

**THE PERCEPTIONS OF JHEOA OFFICERS TOWARDS THE
CAUSES OF ORANG ASLI DO NOT CHOOSE ISLAM AS THEIR
RELIGION**

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Academic project submitted in fulfilment for the degree of
BACHELOR OF DA'WAH AND ISLAMIC MANAGEMENT

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March 2004

AUTHOR DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this academic project is may own except for quotations and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thank the Almighty God for giving me the strength, courage, and wisdom to complete this task. All the pray for peace and prosperity to our beloved Rasulullah SAW. his beloved family, all the *Shuhada'* and all his followers.

Firstly, I wish to express my special thanks to my research coordinator, Professor Datin Doktor Mizan Adiliah binti Ahmad Ibrahim for all her kindness and accommodation in the preparation of this research. I would not have been able to organize my research successfully without her guidance and advice.

I also wish to express my highly gratitude to my beloved mother, Siti Hawa binti Abdullah, not forgetting my brothers and sisters for all their love and advice. You are always in my heart.

I am also very grateful to all my lecturers, all the knowledge and guidance that you all give to me, I will remember it for all my life. Special thanks also to my housemates and classmates who had been very helpful. I will remember all of your kindness and all the time we spend together will be a remembrance that last for long. And also a warm thank to the participants from *Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli Kuala Lumpur and Gombak* who are involved in the survey for my research for their full cooperation especially Encik Sayed and Encik Panjang Ali.

I also wish to express my highly appreciation to a person that is very special to me. Thank you for always be here for me at any time and place. The relationship we build together hopefully will last for eternity.

Lastly, my sincere gratitude and appreciation to all people who are directly or indirectly involved in this research who contributed in term of encouragement, information, suggestions and guidance for this study.

Wassalam

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini mengkaji pendapat para pegawai JHEOA terhadap sebab Orang Asli tidak memilih Islam sebagai agama. Kajian ini bertujuan mengetahui sebab Orang Asli tidak memilih Islam sebagai agama, mengetahui masalah pendakwah dalam mendakwah Orang Asli dan mendapatkan cadangan yang seharusnya diambil untuk meningkatkan bilangan Orang Asli yang memeluk Islam. Kajian ini berbentuk deskriptif dan soal selidik berstruktur telah digunakan. Hasil kajian ini penulis mendapati masalah yang paling ketara menjadi penyebab Orang Asli tidak memilih Islam sebagai agama ialah kurangnya perhatian masyarakat Melayu yang berjiran dan tiadanya tindakan susulan selepas aktiviti da'wah dijalankan. Bagi masalah pendakwah pula, tiadanya para pendakwah yang berminat dan sanggup tinggal bersama Orang Asli, dan cadangan yang dikenalpasti ialah mewujudkan tindakan susulan, menambah bilangan pendakwah yang betul-betul berminat, dan pendakwah harus memahami dan mengkaji kehidupan Orang Asli.

ABSTRACT

This research was done to study the perceptions of the *JHEOA* officers towards the causes of *Orang Asli* did not accept Islam as their religion. The research was made in order to find out the reasons why the *Orang Asli* did not accept Islam, to find out thoroughly the problem faced by the Islamic preacher in running their preaching activities towards *Orang Asli* community and also obtain recommendation and solution to solve the problems and attracting more *Orang Asli* to accept Islam. This research is a descriptive research and structured interviews and questionnaires were used in obtaining the data. From the research, it was found that the main problem of why the *Orang Asli* did not accept Islam is because the lack of attention from the Malays society and also no follow-up action has been taken after the *da'wah* activities end. The problem faced by the Islamic preacher arising due to unwillingness of the Islamic preacher to live with the *Orang Asli* family and also they were not interested in educating and preaching the *Orang Asli*. The recommendation obtain from this research is that the Islamic preachers must do a follow-up action continuously, increase the number of Interested Islamic preacher, and the Islamic preacher must study and understand the *Orang Asli* life style.

ملخص البحث

هذا البحث يبحث عن آراء موظفي (جي. ايتش. إي. أو. إيه) JHEOA على ابناء البلاد الأصليين في قضية عدم إختيارهم الإسلام كدين لهم. الأهداف الأساسية من هذا البحث هو معرفة أسباب عدم إختيار الإسلام من قبل ابناء البلاد الأصليين ومعرفة المشاكل من قبل الدعاة أثناء دعوتهم لهؤلاء القوم ثم الحصول على الإقتراحات الجذابة حتى يتمكنوا في ازدياد عدد دخولهم إلى الإسلام . والمنهج المتبع في هذا البحث هو عبارة عن جمع المعلومات بمنهج الإستعلامات، وتحليل البحوث السابقة. وقد أفاد البحث بنتائج منها أن أهم الأسباب في عدم إختيارهم في الدخول إلى الإسلام هو عدم إهتمام من قبل المجتمع الملايوية المحيطين بهم كما كان عدم وجود البرامج الخاصة لهم من قبل الدعاة. وكذلك أفاد البحث معرفة أهم المشاكل من قبل الدعاة وهي عدم رغبتهم في المكوث مع هؤلاء القوم. أما بالنسبة إلى الإقتراحات الحاصلة نتيجة من عملية الإحصائية (من قبل الدعاة) فهم يقترحون أن على الدعاة أن يخططوا ببرامج خاصة متواصلة، حتى يتمكن هؤلاء القوم ممارسة هذا الدين بشكل شامل. وكذلك ازدياد الدعاة الراغبين في هذا الميدان مع تمكينهم في تحسين أسلوب الدعوة إلى هؤلاء القوم تؤدي إلى نجاح هذه الدعوة.

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TRANSLITERATION

ARABIC WORDS TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

TRANSLITERATION TABLE

1. ALPHABET

<u>Arabic</u>	<u>Latin</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
ء	,	فأل	fa'l
ب	B	برد	burd
ت	T	تلّ	tall
ث	Th	ثوب	thawb
ج	J	جدار	jidar
ح	H	حبيب	habīb
خ	Kh	خارج	khārij
د	D	ديك	dīk
ذ	dh	ذهب	dhahab
ر	r	رفيق	rafīq
ز	z	زبيل	zabīl
س	s	سلام	salām
ش	sh	شرب	sha ^ʿ b
ص	s	صخر	sakhr
ض	d	ضيّق	dayq
ط	t	طويل	tawīl
ظ	z	ظالم	zālim
ع	c	عقل	^ʿ aql
غ	gh	غلام	ghulām
ف	f	فيل	fīl
ق	q	قلب	qalb
ك	k	كبير	kabīr

ل	l	لُبّ	lubb
م	m	مَجِيد	majīd
ن	n	نَجْح	najah
هـ	h	هَوْل	hawl
و	W	وَرَق	waraq
ي	y	يَمّ	yamm

2. Short Vowel

<u>Arabic</u>	<u>Latin</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
	a	كِرْم	karama
	i	عِرْف	‘alima
	u	غِرِيب	ghuliba

3. Long Vowel

<u>Arabic</u>	<u>Latin</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
ى , ا	ā	عَالِم ، فَتَى	ālim, fatā
ي	ī	عَلِيم ، دَاعِي	‘ālīm, dā ‘ī
و	ū	عِلُوم ، أَدْعُو	‘ulūm, ad‘ū

4. Diphthong

<u>Arabic</u>	<u>Latin</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
و	aw	نُوم	nawn
ي	ay	لَيْل	layl
ي	iyy	شَافِعِي	sh āf ī‘iyy (ending)
و	uww	عِلُوء	‘uluww (ending)

5. Exemptions

5.1 Arabic letter (hamzah) found at the beginning of a word is transliterated to the letter “a” and not to’.

Example: أكبر transliterated to: akbar(not ‘akbar).

5.2 Arabic letter (ta’ martubah) found in a word without (al) which is coupled with another word that contains (al) at the beginning of it is transliterated to the letter “t”.

Example: مكتبة الإمام transliterated to: maktabat al-imām

However if the Arabic letter (ta' marbutah) found in a word with (al), in a single word or in the last word in a sentence, it is transliterated to the letter "h".

Example: المكتبة الأهلية transliterated to: al-maktabah al-ahliyyah
 قلعة qal'ah
 دار وهبة dār wahbah

ABBREVIATION

n.d	no date/no year
n.a.	no author/no artist
pp.	pages
S.W.T	subhānahu wa ta'ālā
S.A.W	salla Allāh 'alayh wa sallam
JHEOA	Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli
JAKIM	Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia
PKM	Parti Komunis Malaya
PERKIM	Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia
ABIM	Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia
YADIM	Yayasan Dakwah Islamiah Malaysia

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli (JHEOA) is a department that been in charged to govern and manage the social needs and the development of *Orang Asli* advancement because *Orang Asli* have their own unique identity. This department was established in 1954. (Abd Ghafar Don, Burhanuddin Abdullah&Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2000) *JHEOA* has played the major role in developing *Orang Asli's* Society (Chin Mei Kian, 1996)

Before the *JHEOA* was established, a Field Ethnographer was appointed in December 1939 as the Protector of Aborigines for the state of *Perak*. This appointment was made after the enforcement of *Perak* Aboriginal Tribes Enactment No, 3 in 1939 and existed before the World War II.

JHEOA has been established in year 1953/54 under a new regulation known as the Aboriginal People's Ordinance No.3, 1954. This regulation was introduced to protect *Orang Asli* traditional culture from the vast development of civilization and exploitation, and also to provide appropriate facilities to them, such as education and developmental facilities.

When our country was put in the state of emergency (*darurat*) in year 1948, the *MPAJA* a.k.a *Parti Komunis Malaya (PKM)* built a close relationship with the aborigines (*Orang Asli*) in the rural areas. Due to the threat from *PKM*, the government started to give special attention to *Orang Asli* by resettlement to avoid the influence from the communist. However, this action failed and as a result, *Orang Asli* become closer to the *PKM* and choose to become anti-government.

In 1949, Welfare Officer Aborigines, a Federal post, has been appointed to administer the Aboriginal Welfare Office, which is one of the divisions under the Department of Welfare. This post was later changed to the Protector of Aborigines or *Orang Asli's* Counsel. This Counsel is responsible to report to the State Chief Secretary, who has responsibility to the High Commissioner of The Malay Federation.

In the years 1951-1952, with the introduction of Members System (*Sistem Ahli*), Aborigines Office was founded separately from the Department of Welfare and was put under the State Internal Affairs Member's portfolio. At this time, the Federal level agency has eleven staff members and at the State level, there is a Protector in *Pahang* and some part-time Protector in *Perak* and *Kelantan*.

In 1953, a new policy was introduced, where the government started to delegate administration and protection affair to *Orang Asli* in the rural areas, instead of trying to resettlement them. Thus, the Aboriginal Welfare Office was enlarged.

After the 1955 election, with the introduction of the Ministry System to replace the Members System, *JHEOA* was put under the supervision of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In December 1956, the Department of *Orang Asli* was changed to museum, *Orang Asli* research division was put under the supervision of Ministry of Education.

The objective of *JHEOA* is to ensure that *Orang Asli* can achieve the same socio-economical level as other societies in this country, practice high morals values, without losing their original identity.

Besides, *JHEOA* also assures that it will be more competent, efficient and effective in the future in order to develop *Orang Asli* society corresponding with the vision of our country.

Some of the goals and objectives of *JHEOA* is to prevent poverty among *Orang Asli*, to increase the quality of life and health, to reshape their morals values, to protect and

govern their culture and arts and also to increase the competency, efficiency and effectiveness of the organization by showing their loyalty, trust, team spirit, pro-active, fairness, empathy, discipline and gratefulness (<http://www.jheoa.gov.my>).

Some of the activities conducted by *JHEOA* are family developmental programs, spiritual programs, education, health, entrepreneurship, human resource management, consultancy services, food and clothes aids and others. (Nong Pai, 1995)

JHEOA was also involved in the programs of introducing Islam to *Orang Asli* and developing the relationship between *Orang Asli* and modern society. These programs get full support and co-operation from agencies and department such as the State Economic Planning Unit, the Department of Forestry, *PERKIM*, *JAKIM*, Municipal Council, Religious Departments and others. From the Statistic obtained from *JHEOA*, it shows that 12,437 people (13.5%) have been successfully converted to Islam. From this amount, 1,708 (57.5%) are *Negratoes*, 5,799 (11.8%) are *Senois* and 4,930 (12.2%) are Native Malays. (Abd Ghafar Don, Burhanuddin Abdullah&Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2000).

The major issue that contributes to the lack of participation from *Orang Asli* to the Islamic programs is due to the internal problems of *Orang Asli* themselves. This is because a lot of them were illiterate and uneducated. These situations are contributing factors that contribute to the difficulties of understanding the teachings of Islam. Thus, *da'ies* have to use appropriate techniques that can be easily understood and accepted by *Orang Asli* in order to propagate Islamic teachings.

Another factor that contributes to the lack of conversion to Islam is the influences of Christian missionaries. These influences are the biggest obstacle for the *da'ies* in preaching Islamic *da'wah* to *Orang Asli* people.

Lack of attention given by the Malay Society towards *Orang Asli* is also one of the influence factors because Malays are more interested to teach and preach to the Malays

itself and not to the *Orang Asli* Society. Furthermore, the Malays have never established a good relationship with *Orang Asli*, which contributes to the lack of conversion.

Orang Asli have wrong perceptions on the Muslim Society. This is relevant because most of the officers in government departments, including *JHEOA*, are Malays. Matters relating to their right on their property (land), for example, cannot be resolved according to their need and demand because the staff and officers are from the Malays and they do not want to take any actions to solve *Orang Asli* problems (Abd Ghafar Don, Burhanuddin Abdullah&Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2000)

1.2 Problems Statement

Many Efforts have been made towards the development of *Orang Asli* and one of them was the establishment of *JHEOA* in 1954. The objective of establishing this department is to tackle the issues of security and physical development. Spiritual development programmes were later introduced in 1990's. (Abd Ghafar Don, Burhanuddin Abdullah&Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2000).

Generally, there are still a lot of *Orang Asli* who have not yet converted to Islam. The amount of *Orang Asli* in 1986 is 68,935. From this amount, only around 7,341 (10.65 %) are Muslims (*JHEOA* 1986). Hence, this research try to study the perceptions of *JHEOA*'s officers towards the reasons of *Orang Asli* do not choose Islam as their religion.

1.2.1 Aims of Research

At the end of this research, the perceptions of *JHEOA*'s officers towards the reasons of *Orang Asli* do not choose Islam as their religion will be studied and examined.

1.2.2 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

1. To understand the reasons behind the refusal of *Orang Asli* to choose Islam as their religion.
2. To get suggestions and recommendations to increase the number of *Orang Asli* converting to Islam.
3. To know the *dai'es* problem in spreading *da'wah*.

1.2.3 Research Questions

1. What are the views of the *JHEOA*'s officers towards *Orang Asli* who do not want to accept Islam as their religion?
2. What are the actions that can be taken in order to increase the number of *Orang Asli* converting to Islam?
3. What are the *da'eis* problems in spreading *da'wah*?

1.2.4 Definitions of Concept and Operational.

Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli:

JHEOA is a body or an agency under the Federal government. This department is a body that is fully responsible to implement all the government policies towards *Orang Asli* in Peninsular Malaysia. An administration Act in relation to *Orang Asli* has been passed in 1954, which provides that the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* may appoint a commissioner for

Orang Asli Affairs and some related officers who are thought to be suitable to take care and protect the welfare and development of *Orang Asli* (JHEOA, 1976).

There are seven (7) divisions under *JHEOA*:

1. Administration and personnel.
2. Finance and Supply.
3. Transportation and Relations.
4. Socio-Economy Development.
5. Research and Information.
6. Training.
7. Health and Medical. (info @ jheoa.gov.my)

Orang Asli:

The term '*Orang Asli*' originates from the Malay word, '*Orang Asal*' or original people who live in this country. The word '*asli*' is taken from Arabic word '*asliyyun*' which means origin. In English, it is known as 'aborigines', and the western scholars call them as 'aborigines of Malaysia'. (Carey, 1976).

The term '*orang asli*' is used in order to replace the term that had been used before such as '*orang sakai*', '*orang darat*', '*orang pangan*' and others. The amendment is made so that the '*orang asli*' will not feel depressed where the names given to them by others have an insulting meaning and they did not like it. (Burhanuddin bin Jalal, 1986).

Orang Asli is the oldest society in Malaysia. The term '*Orang Asli*' starts to be used and accepted after independence in 1957 to replace the English term 'aborigines' used by the British (Abdullah Muhammad Zin, 2000).

The *Orang Asli* are the indigenous minority peoples of Peninsular Malaysia. The name is a Malay term which transliterates as 'original peoples' or 'first peoples.' It is a collective term introduced by anthropologists and administrators for the 18 sub-ethnic groups

generally classified for official purposes under *Negrito*, *Senois* and *Proto-Malay*. They numbered 105,000 in 1997 representing a mere five percent of the national population.

The *Orang Asli*, nevertheless, are not a homogeneous group. Each has its own language and culture, and perceives itself as different from the others. Linguistically, some of the northern *Orang Asli* groups (especially the *Senois* and *Negrito* groups) speak languages - now termed Aslian languages - that suggest a historical link with the indigenous peoples in *Burma*, *Thailand* and *Indo-China*.

The *Orang Asli* have equally varied occupations and ways of life. The *Orang Laut*, *Orang Seletar* and *Mah Meri*, for example, live close to the coast and are mainly fishermen. Some *Temuan*, *Jakun* and *Semai* people have taken to permanent agriculture and now manage their own rubber, oil palm or cocoa farms.

About 40 per cent of the *Orang Asli* population - including *Semai*, *Temiar*, *Che Wong*, *Jah Hut*, *Semelai* and *Semoq Beri* - however, live close to, or within forested areas. Here they engage in swiddening (hill rice cultivation) and do some hunting and gathering. These communities also trade in *petai*, *durian*, rattan and resins to earn cash incomes.

A very small number, especially among the *Negrito* groups (such as *Jahai* and *Lanoh*) are still semi-nomadic, preferring to take advantage of the seasonal bounties of the forest. A fair number also live in urban areas and are engaged in both waged and salaried jobs.

There is no doubt, however, that the *Orang Asli* are the descendants of the earliest inhabitants in the peninsula. It has been suggested that they retained much of their identity to the present day because of their relative isolation from the other communities and the forces of change.

This is not to suggest that the *Orang Asli* lived in complete isolation, existing only on subsistence production. Economic dealings with the neighbouring Malay communities were not uncommon for the past few hundred years, especially for the Proto-Malay groups. Those *Orang Asli* living in remote forest areas also engaged in some trading with the Malays, with jungle produce being exchanged for salt, knives and metal axe-heads.

There was also evidence of trade in blowpipes and blowpipe-bamboo among certain tribes. It has also been shown that the *Orang Asli* have played a significant role in the Malay Peninsula's economic history as collectors and primary traders as early as the 5th Century A.D. An early 19th century report also tells of *Negritos* providing forest products as tribute to the Malay chiefs of the river basins they resided in.

There seemed, therefore, to be a certain amount of interaction between the *Orang Asli* and the other ethnic groups, particularly the Malays who resided along the fringes of the forest. Some of the initial contacts, however, were unfortunately characterized by cruelty and mutual hostility.

Islam:

Islam is an Arabic word which means "submission (to God)" and is described as "*deen*" in Arabic, meaning "way of life" or "religion". It has an etymological relationship to other Arabic words, such as *salaam*, which means "peace". The Arabic word "*Muslim*" is related to the word Islam and means a "vassal" of God and "one who surrendered" or submits (to God). Muslims see homage to God as a sign of distinction; this term has no negative connotations. Homage means serving the will of God above and beyond one's own goals. After completely understand Islam, a Muslim will get happiness in this world and hereafter. This is evidenced with the word of Allah in the Qur'an which stated that only Islam is the truthful religion.

Allah SWT. commandment in Al-Qur'an

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعِيًّا
بَيْنَهُمْ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

(Al-Qur'an. Ali-'Imraan 3:19)¹

The religion before Allah is Islam (submission to His Will): nor did the people of the Book dissent there from except through envy of each other, after knowledge had come to them. But if any deny the Signs of Allah, Allah is swift in calling to account.

Islam actually completes the relationship between human and his creator (Allah SWT.) and the relationship between humans and Islam as 'ad-din' that cannot be separated from humans' life. Allah SWT. sermons the believers to accept Islam with all their heart. As stated in Al-Qur'an.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السَّلْمِ كَافَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ

(Al-Qur'an. Al- Baqarah 2: 208)

O ye who believe! Enter into Islam whole-heartedly; and follow not the footsteps of the Evil One; for he is to you an avowed enemy.

In Islam, our main reference is the Qur'an and then of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. These references have been used as main references of Islam in the past and for eternity. Allah SWT. says in Al-Qur'an.

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ

(Al-Qur'an. Al-An'am 6: 38)

There is not an animal (that lives) on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you. Nothing have We omitted from the Book, and they (all) shall be gathered to their Lord in the end.

¹ All Quranic translations in this writing are based on 'Abdullah Yusuf Ali. The *Holy Qur'an, Text And Translation*. Kuala Lumpur: Islamic book Trust. Translations from other sources will be cited accordingly.

There are two meanings of the word ‘Islam’:

- a) Literal meaning
- b) Phrasal or technical meaning

a) Literal Meaning

‘Islam’ literally means:

- To bow and trust (*taslim*)
- Safeguard (*salaam*)
- To be loyal, peaceful and without any defect either physically (*zahir*) or spiritually (*batin*)
- Obedience and to enter felicity

One of the Quranic verses that show this meaning is:

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمِ قَالَ أَسَلَّمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

(Al-Qur’an. Al-Baqarah 3:131)

Behold! His Lord said to him: "Bow (thy will to Me):" he said: "I bow (my will) to the Lord and Cherisher of the Universe."

b) Phrasal Meaning

The Phrasal Meaning of ‘Islam’ is:

1. Allah SWT. is one, loyal and obey to His orders, to faithfully follows the teaching from Allah brought by the Holly Prophet Muhammad SAW.

2. One witness that there is no God besides Allah SWT. and that Muhammad SAW. is His Messenger and one must pray, perform *zakat*, fast during the month of *Ramadhan* and perform hajj for those who are capable to perform it.
3. Bow and obey all that are thought by Prophet Muhammad SAW.
4. Religion introduced by Prophet Muhammad SAW. where the name is not based on his own *ijtihad* but it is solely from Allah SWT.
5. According to Ibn Manzurin his dictionary, *Lisan al-Arab*, the phrasal meaning of 'Islam' is to hear all the *syariat* brought by the prophet Muhammad (Ab.Latif&Rosmawati, 1998)

فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّينَ ءَأَسْلَمْتُمْ
فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

(Al-Qur'an. Ali 'Imran 3: 20)

So if they dispute with thee, say: "I have submitted my whole self to Allah and so have those who follow me." And say to the People of the Book and to those who are unlearned: "Do ye (also) submit yourselves?" If they do, they are in right guidance, but if they turn back, thy duty is to convey the Message; and in Allah's sight are (all) His servants.

The word Islam is derived from the Arabic root word "*slm*" which means, among other things, peace, purity, submission and obedience. From the Islamic aspect, the word Islam means submission to the Will of God and obedience to His Law. The connection between the original and the religious meanings of the word is strong and obvious. Only through submission to the Will of God and by obedience to His Law can one achieve true peace and enjoy lasting purity.

The Muslim worships God alone, Muhammad SAW. was only a mortal being commissioned by God to teach the word of God and lead an exemplary life. He stands in

history as the best model for man in piety and perfection. He is a living proof of what a man can be and accomplish in the realm of excellent and virtue. Islam has existed in one form or another all along from the beginning and will continue to exist till the end of time. Those who are Islam followers are called Muslims. (Hammudah Abdalati, 1998)

1.2.5 Significance of the Study

From this research, the reasons why *Orang Asli* do not convert to Islam will be studied and examined. This research will also take into consideration the perceptions of *JHEOA*'s officers towards the reasons of why *Orang Asli* do not convert to Islam. As been highlighted earlier, there are many problems arise either from *Orang Asli* or the *da'ies* themselves, which contributes to the factor why only few of *Orang Asli* convert to Islam.

Some of it includes the internal problems that is from *Orang Asli* themselves such as sexual freedom, drinking and gambling (Burhanuddin bin Jalal, 1987) in addition with some other external problems such as the shortage of *JHEOA*'s staff, the isolated location of *Orang Asli* village, the lack of competent *da'ies*, problems relating to *Orang Asli* old customs and beliefs, language barriers, incomplete *da'wah* movement, financial problems and lack of follow-up activities (Rosnida Satar @ Sallehuddin, 1991).

Due to all these reasons, this research will study all these causes and find the solutions and actions that can be taken to overcome these problems in order to increase the number of *Orang Asli* embrance to Islam.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The difficulty in delivering Islamic preaching to *Orang Asli* in Malaysia has been the main reason why *Orang Asli* do not choosing Islam as their way of life (religion). Thus, this research was been conducted based on the previous researches that have been done related to the research subject.

2.2 *Orang Asli*

Cassim (1978) stated that *Orang Asli* is left far behind especially in socio economic development. The reason is because of their history.

Although around 60% of *Orang Asli* lives in rural area, but their relationship with the urban people has been developed, they are not left far behind in development compared to the modern society. Malaysia is a multi racial country. *Orang Asli* society is the minority group in Malaysia society comprises of 1% from a whole population in Malaysia. *Orang Asli* is the original society in Malaysia although the origine of people in Malaysia has not been stated clearly in the history. Only the western scholars believed that the origin of society in Malaysia rephrase from *Orang Asli* society. (Burhanuddin bin Jalal, 1986).

Orang Asli Society is the oldest society in Malaysia. The term *Orang Asli* has been use widely after independent in 1957 to replace the word “Aborigines” used by the British. (Abdul Ghafar Don, Burhanuddin Abdullah&Zulkiple Abdul Ghani , 2000).

Orang Asli is part of Malaysian society which amounts to of 166,119 people and can be divided into 3 main groups that are *Negrito*, *Senois* and *Melayu Asli*. Each group then split into 6 smaller groups (18 races) where they use various language and dialect as their medium of communication along with local Malay dialect. (<http://www.jheoa.gov.my>)

As written in Malaysia supreme law, act 134 has developed a definition of *Orang Asli*:

1. In this Act an aborigine is:

- (a) Any person whose male parent is or was, a member of an aboriginal ethnic group, who speaks an aboriginal language and habitually follows an aboriginal way of life and aboriginal customs and beliefs, and includes a descendant through males of such persons;
- (b) Any person of any race adopted when an infant by aborigines who has been brought up as an aborigine, habitually speaks an aboriginal language, habitually follows an aboriginal way of life and aboriginal customs and beliefs and is a member of an aboriginal community; or
- (c) The child of any union between an aboriginal female and a male of another race provided that the child habitually speaks an aboriginal language, habitually follows an aboriginal way of life and aboriginal customs and beliefs and remains a member of an aboriginal community.

2. Any aborigine who by reason of conversion to any religion or for any other reason ceases to adhere to aboriginal beliefs but who continues to follow an aboriginal way of life and aboriginal customs or speaks an aboriginal language shall not be

deemed to have ceased to be an aborigines by reason only of practicing that religion.

3. Any question whether any person is or is not an aboriginal shall be decided by the Minister.

(*Orang Asli* Act 1954, Revised 1974)

This Act is unique in that it is the only piece of legislation that is directed at a particular ethnic community. (For that matter, the *JHEOA* is also the only government department that is to cater for a particular ethnic group.)

Originally enacted during the height of the Emergency, the *Aboriginal Peoples* 1954 (revised in 1974) basically served to prevent the communist insurgents from getting help from the *Orang Asli*. It was also aimed at preventing the insurgents from imparting their ideology to the *Orang Asli*. For this reason, for example, there are provisions in the Act which allow the Minister concerned to prohibit any non-*Orang Asli* from entering an *Orang Asli* area, or to prohibit the entry of any written or printed material (or anything capable of conveying a message). Even in the appointment of headmen, the Minister has the final say. The Act treats the *Orang Asli* as if they were a people unable to lead their own lives and needing the 'protection' of the authorities to safeguard their well being.

Nevertheless, the Act does recognize some rights of the *Orang Asli*. For example, it stipulates that no *Orang Asli* child shall be precluded from attending any school only by reason of being an *Orang Asli*. It also states that no *Orang Asli* child attending any school shall be obliged to attend any religious instruction without the prior consent of his parents or guardian. Generally also, the Act allows the right of the *Orang Asli* to follow their own way of life.

And while the Act provides for the establishment of *Orang Asli* Areas and *Orang Asli* Reserves, it also grants the state authority the right to order any *Orang Asli* community to leave and stay out of an area. In effect, the best security that an *Orang Asli* can get is

one of 'tenant-at-will'. That is to say, an *Orang Asli* is allowed to remain in a particular area only at the pleasure of the state authority. If at such time the state wishes to re-acquire the land, it can revoke its status and the *Orang Asli* are left with no other legal recourse but to move elsewhere. Furthermore, in the event of such displacement occurring, the state is not obliged to pay any compensation or allocate an alternative site.

Thus, the Aboriginal Peoples Act laid down certain ground rules for the treatment of *Orang Asli* and their lands. Effectively, it accords the Minister concerned or the Director-General of the Department of *Orang Asli* Affairs (*JHEOA*) the final say in all matters concerning the administration of the *Orang Asli*. In matters concerning land, the state authority has the final say. The development objective of the Act, therefore, appears to have been subsumed by both the security motive and the tendency to regard the *Orang Asli* as wards of the government.

2.3 Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli (JHEOA)

Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli has been formed in 1953/1954. In the early years, this organization to helped the government in fighting the communist activist in the forest in state of emergency (*darurat*) in year 1948. *JHEOA* plays a major role in developing *Orang Asli* economy through construction of the native society handcraft and herb centre in Carey Island, *Gombak* in *Selangor*, *Jerantut* in *Pahang*, rest area in *Perak* river and others. *JHEOA* is also responsible in eliminating the gap between *Orang Asli* and the Malaysian modern society so that they can live together. (Utusan Malaysia, 15th December 2003).

JHEOA has been provided with a budget of RM 100 millions to carry out various development programs for *Orang Asli* around the country. They are focusing in increasing the health standard, pre school education, economic activities including the palm tree estate development and mind development program. This big budget project is forecasted to give full benefit to 132,000 *Orang Asli* around the country so that they live comfortably like others. Excessive amount has been spent to *Orang Asli* residence area that lack of basic facilities such as roads. (Berita Harian, 2nd of August 2003).

According to Rohima binti Muda (1987), the foundation of *JHEOA* in 1955 is to look after the administration, welfare and development of *Orang Asli*. *JHEOA* is under the supervision of *Jabatan Hal Ehwal Dalam Negeri*. One of the important aspects that arise in the state of emergency in 1954 is the safety aspect, so the formation of *JHEOA* is to cease the influence of communism ideology to *Orang Asli*. The development of *JHEOA* took place 1954 to 1987. The first stage are in 1954-1960, second stage in 1961-1970 (The restructuring of *JHEOA*) and the third stage was in 1971-1987.

She also said that *JHEOA* is the closest agency to *Orang Asli* community, so *JHEOA* must carry out their task effectively for example their *da'ies* who have been given responsibility in preaching Islamic teaching must have adequate knowledge on *Orang Asli*, the change of attitude of Malay society towards *Orang Asli* will increase the chances for *Orang Asli* to be interested to the Islamic teaching, the assignment of more *da'ies* from *Orang Asli* itself, plan an effective Islamic preaching activities, educating *Orang Asli* community to increase their understanding in Islamic practice, and also wider the scope of Islamic preaching organization in order to increase the Islamic quality among *Orang Asli*.

JHEOA is a federal government agency. This agency is fully responsible to operate the federal government plan for *Orang Asli*. An act has been issued and passed on the administration related to *Orang Asli* community by *Yang Dipertuan Agong* can elect a commissioner to supervise the current affair of *Orang Asli* and also a group of officer who are qualified to charge in the welfare and development of *Orang Asli*. (*JHEOA* 1976).

2.4 The Obstacle in *Da'wah* and the Suggested Solutions

In developing the Islamic practice among *Orang Asli* community in this country, there are many difficulties and problems arise have negative effect to the implementation of the Islamic programs. Among the problems are there are not many staff have deep interest to accomplish the task to attract *Orang Asli* community to the Islamic teaching. The

location of *Orang Asli* is also too far to reach, lack of follow-up action, *Orang Asli* strong belief in their ancestor religions and also negative views of the Malays towards *Orang Asli*. (JHEOA, 1981)

Zainuddin bin Musa (1994) stated that in the effort of developing *Orang Asli* either physically or spiritually, JHEOA must establish an action community to organize *Orang Asli* community affair where the workforce must be from the pensioners JHEOA or the interested parties. Furthermore, they must appoint more *da'ies* which come from *Orang Asli* themselves.

The Islamic center of Malaysia has given their full effort in order to attract *Orang Asli* community to be a Muslims and also to increase their living standard, the formation of special unit to teach Islam to *Orang Asli* community is the evidence of the Islamic center of Malaysia commitment in protecting *Orang Asli* community welfare. (Berita Harian, 24th January 1998)

The federal government and various educations institutional in Malaysia have opened the opportunities to the *Orang Asli* to get a higher education. (Berita Harian, 24th September 1986)

Sidi Gazalba&Zainab Ismail (1995) agree that the Islamic preaching problem arise from the confusion of Muslims people in this country on the Islamic practice. There are many Islamic organizations that use Islam as their objective but their practices are not based on the Qur'an and *Hadith*. Many of the *da'ies* are not qualified enough to give preach Islam to the public. This has caused a catastrophic to Islam itself. A lot of Islamic works are not using the right channel and has been carried out in ineffective way without understanding the current environment and the main objective. It Islamic preaching or teaching not been managed in effective way it will not bring unity to the *ummah* but also hurting the Islamic *Ukhwah* that leads to the catastrophic to the Islamic people. As the result, all the efforts to develop Islam become wasted.

Abdul Rahim Arshad (2003), in his paperwork, written that all the *da'ies* must cooperate to plan an effective way to solve the problem in Islamic preaching so that it will run smoothly and effectively. A few problems have been identified, among them are the Islamic preaching institutions do not organize their program effectively, the preaching systems itself is not effective and does not professionally organized, the irrelevancy of the preaching objective with the *ummah* problem, conflict arise among the *da'ies*, and the preaching objectives are not clearly identified.

This matter has been focused by Abdul Ghafar Don, Burhanuddin Abdullah & Zulkiple Abdul Ghani (2000), in their attempt to send Islamic preachers to *Orang Asli* community and a few problems and obstacles have been identified. The problems arise from *Orang Asli* itself, the influence from the Christian Missionary and lack of attention from the Malay society towards the *Orang Asli* society, misunderstanding between *Orang Asli* and the Malays and also their confusion on Islam itself. Based on the information given, many suggestions had been given to the party that involve in the Islamic preaching activities to *Orang Asli* whether they are individuals or organizations. The *da'ies* had been focusing on the contents of their Islamic preaching and use the media as one of their approach and strategy.

According to Ahmad Tajuddin bin Abdul Hamid, the Islamic preaching today faces a big challenge especially in 21st century and also when we are reaching the new era that is 'the third millennium'. The Islamic preaching nowadays has to face the internal and external challenges. The *da'ies* must increase their effort in spreading the word of Islam because they face the problem from the organization or individual that teaches the wrong principle of Islam. Due to this reason, the Islamic practitioners must adequately prepare themselves especially when facing the globalization and millennium era.

Abdul Aziz Mohd Zain (2001) said that the problem that faced by the *da'ies* was came from themselves or the Muslims themselves. It can be summarized that the main problem arised from the *da'ies*, the non-Muslim and also the Muslim. Among the special efforts done by them are go back to the people who have big influence to the tribe such as

Tok Batin, build a close relationship such as doing the social work, ask on the issues relevant to the religions and at the same time raise the other issue, bring forward the 'aqidah issue and their difference from the other religions including *Orang Asli* belief and also showing them the greatness of Islam.

Amran Kasimin (1985) confident many problems faced by the parties involved cannot be identified due to several reasons, or it is agreed that this matter must not being spread to the public. There are 2 major problems occur in the effort to send the Islamic message that are the problem faced by the party involve in organizing the new Islam comers and also the problem faced by the new comers itself. There are many new converts live with their non-Muslim family because they do not have adopted Muslim's family. This gives them a problem to perform their 'ibadah and they will also crossing the food problems example (*haram*) food.

Rohizan bin Ya (2001) stated that Islamic preaching problem aroused among *Orang Asli* can be divided into two. First is the internal factor the problem which comes from *Orang Asli* itself. Secondly, is the external factor that is involving problem from the Christian Missionary, the mass media influence and also the attitude of the Malays society.

The Malays society is very prejudice to *Orang Asli*. Some of the Malays like to touch on the sensitive issue to the *Orang Asli* society such as to call them 'sakai' which means the slave. This insulting word has been used for a long time by the Malays to insult another person. Nevertheless, there are some Malays who are still using 'sakai' to refer to *Orang Asli* because for them 'sakai' means a group of primitive or slave that live in the jungle and isolated from the modern society. (Shamsul Amri Burhanuddin, 1978)

Orang Asli are feared to be Muslims because in their opinion Islam will bring in difficulties to them. In the food aspect, many foods that they always eat cannot be eaten such as pork, monkey and others. (Carey, 1970)

There are also *Orang Asli* who have been Muslims but now removed Islam and went back to their old belief. This is a huge problem faced by *JHEOA* and also organizations involved. This issue has been spotted in *Tanjung Malim, Perak* where by 9 people from *Orang Asli* left Islam and converts back to their old belief. (Berita Harian, 22nd September 1986)

Sidi Gazalba & Zainab Ismail (1993) stated that the weakness of Islam economy nowadays is the effect from the slow moving of Islamic movement. In Malaysia, the Islamic movement has been operating and run by certain organizations such as *Al-Arqam*, *Tabligh*, *ABIM*, *PERKIM*, and *YADIM*. It is a pity that these organizations do not cooperate with each other but they work with their own way. Furthermore, the Christian Missionary has done their own preaching widely around the globe and their followers have been increased from day to day. Many actions have been taken to stop their activities such as giving awareness to the Muslims on the dangerous of the preaching brought by the Christian Missionary. An ideal Islamic society must be develops to will attract the non-Muslim society.

The Islamic preaching in the early ages (Muhammad SAW. and his companion era) is the perfect model to be a reference and guidance to the *da'ies* nowadays. Besides, the government must play an important role in safeguarding the safety and peacefulness achieved by the converts, and also provide them a special settlement that is complete with all facilities needed. The federal government should form a special committee to manage the affairs of the convert in order to protect and monitor any awful measures taken by their family and foe. The government also must discuss this matter with the Islamic organization face to face and also provide them with technical expertise, moral support and material in order to make their preaching efficient.

In addition, the *da'ies* have to attend the Islamic special course. The education centre, police and also the army organization must also provide a special training to their members on the Islamic preaching so that they can also help in developing Islam in this country. For Islamic students and scholars, they are encourage to get along with the non-

Muslims and they also must have a compulsory practical training to non-Muslims in their syllabus as their core subject.

Burhanuddin bin Jalal (1986) stated that the problems and challenges facing by the Islamic preaching movement are the difficulty to form an intimate environment between the Malays society and *Orang Asli* and also a challenge from Christian and *Bahai* Missionary. There is a move to break the relationship between the Malays and *Orang Asli* society by spreading anti-Malays towards *Orang Asli*, and the difficulty in teaching and guiding them to responsible and pure Muslims in their daily life.

There are not many of *da'ies* or practitioners that are willing to live together with *Orang Asli* as one of the efforts to teach them practically on Islam and to strengthen their *iman*. (Berita Harian, 21st December 1984)

According to Malizah Mohd Yusof, Rohani Kamis&Siti Rosilawati Ramlan (2000), among the steps that have been suggested to refurbish the Islamic preaching to *Orang Asli* is by adding and maintaining the spiritual programs, involvement and cooperation from the public on the Islamic preaching movement, and the preparation of the *da'ies* to be assigned to *Orang Asli* village.

Yusoff Muhammad (2000) has stated that the Islamic preaching plays a major role to put Islam at the highest place. There are a few pre-requisites that have to be fulfilled by the *da'ies* so that the preaching will be successful. The credibility of the preacher, that is the *da'ies* must be the role model, focusing on the education and moral aspect, the relevance of Islam towards human history, social systems as the alternative to the socialism and capitalism.

According to Muhammad Said Ramadhan (1997), actually, the Islamic preaching is not brought out the problem; the problem is come from the people itself due to their confusion and stupidity. The question is, how the *da'ie* wants to preach to others but they

do not have enough knowledge on Islam. This love to Islam is not automatically qualified them to be *da'ies* but they must have a deep knowledge on Islamic aspects and principles.

Ghazali Darussalam (1996), quoted that in order to faces any challenges that threaten the Islamic movement, steps must be taken to put aside any disagreement between them, plan a strategy together and also increase the numbers of expert or professional *da'ies* in their organization or movement.

Mohd Amin Abdul Rahim (2001), gives his opinion on how to preach effectively to non-Muslims. Among of the suggestion are the administration and management of Islamic movement must be organized professionally, increase the quality of *da'ies*, Islamic council must play their role aggressively, increase the amount of Islamic reading materials such as Islamic newspapers and books, build a mosque or a place for them to pray. For those who live far from town, increase the financial provision, send the *da'ies* to attend certain courses, seminar, and conference that relevance to their task or work, continuously run a research on the matters that relevance to the Islamic movement including the preaching techniques and approaches, preaching media and facilities, organize a seminar to increase awareness of the public on the importance of Islamic preaching, and also motivate the public (Muslims) to joint the Islamic movement.

The problem arise came from the Islamic society itself that give the negative effect to Islam due to their stubbornness and stupidity. Amongst the problems is that the media agency always given the negative image to Islam which is not true, the stupidity born inside the individual Muslim himself, and the *da'ies* always be isolated by the public.

Therefore, in order to develop awareness on the importance of Islamic preaching, all parties must give full cooperation especially to the government. Problems must be identified and solved quickly and effectively strategy should be planned and well organized. From the mass media aspect, the Islamic telecommunication media must be developed in multi languages. For the *da'ies*, the knowledge on the difference of others religious, preaching strategy and the ability to preach in different language is very

important. The *dai'ies* also must have a deep understanding on the belief or religions of the non-Muslims. (<http://www.Alumni-hira.org>)

The most important thing for the *da'ies* is to correct the wrongful thought on Islamic principle and teaching and also enhancing the Islam image to the world. In making Islam as a religious that can be accepted around the world, they must show that Islam is a perfect way of life, easy to adapt, safeguard principle and produce more *da'ies* from various races is very important. Actually, they must speed up the process to organize the Islamic programme systematically, so that every effort in globalizing Islam is not been wasted and the vision to make Islam as the worldwide religion will come true. (Al-Islam, July 1996)

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

From the researches that have been conducted, the causes why *Orang asli* do not convert to Islam must be identified and studied. This research will also take into consideration the perceptions and views from *JHEOA*'s officers on the reasons of why *Orang Asli* do not convert to Islam. As mentioned earlier, there are many problems arose either from *Orang Asli* or the *da'ies* themselves, which contributes to the cause of only few *Orang Asli* converted to Islam.

Some of it includes the internal problems from *Orang Asli* themselves such as sexual freedom, drinking and gambling (Burhanuddin bin Jalal, 1987) besides them are some other external problems such as the shortage of *JHEOA*'s staff, isolated location of *Orang Asli*'s village in rural areas, incompetency of *da'ies*, problems relating to *Orang Asli* old customs and beliefs, language Barriers, incomplete *da'wah* movement, financial problems and have follow-up activities (Rosnida Satar@Salehuddin, 1991)

Due to all these, this research will study the causes and try to find a solution to overcome this entire problem so that it will increase the number of *Orang Asli* embrace to Islam.

3.2 Research Method

This research is a descriptive research. According to Abd Razak Mohammad (1986), descriptive research is expounding and describing informations, which is collected and analyzed in the form of percentage and using charts. This methodology is used to ensure the questions. Data from this area will be collected in the form of repetition and the percentage will be counted.