two relationship situation that is the relationship which involves their own family members who are non-Muslim and the relationship with the surrounding Muslim community. There is part of the Chinese Muslim community that took the easier way in adjusting their life to the pristine culture when interacting with non-Muslim families. Nonetheless, in the context of the Muslim relationship, in [15] stated that among the newly converts that lived among the Malays Muslim, they have suited themselves in eating Malay food, as well as eating using their hand as to how the Malay Muslim community do. Apart from that, it has also found that the newly converts are really comfortable in wearing Malay bajukurung. Whereas, during the celebration of Aidil Fitri, the men would wear baju Melayu along with sarung to perform the Aidil Fitri prayer. Looking from one side, the religious conversion to Islam shows how the newly converts community demonstrate the culture of the local Muslim community. This process relates greatly to the experience of partaking in activities before converting which the newly converts had gone through.

There are several previous studies that showed the elements dialogue of life as factors the influenced the newly converts to embrace Islam. In [16], it is found that the interaction with Muslim peers were seen as the main factor for the newly converts to embrace Islam which started from observing the religious phenomenon that occurred within the Muslim community. It also stated that the role of intellectuals played the spurring factor towards the Chinese community that took the choice in making the religious conversion while comparing the religious phenomenon which related to the aspects of divinity, social justice and the practises of the Muslim community. Furthermore, in [17] found that the religious conversion to Islam within the community of the blacks was caused by the influence of peers, family encouragement who had already embraced Islam, role played by the Islamic da'wah organisations, visits to the Muslim's worship place and readings. Findings from the study showed the factor of interaction with Muslim peers was the most answer given who had embraced Islam. The study is a sociological triangulation study that combines the method of interviews, questionnaires and observations. In [18], it was found that on the third phase, significant event factor that occurred within the respondents surrounding before converting was watching Islamic religious programs, seeing Muslims performing prayers, reading books on Islam, listening to Islamic musical was the starting point for this community in getting to learn about Islam closer. Next, on the phase of encounter, it found that information about Islam made it more convincing when this Chinese community were directly involved with Muslim's religious activities. Therefore, within the phase of encounter, factors such as the eagerness to marry a Muslim partner, friendship with a Muslim friend, encouragement from Muslim families and involving in the activities of the Muslim community are factors that encouraged this community to embrace Islam. The study shows how the elements of the dialogue of life such as introduction, understanding and partaking in other religious matters led to the community to conversion. According to [9], it was found that the conversion of religion was due to factors such as interaction with Muslim peers (11%), influence from neighbours and villagers (7%), born in a family whom had converted to Islam (20%), influence from the newly converts (9.5%) and believing that Islam is the right religion (33%). Whereas, in [15] sees this relationship between the Chinese Muslim community with the Malay community as harmonious, especially when a Chinese Muslim community is married to a Malay Muslim community or lives within the Malay Muslim community. In relation to this, life after embracing Islam shows the

tendency of the Chinese Muslim converts community in adapting themselves to the culture, for instance as in marriage customs, food, clothing and language.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive study was conducted through a quantitative method (purposive sampling) which was referred to as a group that had sample characteristics that was required by researchers [19]. The exact population of the sample was 92 people and based on the Krejcie and Morgan table. If the exact population of the sample was 95, therefore the most suitable number of samples would be 75 people. Based on the total population of 92 people along with a total sample of 86 people, this meant that it stood at a high percentage of 93.5%. Professor Dr. Datin Azizan Baharudin who is an expert in the field of life dialogue from the Centre of Civilisation Dialogue, University of Malaya and also the Deputy Director at the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia has revised the questionnaire. A pilot study has also been carried out to ensure that the questionnaire which was distributed was of quality and that the obtained reading value of the alpha was at 0.797. In [21] stated that the level of the Cronbach's Alpha = 0.71-0.91 was a high reliability reading (71%-90%) [20]. Further questionnaires was distributed with the help of Ustaz Abdul Halim Lim Abdul Rahman, Principle of Terengganu's Newly Muslim Training Centre for respondents that attended the class which was organised by the training centre itself on 15 December 2013 until 30 January 2014.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Limitation of study only involved Chinese converts who took part in activities under the Newly Muslim Training Centre which was managed by the Islamic and Malay Custom Centre (Majlis Agama Islam dan Adat Melayu MAIDAM) of Terengganu, a state is located at East Cost of Peninsular Malaysia with 2.4% of the population is the Chinese (mostly non Muslim). A descriptive analysis was conducted using the mean and percentage method for the 5 likert scale reading. Respondents are asked to choose one from the five given choices of answers that consist of strongly disagree (SD), disagree (D), not sure (NS), agree (A) and strongly agree (SA). Afterwards, the answers from the respondents are measured by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The mean scores will be divided into 3 sections, when divided they will give a reading of low (1.00-2.39), moderate (2.40-3.79) and high (3.80-5.00).

Respondents' Background

Table 1: Respondents' background

Age	No	%	Period of converting to Islam	No	%
15- 20 years old	6	7.0%	1-5 years old	12	14.0%
21-30	7	8.1%	6-15 years old	27	31.4%
31-40	22	25.6%	15 years old and above	47	54.7%
41-50	28	32.6%			
51 years old and above	23	26.7%			
Respondent's previous religion			Factors of converting to Islam		
Buddha	65	75.6%	Guidance from Allah (God)	31	36.0%
Confucius	2	2.3%	Readings	4	4.7%
Taoism	3	3.5%	Interactions with Malay Muslim community	27	31.3%
Christianity	10	11.6%	Encouragement from other Muslim families	7	8.1%
Mixed	4	4.7%	Marriage	17	19.8%
Atheist (no religion)	2	2.3%			
Marital Status					
Married to Malay Muslim				62	72.1%
Married to non-Malay Muslim				5	5.8%
Bachelor/Single				11	12.8%
Widower/Widow				8	9.3%

Based on Table 1, respondents consisted of 86 Chinese who had converted to Islam within the state of Terengganu where 44 respondents were males and 42 other respondents were females. Majority of the respondents were previously Christians, 4 respondents were of mixed religion and 2 respondents were an atheist. This showed that majority of the Chinese community in Terengganu practised religious teaching that was inherited from the

mainland of China. This comes to show that Islam and Christianity were the alternative choices for them when it comes to converting their belief. As many as 31 people or 36% from the respondents stated that the factors which had influenced them to convert to Islam were receiving guidance from Allah (God). Another 27 respondents or 31.3% stated that interactions with Muslim peers were the factor that encouraged them to convert into Muslim. About 17 other respondents or 19.8% of the respondents stated that they took up Islam as they wanted to marry their partners who were Muslims. Whereas, the other 7 respondents stated that it was the influence of their family members who had already converted to Islam as the cause for them to convert. Findings also found that only 4 respondents stating that readings about Islam was the cause for them to convert to Islam. Most of the respondents had married their partners who were of Malays which covers 72.1% or 62 people. There is still another 11 respondents who not married, another 8 respondents were widowers and only 5 respondents chose non-Malay as their spouses. It is evidently that this finding has clearly stated that the factor of converting to Islam is indirectly involved with the Chinese converts in the dialogue of life arena when the community is brought along with peers of different religion, marriage and encouragement from family members who had already converted to Islam. In [22] stated that there are two factors which exist that influenced to the convert of religion that is the relational factors such as influence of marriage, friendship and companionship. The second factor is rational factors, such as study, observation, surveillance and mystical practises.

Factor Involving in Dialogue of Life before Converting Islam

Table 2: Interaction with Muslim friends

No	Question	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean
1	Interaction with peers of different religion can foster religious tolerance (give and take)	8 9.3%	5 5.8%	6 7.0%	52 60.5%	15 17.4%	3.70
2	I can understand the Islamic morality through the interaction with Muslim peers	1 1.2%	2 2.3%	11 12.8%	61 70.9%	11 12.8%	3.92
3	I am willing to discuss religious issues with peers of different religion	1 1.2%	2 2.3%	20 23.3%	50 58.1%	13 15.1%	3.84
4	I have asked my Muslim peers about the practise of prayers (solat)	2 2.3%	6 7.0%	17 19.8%	44 51.2%	17 19.8%	3.79
5	I understand other religions through the relationship with peers of different religion	1 1.2%	4 4.7%	4 4.7%	61 70.9%	16 18.6%	4.01

Ethnic diversity certainly exposes a community towards interactions that puts cross section of race and religion. In relation to that the Chinese convert community agrees that interactions with peers of different religion are an instrumental part in strengthening the tolerance of relationship. Based on the findings as in Table 2, majority of respondents for agree (A) was at 60.5%, whereas 17.4% had chosen strongly agree (SA) compared to a group which disagree (D) that had a percentage of 5.8% and for strongly disagree (SD) was at 9.3%. Nevertheless, the mean score showed that the scale was still at a moderate level. The next question was on the process of understanding the morals of the Muslim community through interactions with peers who were Muslims. Findings showed that most Chinese convert community confessed that they understood the morals of Islam through the interactions with Muslim peers when 70.9% of them had agree and 12.8% self-admittedly chosen strongly agree. Therefore, the findings of the mean score of 3.92 showed that it was highly proven. Going back and forth from the interactions that involved cross section of religion, respondents questioned more specifically on religious practises about the life of their Muslim companions. The overall findings which showed that 51.2% who had agree and another 19.8% that had chosen strongly agree showed the willingness of the Chinese converts' community in discussing on the matter of religion with peers of different religion while interacting. The findings for the mean score of 3.84 showed that the experiences of the Chinese converts' community was in a high state. For example, the experience of a respondent in understanding the practises of prayers of their Muslim peers who have asked (dialogue) showed 51.2% for agree and 19.8% showed strongly agree. Nonetheless, the acquired mean score of 3.79 showed that it still stood at a moderate state. Majority of the respondents confessed that they knew and understood other religions through interactions with peers of different religions. Findings for the score of 4.01 showed that it was high, a total of 70.9% had agree and another 18.6% had strongly agree to this statement. Despite the average score of 3.85 for the overall items that was acquired, it showed that the reliability was still highly proven.

The Chinese converts' community tried to construct their understanding of religion and culture from their Muslims peers through the sharing of the dialogue of life via interaction. The observation among the Chinese community towards the behavioural conduct of their Muslim peers in managing religious matters had conjured the eagerness to know on the phenomenon of Islam. In [23] has summarised that close physical bond strengthens the

relation in making them learning another individual. In relation to this, in [18] stated the frequent social interactions between Muslims and non-Muslims directly exposed the religion of Islam through the behavioural conduct of that individual. Therefore, peers influence can shape the attitude, behaviour of teenagers and also self-formation of teenagers [24].

Table 3: Socialisation with the Muslim community

No	Question	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean
6	I have learnt a lot on Islam through the involvement of Malay Muslim activities	2 2.3%	6 7.0%	8 9.3%	51 59.3%	19 22.1%	3.91
7	Before turning to Islam, I have read on reading materials about Islam	3 3.5%	18 20.9%	9 10.5%	38 44.2%	18 20.9%	3.58
8	Before turning to Islam, I have watched on Islamic documentaries	10 11.6%	25 29.1%	10 11.6%	34 39.5%	7 8.1%	3.03

The involvement in Malay Muslim activities allowed them to the basic information regarding to religious practises. Based on Table 3, 59.3% agree in stating that the partaking has exposed a lot on Islam, whereas another 22.1% had chosen strongly agree. The acquired mean score of 3.91 showed that the acceptance was high. Apart from giving information on Islam further in-depth, life dialogue can also rectify the misunderstandings towards other religions. In this matter, 66.3% had chosen agree, whereas another 12.8% stated that they strongly agree. Nonetheless, the mean score of 3.71 still showed that the reading was at a moderate state. Another influential factor in the involvement of the Chinese converts' community in the life dialogue are the readings on Islam as well as their observation towards the broadcasting of Islamic religious programs. Both acquired a mean score of 3.58 and 3.03 which showed the motivation was at a moderate state. Both of these items are broadcasting program and Islamic religious book which became the starting point for these groups to embrace Islam after 15 years of understanding and learning Islam. The acquired average score for the 3 items was scaled at 3.51 which showed a moderate state. Religious socialisation is a long process in understanding the aspects of other religions that had occurred involuntarily. It can be said that the process of learning through social relationship started when that individual was still young and it occurred without conscious until confidence and faith formed within themselves. Mass media is one of the contributors towards the Chinese community into learning the aspect of the Muslim community's religion. Going back to the process of knowing the religion of the Muslims' community through media, it can be said that these respondents are able to differentiate the differences in religion towards the rising issue in the dialogue of life.

Factor Involving in Dialogue of Life after Converting Islam

Table 4: Family relationships

No	Question	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean
9	Involvement in non-Muslim Chinese community while I was Muslim was encouraged by the feeling of love for the family	1 1.2%	6 7%	20 23.3%	41 47.7%	18 20.9%	3.80
10	I still practise the cultural traditions of my origin which does not contradict to Islam	2 2.3%	6 7%	12 14%	49 57%	17 19.8%	3.85
11	I still celebrate Chinese New Year with my family or non-Muslim Chinese community	2 2.3%	12 14%	10 11.6%	40 46.5%	22 25.6%	3.79

Inside the context of intra-ethnic relationship, majority of the Chinese Muslim community agree in stating that the partaking of activities with their family was influenced by the feeling of love for the family. Therefore, based on Table 4, the mean score of 3.80 showed that the readings was still high with 47.7% had stated that they agree and another 20.9% stated strongly agree towards the question given. In this context of the Chinese converts' intra-ethnic relationship, dialogue of life also showed the sharing of culture and customs that was inherited. Respondents were also asked on the involvement in culture and also the pristine customs. The mean score of 3.85 showed that it still stood at a high state. About 57% of respondents had chosen agree, whereas the other 19.8% stated strongly agree. For instance, the sharing of the pristine culture can be seen during the Chinese New Year celebrations with families that are of non-Muslims. The result of the study showed that 46.5% of respondents stating agree and another 25.6% had chosen strongly agree in celebrating the festival with families that are non-Muslims. Nonetheless, the mean score of 3.79 showed that it has yet reached the moderate state. Dialogue of life that underlies the Chinese converts' community in Terengganu started with only knowing the culture of the Malay Muslim community, then it gradually went further on into knowing the Islamic community which caused the Chinese ethnicity not being able to avoid from learning other religions through unplanned routine which happened spontaneously. Furthermore, there are

some respondents who are fearlessly involving themselves directly with the activities within the Islamic community in villages without the knowledge of their families [25]. Therefore, groups of minorities usually tend to accept the knowledge of learning the life of the dominant community and that the similarities with the majority have allowed them to be accepted with ease. This experience is also stated by [26] on how much he had learnt on the values of other religious communities such as kindness, generosity and mercy from a group of Buddha community through the involvement of activities.

Table 5: Factor of cultural partaking and Islamic religion

No.	Question	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean
12	My life has been greatly influenced by the cultural life of the Malay Muslim	1 1.2%	3 3.5%	4 4.7%	62 72.1%	16 18.6%	4.04
13	A strong inter-religious relationship is needed in Terengganu	2 2.3%	7 8.1%	0 0%	46 53.5%	30 34.9%	4.19
14	I feel that the partaking of activities with other Muslim community is a non-beneficial activity	27 31.4%	44 51.2%	8 9.3%	5 5.8%	2 2.3%	1.96

Inside the context of relationship between the newly convert Chinese community and the Malay Muslim community, it has been found that the present culture of the Malay Muslim community has contributed a great influence to their life. Based on Table 5, the acquired mean score of 4.04 showed that the influence of the Malay Muslim culture on the life of the newly converts is of great influence. A total of 72.1% had chosen agree and another 18.6% stated strongly agree to this statement. In Terengganu itself, respondents see the inter-religious relationship is needed as the mean score showed a reading of 4.19. The total respondents that agree to the question was at 53.5%, whereas the other 34.9% has stated strongly agree. Apart from this the life of dialogue also pictures the partaking of activities through neighbourhood that are of different ethnicity and culture. Besides the need of information, the involvement of Chinese Muslim community within the Malay tradition such as kenduri, gotong-royong and wedding arrangements comes to show that it is carried out to preserve racial harmony. The ability of respondents to communicate in the Malay language along with a good Terengganu's accent showed that the social interactions took place at a very early stage of life. This partaking of culture can be seen in their daily life from the aspects of clothing, food, settlements and language. In [25] stated that acculturation of the minority upon the culture of the majority might not take place unless there is the occurrence of frequent interactions. The Chinese Muslim community shared activities with the Malay Muslim community on the basis of Muslim brotherhood even though at times it is seen quite different in terms of their daily norms.

Table 6: Motivation from da'wah organisations

No	Question	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean
15	The Religious Council and da'wah of NGO has organised a lot of activities that can unite the Chinese Muslim community with the Malay Muslim community	18 20.9%	8 9.3%	21 24.4%	27 31.4%	12 14%	3.08
16	The Religious Council and da'wah of NGO has organised a lot of activities that can unite the Chinese Muslim community with the non-Muslim Chinese community	10 11.6%	33 38.4%	15 17.4%	21 24.4%	7 8.1%	2.79
17	Programs that are organised by PERKIM/Da'wah of NGO were well received within the Malay Muslim community and also the non-Muslim	15 17.4%	25 29.1%	24 27.9%	14 16.3%	8 9.3%	2.71
18	I feel that the partaking of activities with the other Muslim community is a non-beneficial activity	27 31.4%	44 51.2%	8 9.3%	5 5.8%	2 2.3%	1.96

In [2] stated that mutual enrichment on the differences in other people's live is important in order to sustain the community development and together of having the taste of peace. This is also stated by [27], saying that the dialogue can strengthen the ties of national unity and national integration. The role of da'wah organisations such as Darul Hidayah (under the management of Terengganu State Islamic Religious Department), Darul Fitrah Association, PERKIM (Islamic Association Welfare of Malaysia) and Terengganu MACMA (Malaysian Chinese Muslim Association) is not just a centre for Islamic religious teaching, it is also made as a place for newly converts to gather, conducting activities and expanding friendship. In this matter, the findings have shown the roles of the religious council and da'wah from non-governmental organization (NGO) in expanding friendship through the on going of activities between the Chinese Muslim community and the Malay Muslim community is at a moderate state. The acquired mean score was 3.08 with a percentage of 31.4% stating agree, whereas 14% had chosen

strongly agree. Nonetheless, the number of respondents stating that they strongly disagree was 20.9% and only 9.3% stated disagree. Apart from that, about 24.4% have not given their answer towards the distributed question. The next respondent was asked on the role of the religious council and da'wah organisations that had organised activities that combined the Chinese Muslim community with the local community. From the findings, it has shown that it is also at a moderate state when the mean score only reached 2.79 with 24.4% stating agree, whereas 8.1% had chosen strongly agree. The number of respondents who stated disagree were the highest with 38.4%, whereas 11.4% stating strongly disagree. The next situation showed a pattern that gradually decreased on the next question when the mean score was only 2.71. This question wanted the respondents to stand firmly with their stand for as long as possible in seeing how the question would be accepted by the Malay community as well as the non-Malay community. Only 16.3% had chosen agree and another 17.4% stated that they strongly agree, whereas 27.9% of respondents did not give their answer. Nonetheless, the degree of acceptance showed that it was still standing at a moderate state. As for the next question, the acquired findings showed that it was on a moderate scale. Most of the Chinese Muslim community disagree by stating that the activities organised by the NGO's were less benefitted. Therefore, the mean score of 1.96 showed that it stood at a low scale. This meant that the dialogue of life which was conducted by the da'wah organisations and also the religious council had given their own implications in nurturing the relationship of tolerance between religion and races in Terengganu. Overall, the moderate scale that was acquired showed findings that was quite different to the study conducted by [28] who had found that the involving factor of the community with different religion in the dialogue with the high scale of religious in higher education institutions. The moderate findings from the study showed that the da'wah organisations and the NGO's of the newly convert in Terengganu faced some problems in realising the life dialogue in Terengganu. Therefore, this finding in a way supported the study that was conducted by [29] in Negeri Sembilan who had found that the role of PERKIM was less effective in providing the understanding of Islam. Hence, this resulted with some individuals within the newly converts of wanting to convert back to their previous religion.

CONCLUSION

To conclude this, we can say that the process of socialisation which cannot be avoided within the Muslim and non-Muslim community has actually open up the opportunity for them to learn, understand and explore the religious differences. The experiences from the newly converts (pre convert) community has a strong relation with the dialogue of life due to factors such as interaction, mixing with the Muslim community and the encouragement towards marriage. Meanwhile, the experiences of the Chinese community after converting Islam showed the community's involvement in the dialogue of life was due to family relationships, relationship ties of Muslims and the motivation from da'wah organisations. As a whole, the findings have shown that it is of high order for factors such as interaction, family relationships and relationship ties of Muslims. On the other hand, for factors such as shared activities and motivation from the da'wah organisations have shown a moderate level on the scale. Thus, the dialogue of life should be strengthened appropriately so that every level of the community that are interrelated within the life of the newly converts can accept and tolerate the differences in culture and religion that exist within others.

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