Humanomics

al-Wasatiyyah in the practice of religious tolerance among the families of new Muslims in sustaining a well-being society

Khadijah Mohd Khambali@Hambali, Suraya Sintang, Azarudin Awang, Khairul Nizam Mat Karim, Nur Farhana Abdul Rahman, Wan Adli Wan Ramli, Nurhanisah Senin, Azmil Zainal Abidin, Ahmad Zuhdi Ismail, Wan Zailan Kamaruddin Wan Ali, Ruzman Md. Noor,

Article information:

To cite this document:
Permanent link to this document:
https://doi.org/10.1108/H-02-2017-0025

Downloaded on: 14 June 2017, At: 20:08 (PT)
References: this document contains references to 37 other documents.
To copy this document: permissions@emeraldinsight.com
The fulltext of this document has been downloaded 49 times since 2017*

Users who downloaded this article also downloaded:

Access to this document was granted through an Emerald subscription provided by emerald-srm:376953 []

For Authors

If you would like to write for this, or any other Emerald publication, then please use our Emerald for Authors service information about how to choose which publication to write for and submission guidelines are available for all. Please visit www.emeraldinsight.com/authors for more information.

About Emerald www.emeraldinsight.com

Emerald is a global publisher linking research and practice to the benefit of society. The company manages a portfolio of more than 290 journals and over 2,350 books and book series volumes, as well as providing an extensive range of online products and additional customer resources and services.

Emerald is both COUNTER 4 and TRANSFER compliant. The organization is a partner of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and also works with Portico and the LOCKSS initiative for digital archive preservation.
*Related content and download information correct at time of download.*


Al-Wasatiyyah in the practice of religious tolerance among the families of new Muslims in sustaining a well-being society


(Author affiliations can be found at the end of the article)

Abstract

Purpose – The main value in a culture of tolerance is wasatiyyah. The fragility of relationships and misunderstanding between Muslim and non-Muslim communities occurs when attention to values of tolerance which need more attention on moderation was not practiced especially in the life of a new Muslim convert community. Thus, the practice of moderation is one mechanism proposed by the government to ensure a harmonious continuation of life in a religious community can be achieved. For that, a qualitative study design was used to describe the current status of a phenomenon that occurs among new Muslim converts. The purposive sampling method is used to determine the applications of wasatiyyah in new Muslims’ life tolerance at Kota Kinabalu (East Malaysia) and Kuala Terengganu (West Malaysia). Although the study was conducted at two different locations, there is a relationship between religious phenomena that occur in the new Muslims community in Malaysia. The purpose of this study is to see the practical concept of moderation in the life of new Muslims and their relation with Muslims and non-Muslims. The results showed that the value of moderation was applied in the aspect of tolerance. The application of Wasatiyyah in practice of tolerance had helped non-Muslims family members to change their attitudes and perception towards Islam. This study suggests the values of wasatiyyah in the life of religious tolerance, need to be nourished especially in multiethnic society when sharing a living places, education and employment for better social development as well as a well-being pluralistic society.

Design/methodology/approach – The study was conducted through descriptive data qualitative methods. Purposive sampling was used which refers to a group that has the characteristics of samples required by researchers (Mohd Najib Abdul Ghafar 2003). This study applies the method of in-depth interview with the selected new Muslims around Kota Kinabalu (representing East Malaysia) and around Kuala Terengganu (representing Peninsular Malaysia/West Malaysia). Thus, data accumulation involves new Muslims (new Converts) from various ethnicities (Sabahan and Sarawakian) which comprise Kadazandusun, Murut, Rungus, Sino and Iban. Secondly, those are from the Peninsular Malaysia which includes Chinese and Indian. Whereas in Kuala Terengganu, data accumulation involves new Muslims from various ethnicities (Chinese, Indian, Sarawakian and others). The result of the interview is shown through descriptive narratives which display the practice of tolerance in the form of supportive interaction from the non-Muslim families towards the new Muslims in Islamic lifestyle.

Findings – The concept of wasatiyyah has nurturing tolerance among Muslim, newly Muslim and non-Muslim as well as fostering harmony among the diverse ethnicities in Malaysia. Based on the discussion, it was observed that the concept of wasatiyyah had a great influence on the relationship among Muslim, newly Muslim and non-Muslim, as it had a strong link with the value of akhlaq that have been embedded in the Muslim community. The wasatiyyah is the main element that shapes the relationship, and it is the results of...
interaction with social norms, for it has bred certain social values that include tolerance, compromise, modesty, respect and cooperation as transpired when they (Muslim and newly Muslim) interact among themselves or with other communities. Furthermore, the main goal for the concept is to maintain peace and built well-being in the society as well as bracing racial ties in Malaysia, especially among Muslim, newly Muslim and non-Muslim.

**Originality/value** – Tolerance is a culture that founded the co-existence of pluralistic society in Malaysia. The culture of tolerance can only be built if ethnic tolerance and religious tolerance is accepted as a common practice – Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The description of *wasatiyyah* in the practice of religious tolerance among the families of new Muslims is the platform towards the acculturation of tolerance in the societal life from different faith and ethnic. It can be said that the higher the tolerance of ethnic, the higher is the religious tolerance, which is manifested through the application of *wasatiyyah* between people from different religions. This situation is highlighted in the relations of Muslim, newly Muslim and non-Muslim in Sabah and Terengganu where the culture of tolerance is apparent in the life together. Extensive interaction through encounters, acquaintance and co-existence that shape the friendship, brotherhood and kinship is the best formula in nurturing the culture of tolerance in the pluralistic society of Malaysia. Perhaps, the concept of *wasatiyyah* may be implemented in the whole aspect of life in the context of Malaysia. It is because the term *wasatiyyah* has the main sources of Islamic epistemology as well as sustaining the well-being pluralistic society without destroying the differences.

**Keywords** *al-Wasatiyyah*, Muslim-newly Muslim, Non-Muslim family, Religious tolerance, Well-being society

**Paper type** Research paper

**Introduction**

Tolerance is a norm in inter-religious relations to ensure the continuance of co-existence and peaceful. Tolerance comes from Latin, *tolerantia* which means flexibility, softness of the heart, broadmindedness and volunteer (Abdul Halim, 2008; Jaffary Awang, 2003). Abdul Halim (2008) explains that tolerance is equivalent to being positive and appreciating others in the frame of providing basic rights as human. Two main models of tolerance are as follows: firstly, passive tolerance which means accepting differences as factual, and secondly, active tolerance, which means being involved with others in the midst of differences and variations. The fact of tolerance is living side by side peacefully and appreciating between variations that existed. When tolerance is being related to religious tolerance and ethnic tolerance, these two concepts brought their own definitions. Religious tolerance according to the Golden Rule stipulates that we “do not do unto others what we do not want them to do to us”. This principle requires that we put ourselves in the place of others and try to understand the situation once we are in another position. It is only through this experience that we are able to understand the complexity and injustice faced by the other side. Religious tolerance is opposite of religious fanatic, which means not to budge from the original stand. An individual who is a religious fanatic is described as a person who always uses excuses or justification for their intolerance based on the conviction that the truth only exists within his own religion. Any oppositions or differences between the religions are considered wrong or false and therefore cannot be applied to others.

The frequency of establishing daily relations between people of different faiths and the ability to adapt oneself with different culture has encouraged the spirit of tolerance in the new Muslim family that is multi-faith. The spirit of being tolerant among themselves is inculcated by the practice of moderation (*wasatiyyah*) as they apply fair and humble treatment both in the relation with Muslims and non-Muslims. Therefore, the culture of tolerance between Muslims and non-Muslims in Sabah can be seen in the relations within the family of new Muslims, which is highlighted through the support from the non-Muslim family members for the new Muslims to live the Islamic life.
The concept of Wasatiyyah

*Al-Wasatiyyah* is an Arabic term. Etymologically, the term *al-wasatiyyah* is a name derived from the word *al-wasat* which means middle, balanced, fair and excellent. In addition, it also means not excessive (rigid) or not loose (Ibn Manzur, 2001). In the Holy Quran, Muslims expressed as a chosen people, a people who most humble, the best, balanced and fair as Allah says in verse al-Baqarah 143:

Thus, have We made of you an ummat justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves; and We appointed the Qibla to which thou wast used, only to test those who followed the Messenger from those who would turn on their heels (from the Faith). Indeed it was (a change) momentous, except to those guided by Allah. And never would Allah Make your faith of no effect. For Allah is to all people most surely full of kindness, Most Merciful.

Technically, the term *wasatan* has been used differently by different Muslim scholars. Commenting on verse al-Baqarah 143 of the Scripture, Ibn Kathir (1992, pp. 196-197) interprets that the people of Muhammad is the *ummatan wasatan* because of the nature of people who are best, very humble and fair. This is because the truth of the teachings of Islam is to celebrate all the different issues that arise in human life. According to Al-Tabari, (2000, pp. 8-10), the meaning *wasat is mustafa, khyar* and *afdal* (the chosen, the best and fair). He emphasized that the chosen and the best because of the person’s characteristic of being fair.

According to Al-Qurtubiy (1993, pp. 104-105), *al-wasatiyyah* means fair and the best. Therefore, we may conclude that *al-wasatiyyah* means the chosen, the best, being fair, humble, moderate, *istiqamah*, follow the teachings of Islam, not extreme to either end in matters pertaining worldly or the after-life, spiritual or corporeal but should be balanced between the two ends (Mohd Shukri Hanapi, 2014, p. 54).

Sheikh Mahmud Shaltut (2004) in *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim* said that verses explained Islam are a truthful guide which establishes an appropriate law for all time and places. The situations the ummah of human in the whole world are divided into two: *al-ifrat* (extreme and beyond actual limits) and *al-tafrit* (extremely low or small) (Basri Ibrahim al-Hasani al-Azhari, 2007, pp. 6-9). These situations can be observed in all matters of aqidah, akhlaq, the relations of human and life, individual and community, international relations and others.

Indeed, Islam gives generous space to the people of different religions and cultures to discuss and solve problems that occur daily, issues related to intellectual, beliefs and others. Recommendations by Mohd Kamil and Mohd Fauzi Hamat (2008) in relationship between religions can serve as a guideline for implementation of *wasatiyyah*. They stated that Muslims need to show good character and treatment just as they would treat their brothers and sisters to the non-Muslims, although they have not understand what Islam is to promote a healthy environment among them. Even so, in the implementation of this *wasatiyyah*, the modesty of Muslims must be kept, in the sense that the Muslim communities should believe that Islam is the only true religion and overcome other religions.

According to Mohd Shukri Hanapi (2014, p. 54), it can be acknowledged that *al-wasatiyyah* is an approach much acclaimed by Islam. A comprehensive and integrated approach is capable of solving the demands and problems of the ummah. Actually, Mohd Shukri Hanapi stressed that *al-wasatiyyah* calls on followers of Islam to practice Islam in a balanced and comprehensive manner in all aspects of life and society by focusing on improving the quality of human life associated with developing knowledge, human development, economic and financial system, political system, nationhood, defence, unity, equality among races, etc. Unity and the inequality gap among races in Malaysia could be managed by adhering to the *wasatiyyah* concept that foresees balance or equilibrium and not an extreme attitude harbouring on either end of the spectrum. The practice of *al-wasatiyyah* is more particularly
important to be applied by the new Muslim converts in their relation with both Muslims and non-Muslims. To understand the practice of *al-wasatiyyah*, the fieldwork study is conducted within the family of new Muslim converts.

### Methodology

The study was conducted through descriptive data qualitative methods. Purposive sampling was used which refers to a group that has the characteristics of samples required by researchers (Mohd Najib Abdul Ghafar, 2003). This study has already been applied in an interview among the selected new Muslims from two different states in Malaysia, namely Kota Kinabalu, Sabah (representing East Malaysia) and around Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu (representing Peninsular Malaysia/West Malaysia) to understand how the practise of *al-Wasatiyyah* in the aspect of religious tolerant. Thus, data accumulation involves new Muslims (new Converts) from various ethnics (Sabahan and Sarawakian) which comprise Kadazandusun, Murut, Rungus, Sino and Iban. Secondly, those are from the Peninsular Malaysia which includes Chinese and Indian. Whereas in Kuala Terengganu, data accumulation involves new Muslim from various ethnics (Chinese, Indian, Sarawakian and others). The result of the interview is shown through descriptive narratives which display the practice of tolerance in the form of supportive interaction from the non-Muslim families towards the new Muslims in Islamic lifestyle.

**Wasatiyyah in the practice of tolerance in the families of new Muslims**

The practice of tolerance is pressing in the life of a new Muslim who lives with a non-Muslim family. Tolerance is necessary in aspects that involve eating together, living together under one roof and celebrating festivals. These three aspects demand high tolerance on matters that cannot be agreed on because of the limit of regulations and obligatory demands that differentiate Islam from other religions. The approach of cultural adjustment cultivated through the spirit of tolerance encourages support from families of non-Muslims towards the new Muslims who are living the Islamic way of life. Apart from that, the practice of tolerance is needed to guarantee the perseverance of harmony that has been affected because of misunderstandings and anxieties from the conversion to Islam. This practice is becoming crucial in solving predicaments that cannot be agreed together based on the changes that happened to the new converts of Islam. The change of daily routines that feature Islamic way of life is now limited by religious regulations, and obligatory religious demands are seen as strange and worrisome by the non-Muslim family members. Even if changes happen to new converts to other religions, the changes are not as immense as those experienced by the new Muslims. Osman Abdullah@Chuah et al. (2008, p. 102) explain that:

This is because, in Christianity, there are no limitations on food and drink and clothing. Further, the mass on Sundays in the church can be held in the language of Christian convert. However, for a Muslim, it is rather strict. A convert could not worship idol, could not take pork and alcohol, and must learn to pray in the Arabic language.

In reality, the life of a new Muslim at the stage of post-conversion faces the problem of double marginality, which means being isolated by two situations (Zebiri, 2008). New Muslim converts face the dilemma of being between commitments as a Muslim and conserving a harmonious relationship with non-Muslim families. Kate Zebiri (2008) stated in her book “British Muslim Converts: Choosing Alternative Lives” that new Muslim at the stage of post-conversion had a bitter experience and faced off difficulty, particularly when they tried to inform the family on the decision to convert as Muslim. This inter-religious dimension shapes the four patterns of association between the new Muslim and the non-Muslim family: starting with strained relationship to accommodative, neutral and supportive relationship. This model of familial
relationships introduced by Sebastian and Parameswaran (2007) becomes the main back up in explaining the form of new Muslim familial relationship. The supportive relation is shown through verbatim transcription below:

(i) [My family in Japan supports me]. They know Islam one of the traditional religion. They only ask me not to follow the new religion such as cult. If she doesn’t pray at home, my family will remind me to do that.

My family will [help to search for the Halal court]. They are very particular on that matter. (Source: Interview on 14 August 2015 at the office of the respondent at UMS, Jpn/P-Jpn-Resp10)

(ii) My family never stops me to convert to Islam. Very supportive - [Mother takes particular care of my food to make sure that it is halal.] Mother does not encourage eating outside and she herself will cook the food. Mother changes to special kitchen utensils for me. (Source: Interview on 14 August 2015 at the office of the respondent at UMS, Jpn/P-Jpn-Resp11)

(iii) They (family) once said to me, “When you have converted, [be a true Muslim and hold on steadfastly to its teachings].” (Source: Interview conducted on 25 October 2015 at guidance class of Teratak Fitrah, Sembulan Kadsn/L-Ppr-Resp13)

(iv) My older brother did not ask many questions. He mostly observed. So now my brother is watching over me. [When I gave birth, he asked his wife (my non-Muslim sister-in-law) to visit and take care of me.]

There is not much difference between before and after converting to Islam. It looks like nothing changes. Familial tie is as usual. I got supportive relation from both sides. (Source: Interview on 13 February 2015 at the respondent’s office at UMS, Kadsn/P/KMrd-Resp18)

(v) Finally I converted to Islam and told my father, who [did not oppose instead he gave me encouragement to be a devoted Muslim.] When I go back home, I will kiss my father’s hand and my family does not feel the difference with the time before I converted. (Source: Interview conducted on 23 August 2015 at the respondent’s workplace in Masjid Negeri, Kadsn/P-Trn-Resp27)

The acceptance of non-Muslim family towards new Muslims to live together as well as support them in implementing the Islamic lifestyle display the culture of tolerance in the relation of Muslims and non-Muslims in Sabah. Although the tolerance that has been displayed takes place in a small family unit, this practice becomes the starting point in relations with friends and neighbours of different faiths. It can be said that the practice of tolerance has been accepted as the culture of the Sabah society inherited from previous generations. The manifestation of this practice can be seen from the collaboration in celebrations, festivals, living together, eating together, business venture at the tamu[1] as well as having family members from other races. This acculturation process does not only take place among the families of new Muslims in the urban areas but also involves clusters of families living in the rural areas. They applied al-wasatiyyah in their daily life for being the chosen, the best and most humble society towards others.

Tolerance plays a positive role in binding new Muslims and non-Muslim family. It is noticed in the above that the term “tolerance” is used to refer to either “religious practice” or “culture”. On the whole, new Muslims has stimulated and applied wasatiyyah in intra-ethnic relations because it provides a big spiritual foundation to tolerance. Indeed, new Muslims mostly found cultural tolerance in inter-ethnic relations, whereas the religious tolerances were found in intra-ethnic relations. For example, the results of a survey that was conducted amongst the new Muslims in Kuala Terengganu showed that the experiences of religious tolerance were highlighted during
visiting non-Muslim family, visiting a funeral, food preparation and celebration of the Chinese New Year. These experiences are interviewed as follows:

(vi) I returned to my parents’ house to persuade them to accept me back into their lives. On my visit to my parents’ house, they will always serve halal (legal) food that they buy for me. My parents finally accepted me back into their lives. I think it is because they see that I am a good person because I practice good Islamic principles. (Source: Interview conducted on 20 October 2016 at Kampung Batu Burok, Kuala Terengganu, Resp 02 Hokkien)

(vii) Once, when I was working with my boss at the flower shop, her mother died, I went to see him, he had said you have converted to Islam, can you come here? I said, “I can come” […] no problem, not a matter. [When I went there, I brought flowers, as I worked in a flower shop.] Only white flowers […] not red, they are in sadness, so I can’t bring red flowers. (Source: Interview conducted on 6 December 2016 at Kampung Gong Pauh, Kuala Terengganu, Resp 15-Foochow)

(viii) When my father died, I went back home. We (new Muslims) can wear the funeral custom. [I wear a white shirt […] I understand that we can honor him like this], but we can’t bow down. I have been asked many Muslim religious teacher (ustaz). Wealth, we as family divided together. Then, I gave all mine to my family. They refused but I asked them to accept. I’m happy for what I done. (Source: Interview conducted on 22 November 2016 at Persatuan Darul Fitrah Office, Kuala Terengganu, Resp 11-Foochow)

(ix) I just said [as a sign of respect […] I wear a red cloth tied around my head […] pricked with a needle. (Source: Interview conducted on 19 November 2016, at Complex of Darul Hidayah, Kuala Terengganu, Resp 07-Hokkien)

(x) During Chinese New Year we join in as well in the food preparation, [chickens and ducks all strung up, my father waits for us, and asks my husband to slaugh in Islamic way.] As for the pork, if we come home, papa doesn’t eat it at all […] we have two fridges one for that (pork) and one for the other stuff […] when they eat pork, if he knows I’m coming back, he cleans it all up, he doesn’t want us to see it. (Source: Interview conducted on 25 November 2016 at Complex of Darul Hidayah, Kuala Terengganu, Resp 13-Hakka)

Overall, the result of the study shows that different faiths between new Muslims and their families do not prevent positive relations. This positive relation can be seen from the tolerance displayed by the non-Muslim families such as supporting and encouraging them to perform Islamic obligations; advising the new Muslim to be obedient Muslims; accompanying the new Muslim for the registration of Islamization at the Islamic department; cooperating in getting halal food as well as preparing special cooking utensils to avoid anxiety to stay with their family; and maintaining relationship with visits back and so forth.

This situation is different from ethnic tolerance that only requires openness and willingness in accepting the presence of others, without being tied to certain regulations and obligations. The term ethnic refers to a cluster of human, where its members connect themselves with shared heritage and share origins in regard to history, original country, language, customs and value system. Ethnic difference does not involve disparities in principle, conviction and execution of certain obligations that led to the widening of chasm between practice and lifestyle of the respective religions. Religion according to Shafiq and Abu Nimer (2007) is a solid identity; religion is something sensitive and attentive; the feeling of religiosity easily stimulates a person to act compared to other elements that shape a person’s identity; moral and spiritual values supported by religion encourage a person to change attitude; and religion left a deeper impact compared to other elements. On that basis, it can be said that ethnic tolerance is easier to perform compared to religious tolerance because it is not only hard for religion to accept change but at the same time it...
also has been bordered with certain regulations and obligations. This is the situation displayed in
the relationship of the families of new Muslims, where the culture of tolerance can be seen from
the support given by the people of different faiths.

Moreover, the distributing wealth is also an important factor in creating social stability
among the society, especially among a new Muslim and his/her family. This should be given
serious attention, and equal distribution should be practiced to tip the balance. It is clear that
the al-wasatiyyah concept in a way has succeeded in harmonising inter-racial relationships in
Malaysia (Mohd Shukri Hanapi, 2014, p. 58). The weak and poor of the society member have
been advocated without considering their race or religion including new Muslim as well as
their family, indirectly disunity and dissatisfaction has been avoided among family
members. This is also the pull factor for sustaining the well-being society especially among
Muslim, newly Muslim and non-Muslim. Moreover, according to the al-wasatiyyah in
tolerance among Muslim, newly Muslim and non-Muslim, the word acceptance is the best
word to describe that the Malaysian society accepts and respects the differences of ethnic,
religion and culture.

Furthermore, the aspiration of al-wasatiyyah among the Muslims are enacted in the concept
of akhlaq [2]. It is viewed as a broad value in life as all aspects of the Muslims’ life such as their
traditions, culture, politics, economy; social relations; and religion are based on the values of
akhlaq (Zainal Kling, 2012). The understanding of the value is expressed through their
actions of tolerance, modesty, respectful and accommodative whenever they communicate
among themselves, or with other ethnic communities (Wan Norhasnia Wan Husin, 2012).

Therefore, the concept of al-wasatiyyah has nurturing tolerance among Muslim, newly
Muslim and non-Muslim as well as fostering harmony among the diverse ethnics in
Malaysia. Based on our discussion, it was observed that the concept of al-wasatiyyah had a
great influence on the relationship among Muslim, newly Muslim and non-Muslim, as it had
a strong link with the value of akhlaq that have been embedded in the Muslim community.
The al-wasatiyyah is the main element that shapes the relationship, and it is the results of
interaction with social norms, for it has bred certain social values that include tolerance,
compromise, modesty, respect and cooperation as transpired when they (Muslim and newly
Muslim) interact among themselves or with other communities. Furthermore, the main goal
for the concept is to maintain peace and built well-being in the society as well as brace racial
ties in Malaysia, especially among Muslim, newly Muslim and non-Muslim.

Conclusion
Tolerance is a culture that founded the co-existence of pluralistic society in Malaysia. The
culture of tolerance can only be built if ethnic tolerance and religious tolerance is accepted as
a common practice – Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The description al-wasatiyyah in
the practice of religious tolerance among the families of new Muslim is the platform towards
the acculturation of tolerance in the societal life from different faith and ethnics. It can be said
that the higher the tolerance of ethnic, the higher is the religious tolerance, which is
manifested through the application of al-wasatiyyah between people from different religions.
This situation is highlighted in the relations of Muslim, newly Muslim and non-Muslim in
Sabah and Terengganu where the culture of tolerance is apparent in the life together. Extensive interaction through encounters, acquaintance and co-existence that shape the
friendship, brotherhood and kinship is the best formula in nurturing the culture of tolerance in the pluralistic society of Malaysia. Perhaps, the concept of *al-wasatiyyah* may be implemented in the whole aspect of life in the context of Malaysia. It is because the term *al-wasatiyyah* has the main sources of Islamic epistemology as well as sustaining the well-being pluralistic society without destroying the differences.

**Interviews with respondents**

Cina/P-sjung-Resp5, 20 September 2015 at the home of the respondent in Taman Kingfisher.

Jpn/P-jpn-Resp10, 14 August 2015 at the office of the respondent, UMS.

Jpn/P-jpn-Resp11, 14 August 2015 at the office of the respondent, UMS.

Kadsn/L-ppr-Resp13, 25 October 2015 at Teratak Fitrah.

Kadsn/P-KMrd-Resp18, 13 February 2015 at the office of the respondent, UMS.

Kadsn/P-trn-Resp27, 23 August 2015 at Masjid Negeri, Sembulan.

Mrt/P-kng-Resp29, 20 July 2015 at Teratak Fitrah, Likas.

Rgs/P-kng-Resp34, 8 February 2015 at the guidance class of Maahad Tahfiz.

Rgs/P-kdt-Resp36, 24 July 2015 at the guidance class of Teratak Fitrah.

Sino/P-kng-Resp42, 17 January 2015 at the guidance class of Maahad Tahfiz.

Resp 15-Foochow, 6 December 2016 at Kampung Gong Pauh, Kuala Terengganu.

Resp 11-Foochow, 22 November 2016 at Persatuan Darul Fitrah Office, Kuala Terengganu.

Resp 07-Hokkien, 19 November 2016 at the Complex of Darul Hidayah, Kuala Terengganu.


Resp 01-Hokkien, 9 October 2016 at Kampung Hiliran, Kuala Terengganu.

Resp 02-Hokkien, 20 October 2016 at Kampung Batu Burok, Kuala Terengganu.


**Notes**

1. *Tamu* (means “meeting”) is a traditional open-air market of Sabah. In the old days, there was no supermarket and shopping malls; so, farmers, fishermen and hawkers would gather weekly at *tamu* to exchange their goods by bartering. *Tamu* is also a social gathering place where villagers exchange news and gossip. The *tamu* in Sabah is the biggest and the most famous native market among tourists.

2. *Akhlaq* is an Arabic term referring to the practice of virtue, morality and manners in Islamic theology and philosophy. It is most commonly translated in English dictionaries as disposition, nature, temper, ethics, morals or manners (of a person).

**References**


Osman Abdullah@Chuah, H.L. and Abdul Salam Muhamad Shukri (2008), *Muslim Converts in Malaysia: The Problem of Cultural Adjustment*, IIUM Press, International Islamic University Malaysia.


Further reading


Sabihah Osman (2007), Toleransi Etnik dan Perpaduan Sosial, Laporan Akhir Penyelidikan IRPA, Universiti Malaysia Sabah.

Author affiliations
Khadijah Mohd Khambali@Hambali, Department of Akidah and Islamic Thought, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Suraya Sintang, Pusat Penataran Ilmu dan Bahasa, University of Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia
Azarudin Awang, Academy Contemporary of Islamic Study, MARA University of Technology, Terengganu, Malaysia
Khairul Nizam Mat Karim, Department of Akidah and Islamic Thought, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Nur Farhana Abdul Rahman, Department of Usuluddin and Philosophy, Faculty of Islamic Studies, National University of Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia
Wan Adli Wan Ramli, Department of Akidah and Islamic Thought, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Nurhanisah Senin, Department of Akidah and Islamic Thought, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Azmil Zainal Abidin, Department of Akidah and Islamic Thought, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Ahmad Zuhdi Ismail, Department of Akidah and Islamic Thought, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Wan Zailan Kamaruddin Wan Ali, Department of Akidah and Islamic Thought, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Ruzman Md. Noor, Department of Syariah and Law, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Corresponding author
Khadijah Mohd Khambali@Hambali can be contacted at: ijamh@um.edu.my

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website: www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm
Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com