

ORANG ASLI MUALLAF: A STUDY OF THEIR LEVEL OF INTERACTION IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract

This research set outs to explore the exact level of interaction between Orang Asli Muallaf and their Malay counterparts in Malaysia. It was sure that interaction in social aspect becomes a dilemma when the Muallaf convert from their own religion to Islām. It suggests that when these converts begin to practice Islām, their behavior changes in line with the identity of the Malays. This is because Islām equates to Malay in the Malaysian context. Whilst they are welcomed by their Malay counterparts, it is nevertheless hypothesized that they may not interact fully in the Malay culture.

Keywords: Social, Interaction, *Orang Asli Muallaf*, Malays, Malaysia

1. Statement on the Focus of the Research

Malaysia is a typical multi-racial and multi-religious country. It is a prime example of a multi-racial society. One of the outstanding characteristics of its multi-ethnic population today is its highly variegated ethnic mix. The ethnic groups of Malaysia consist mainly of the Malay community, the Chinese community and the Indian community. (Malaysian Year Book, 1980:15) Malaysia also has other ethnic groups like the Eurasians and *Orang Asli*. Because of the multi-racial character of the population, it also has a variety of culture, religion, social norms and values. This makes the country a rich field for studying the interaction of the various ethnic groups. It is important to appreciate the recent level of interaction in a multi-racial context such as Malaysia in order to make possible the development of policies that could sustain solidarity within the community. Without this information the country will face a serious troubled situation, created by the feelings of disaffection between all races.

This research set outs to measure the level or the degree of interaction between *Orang Asli Muallaf* and the dominant Malay community. The *Orang Asli* falls into two district groups, first; a group which has rejected their previous customs, traditions and 'way of life' in order to embrace Islām (the *Orang Asli Muallaf* referred to this group). Second; a group which has 'born into' the *Orang Asli* with their animism faith. As a result, *Orang Asli Muallaf* confront the dilemma that they are disliked by their own ethnic community because they differ socially from them after 'conversion' to Islām, particularly, in the new 'behavior' needed across specific areas of conduct such as prayer, fasting, observance of ritual, alcohol prohibition, eating only '*halāl*' meat and so on. On the other hand, they need to adapt their social norms and values in line with Malay community since they dominate the social aspect as Muslim.

In effect this new 'behavior' results in a 'loss of ethnic identity', which instead moves closer to that of the Malays themselves. That Islām equates to 'Malay' in Malaysia is deeply influential in this.² However,

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these social pressures to conform to the norms of 'Malay' Islam create considerable confusion for *Orang Asli Muallaf*. Not only is their previous ethnic identity eroded, but their 'new' identity is uncertain. Should they regard themselves as *Orang Asli*, Malay or Muslim? It also creates a new problem related to their interaction with the Malays. Should they avoid interacting with the Malays in order to avoid the assumption that they are being Malay even if in reality they are *Orang Asli*?

The above questions relate directly to the heart of this research, which will focus upon measurement of actual levels of interaction. In other words, the 'unclear situation' in which the *Orang Asli Muallaf* find themselves will affect their interactions with the Malays. There is also the motive that discovering their level and degree of interaction can help bring about appropriate policies to help them.

2. The Objectives of the Research

The general objective of this research is to look into the social interaction of the *Orang Asli Muallaf* with the Malay Muslims in Malaysia by measuring the level of such interaction. The level here means the statistical results affected from testing and analysis made by the researcher through the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software.

This research task is to evaluate this level in the context of various situations of the *Orang Asli Muallaf* in Malaysia. Therefore, it is interesting to find out about the interaction between them and the Malays. It is interesting to know the exact level of their interaction. The group of *Orang Asli Muallaf* will be divided according to selected criteria. Therefore, the general statement of the problem of this research is: if Islām is equated to Malay, based on the Constitution of Malaysia, do the *Orang Asli Muallaf* change their social aspect in line with the identity of Malays. This means, do they interact with the Malays and what is the exact level or degree of their interaction?

Specifically, the objective of the research is to look into the practices of social aspects such as language, culture, norms and values of the Malays and to examine and analyze whether *Orang Asli Muallaf* interact with such things. Therefore, these researches focus on the achievement of studying the level of social interaction of *Orang Asli Muallaf* with the Malays by using several Malay practices.

3. Background of *Orang Asli* in Malaysia

The term of *Orang Asli* refers to aboriginal people in Malaysia. *Orang Asli* normally live in the jungle or very remote areas. Nowadays, there are approximately 6,000 *Orang Asli Muallaf* out of 147,556 *Orang Asli* population in Malaysia. Most of them are from the State of Pahang which has 54,293 populations of *Orang Asli*.

The existence of *Orang Asli* in Malaysia has become one of a source of attraction for tourists from outside to visit Malaysia. Visitors from outside are keen to visit the *Orang Asli* village due to their unique lifestyle. It is interesting to note that, even though their life is simple, but they are rich with tradition. *Orang Asli* is believed to have many potentials. Living in the jungle make them closer to various resources to be exploited. They can perform good song, mastering in handicraft and works related to their surrounding area.

Various agencies whether government or non-government are taking initiative to help to develop and enhance life quality of *Orang Asli* through different approaches. Among the agencies which are concerned with *Orang Asli* affairs are *Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli* /JHEOA (Department of Orang Asli Affairs of Malaysia.), *Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia*/JAKIM (Department of Islamic Advancement of Malaysia), States Religious Department, *Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia* (Muslim Welfare Organization of

² Inevitably this is the case, since 'Malays' are the dominant ethnic group in what is their own country. Specific legislation protects this principle, such as Article 160, in the constitution of Malaysia.

Malaysia) and also Islamic Youth Movement Malaysia (ABIM). (Abdul Ghafar Don, et.al.. 2012. Retrieved 24th of October, 2013 from <http://www.aensiweb.com/anas/2012/549-551.pdf>: 550)

The efforts of those agencies generally can be seen in the following aspects:

1. Education, intellectual and spiritual development

Research conducted by Faculty of Economics and Business, National University of Malaysia shows that 50% of *Orang Asli* are having dropped out problem. The data show that the *Orang Asli's* education is in a critical situation. Therefore, to uplift the standard quality of education among *Orang Asli*, JHEOA for example has taken initiatives to encourage educational programs, training and mind development amongst children, teenagers and aboriginal youth as a preparation towards leaving their dependency towards land-based economy. (www.jheoa.gov.my, 23rd of October, 2013). For the adult, several steps have been taken to change the life of *Orang Asli*. *Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga* (PKK) (Harmonious Education for Family) and *Pendidikan Literasi Kefungsian* (PLF) (Functional Literacy Education) are an example of such efforts. Generally, it is a fact that *Orang Asli* still left far behind the other ethnic groups in Malaysia in terms of educational achievement. This is due to among other less infrastructure particularly school. It is the responsibility of the government to provide sufficient educational infrastructure for the betterment of *Orang Asli* education.

Besides JHEOA, JAKIM also plays its role in terms of religious education. In order to change the way of *Orang Asli* thinking, JAKIM has done various initiatives to educate *Orang Asli* usually related to religious education. For example, *Penggerak Masyarakat Orang Asli/PMOA* which might be considered as *muballigh* (Preacher) to teach *Orang Asli* basic teachings of Islam and teaching the art of reciting the Qur'an.

2. Infrastructure

Compared to other ethnic group in Malaysia, *Orang Asli* also still left far behind in terms of standard quality of life. Some of them live in a very remote area or in the jungle. Most of their villages far away from town. In order to upgrade the standard life of *Orang Asli*, Malaysian Government in 2007 has allocated some of RM83,887,000.00 to relocate *Orang Asli* in a proper village with sufficient infrastructure (under integrated development projects) such as Poor Housing Citizens Project, a community center, multi-purpose hall, tap water and electricity supply. Under year 2009 budget, the Government of Malaysia has increased the allocation for development of *Orang Asli*. RM160 million been allocated for this purpose. This kind of development projects is in line with the strategy of the JHEOA with emphasized to promote a more modern and progressive aboriginal and eliminate any negative stereotypes (www.jheo.gov.my, 24th of October, 2013).

3. Socio-Economy

As to uplift their socio-economic aspect, the Malaysian government has taken initiatives to help *Orang Asli* having a better life. The government gives more emphasis on projects related to socio-economic development and human development. The government is of the opinion that *Orang Asli* should not depend anymore on the traditional form/source of economy like hunting, forest product, fishing and other. They should be encouraged to be involved in business likes commercialized the jungle products. Therefore, the Government focused on land development activities, encouraged small scale industry, agricultural machinery assistance, entrepreneurship training and planting palm oil commercially. These particular efforts are part of government commitment to help to develop *Orang Asli*.

4. Concept of *Muallaf* in Islam and Malaysia

The word ‘Muslim converts’ means those who are changed from their previous religions to Islām and become Muslim. In Islām, they are called ‘*Muallaf*’. The *Encyclopedia of Islām* explains that the word *Muallaf* comes from the Arabic ‘*Al-Muallafa Qulūbuhum*’ which means “those whose hearts are won over” or “those hearts that need softening” (C.E Bosworth, E. Van Donzel, W.P Heinrichs and C.H Pellat, 1993:254). The term applied to those former opponents of the Prophet Muhammad who are said to have been reconciled to the cause of Islām by gifts of 100 or 50 camels from the Prophet Muḥammad’s share of the spoils of the battle of *Hunayn*, after Muḥammad’s forces had defeated the *Hawāzin* confederation, and which were divided out at the *al-Dijrana*. The list included the Meccan Leader Abū Sufyān and his sons Mua’wiyya and Yazīd and various Bedouin chiefs of the tribes of western Arabia. On the other hand, the actual phrase is connected with the Qurān in the *Sūra Al-Tauba*: 60, which means: “*Zakāt*³ is for: the poor, the destitute, those who collect it, reconciling people’s hearts (*Muallaf*), frees slaves, spending in the way of Allah, and travelers. It is a legal obligation from Allah. Allah is all knowing, all wise”

From the above phrase, *Muallaf* should be given *Zakāt* in order ‘to win’ and ‘to soften’ their hearts to follow Islām as a way of life. To give a better understanding about *Muallaf*, especially their categories according to the Islamic view, the word should be discussed together with *Zakāt*. These two things are determined in Islam as being included within the category of *Fiqh*⁴. Several discussions among Islamic scholars showed that the term *Muallaf* also includes non-Muslims, but only for the purpose of turning their hearts to Islām; for example, al-Qarādāwī states, where there is a group of non-Muslim being courted in the hope that they will accept Islam, such as the case of Safwān. During the opening (al-futūh) of Mecca, Safwān was given a period of four months by the Prophet Muhammad to consider accepting Islām. When the battle of *Hunayn* occurred, he took part in it. The Prophet then lent Safwān his sword and gave him a few camels, taken from a valley. Consequently, after that incident, Safwān became a good Muslim. (Yūsuf al-Qarādāwī, 1986:595) The ḥadīth Sohīh referring to the event appears in the Sunan al-Tirmīdhī, which means: “From Safwān, son of Umayya, who said: “On the day of the Hunayn war, the Prophet had given me something. Truly, he was the person whom I hated most but he always gave me (something) until he really became the person that I love most”

The ḥadīth mentioned above explained that Prophet Muhammad had transformed Safwān who hated him most at first, but through love, care and material showered on him by the Prophet, his hatred changed to love. Similarly, there is another ḥadīth Sohīh collected by Shawkānī and cited by Ahmad with the *sanad* from Anas: (Al-Shawkānī, Muḥammad bin Ali, 1987:120-121) “Truly, the Prophet never asks anything except for the importance of Islām unless he was definitely able to fulfil it. Once, a man come and asked him something, he then was told to take a large part of the *Zakāt*, (goats) which occupied land between two mountains. So, the men went back to his people and said: My people, all of you should embrace Islām, for Muhammad (loves) gave something as though a person was afraid of hunger”

³ *Zakāt* otherwise known as Islamic religious tax, one of the five basic pillars of Islam. All adult Muslims of sound mind and body with a set level of income and assets are expected to pay *Zakāt*. *Zakāt* will be paid yearly on certain types of property determined by religion (Islām). *Zakāt* is payable, at different rates on basically five items of income and assets which are crops, harvests, herds, gold and silver, and merchandise.

⁴ *Fiqh* refers to the study of the law in Islam and was defined in terms of jurisprudence as the knowledge of the rights and duties whereby human beings are enabled to observe right conduct in this life and to prepare them for the world to come. See more meaning about *fiqh* at: Kamali, Mohammad Hashim. 1991. *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence*. Cambridge, U.K.: Islamic Texts Society.

As a result, almost all of the Islamic scholars agree the non-Muslim as a part of *Muallaf* as a way to persuade them to embrace Islām. Unfortunately, they do not verify the categories clearly. Only al-Qurtubī mentioned three of them, which are: (al-Qurtubī, 1954:180)

1. Those who have just embraced Islām. They need support in order to build up their confidence towards Islām. al-Qurtubī quoted from al-Zuhri, who was of the opinion that those included in this group were the Jews and Christians who had newly accepted Islām, even though they were rich.
2. Leaders and public figures amongst them who had many friends who were non-Muslims. By giving them a part of the *Zakāt*, it was hoped to be able to attract them and their friends and get them to embrace Islām as was in the case when Abū Bakar gave *Zakāt* to Uday bin Hatīm and Zabarqan bin Bdr. Both of them were of high social standing in their society.
3. The middlemen who can persuade other non-Muslims to embrace and accept Islam such as an act of war. In this matter, they received a part of the *Zakāt* to become such a middleman.

After the death of Prophet Muḥammad, the companions directed their attention to the rights of the *Muallaf* in receiving *Zakāt*. They do not explain further the meaning of the group, and these were the reasons, categorizing the *Muallaf*. For example, during the time of Prophet Muḥammad, Uayyana bin Hisn, al-Aqra' bin Habīs and Abbas bin Mirdās were each given a guarantee (a letter) from the Prophet and Abū Bakr that they were to be given a portion of the *Zakāt* collection. When the letter was brought to the notice of Umar, he immediately tore up the letter. He said: "*The Prophet gave you that portion to entice you to Islām. Now Allah has exalted Islām and there are no longer any bonds between you and us. If you are still in Islām, then we accept you but if you are not, then our tie is through the sword*" (Amiur Nuruddin, 1991:141-142). After that Umar read al-Qurān, *Sūra al-Kahf*:29, says: "*It is the truth from your lord, so let whoever wishes have īmān and whoever wishes be kāfir*". They went back to Abū Bakr and told him what had happened and thus asked: "*Are you the Caliph or Umar?*" Abū Bakr answered: "*Umar!*". Abū Bakr did not refute the sayings and actions of Umar, nor did the other companions until that matter achieved the consensus of opinion (*ijma'*) of them all, according to some scholars. There were no comments from Uthman and Ali about that portion hitherto meant for the *Muallaf* being taken away from them. When Abū Bakr was caliph, he continued giving the part to Uday bin Hatīm and the people in his area.

After the era of the companions, there are a few differences of opinion among the *Fiqh* Scholars (*Ahlu al-fiqh*), for example, Hanafī *Fiqh* scholars were of the opinion that the portion for *Muallaf* should be abrogated; they thus lost all rights after the death of Prophet Muḥammad. They based their opinion on the *ijma'* of the companions of the Prophet, since Abū Bakr and the other companions did not question the action and sayings of Umar. However according to al-Qurtubī, the Malikī scholars had two differences of views on this matter, which are that the loss of *Muallaf* rights was due to the strength and the expansion of Islām and the rights of the *Muallaf* are permanent as long as they have done their work in persuading other non-Muslims to embrace Islām. According to Shāfi'ī, there are two opinions on the problem of giving *Zakāt* to the *Muallaf*:

1. The new converts to Islām could be given part of *Zakāt* because Allah has commanded *Zakāt* taken from Muslims to be given back to Muslims and not to be given to people of other religions.
2. The non-Muslim should not receive any part of the *Zakāt* even to attract them to Islām. Although the Prophet had once given part of the *Zakāt* to some non-Muslim in the *Hunayn* War, it was actually from the property of '*ghanīma*' (acquired without the use of force or struggle) and more specifically from the Prophet's own property.

Al-Nawāwī was in complete agreement with Shāfi‘ī’s opinion that in order to attract the hearts of non-believers to Islām, *ghanīma*’s property, or any other, could be used, but not out of the *Zakāt* collection. Meanwhile according to al-Qarādāwī, the *Muallaf* includes both non-Muslim and Muslims, giving the portion of the *Zakāt* to them would be in order if it could attract the non-Muslim to Islām. The prohibition concerns giving a part of *Zakāt* specifically to them. New converts, however, should receive their part as prescribed.

However, there are two things not really clear from the above discussion. Firstly; the period which somebody who has newly embraced Islām can be called *Muallaf*. The second is related to integration, or in other words, how the *Muallaf* integrate with the Muslims. If the period referred to the stand of Umar in relation to Uyaynah bin Hisn, al-Aqra‘ bin Habīs and Abbas bin Mirdās, the period is only two years. This is based on the term which Abū Bakr has been a caliph until the early term of U‘mar. Unfortunately, some subsequent Islamic scholars followed basically what Prophet Muhammad did during his life in giving *Zakāt* to *Muallaf* (including those who were non-Muslims) as long as they enhance Islām. That means, they will continue to be called *Muallaf* and will receive the *Zakāt* collection.

The way *Muallaf* interact and integrates with ordinary Muslims probably can be seen best through a consideration Islamic education or sometimes the discussion can be found in the ‘*da’wa Islāmia*’⁵ section. For example, according to al-Qurtubī the reason to give attention and guidance to *Muallaf* in the way of Islām is part of *da’wa* methodology since it is obligatory for Muslims to propagate Islām, to save them from the swords of the Muslims here on earth and the fire in the life after death. After that, al-Qurtubī gave some emphasis by giving them priority in guidance, briefly as follows:

1. To prevent them from deeds that may spark social unrest.
2. To make them realize the wholesomeness (*Shumūl*) of Islām as their constant guide on the right path.
3. To encourage them to hope for the blessing of Allah, so that their hearts are open to accept the teaching of Islām.
4. To show them how Islām always cares for and loves the *Muallaf* and that the Prophet Muhammad is a blessing for all and especially the new convert.

Meanwhile, according to Ibn Hishām the purpose of providing guidance to the *Muallaf* in the basic knowledge of the ‘*Dīn*’ (religion) and instilling them with qualities of correct moral behavior is to encourage them to willingly embrace Islām, and to avoid evil deeds. Ibn Hishām said that the best example of love and guidance can come from ‘*Hijra*’. The companions were ever willing to sacrifice themselves, their nation, home, wealth, friends and families to migrate to Yathrib (Medina). As an example, Ali bin Abī Tālib willingly took the place of Prophet Muhammad, lying on his bed even though he knew the pagan *Quraish* had already designed to kill the Prophet. Abū Bakr, constantly looked ahead to ensure that he had chosen the best way for the Prophet Muḥammad; and at the same time looked back to see no danger coming from behind in order to protect the Prophet whilst on their journey to Yathrib. (Ibn Hishām, Abd al-Mālik al-Himyarī:98-123)

In Malaysia, the concept of conversion followed from what was discussed as the Islamic view above. This was strongly reflected with the rule of *Zakāt*. However, in certain areas unrelated to the rule of *Zakāt*, there are several different practices concerned with the concept, which can be summarized in two parts:

⁵ *Da’wa* is an Arabic term meaning 'invite' or 'invitation'. It is considered to be an obligation on Muslims to invite others to understand and practice Islām as a way of life. *Da’wa* is usually referred to as the act of 'preaching Islām'. It can apply to both Muslims and non-Muslims.

1. The Malay Muslims call the *Muallaf* 'our brother' (or '*Saudara Kita*' in the Malay language) and 'new brother' (known in the Malay language as '*Saudara Baru*'). The word 'new brother' (*Saudara Baru*), used in the Malay Muslim society in Malaysia, is to indicate and state that someone has embraced Islām. Referring to them as such is a way to enhance Islamic brotherhood's care for and love of the converts. However, this also may alienate the converts and cause them to become separated from the mainstream of the Muslim *umma* as the converts may feel that they are not one of the born Muslims. This can divide Muslims into born Muslims and converts. This is not good for interaction, that is, to encourage them to socialize and mix freely as Muslim brothers.
2. In general, instead of the words '*Saudara Kita*' and '*Saudara Baru*', Malay Muslims categorized all the converts in one category called '*Muallaf*' which referred to those who are not Malay. It happens because, as Malays, they do not know whether the *Muallaf* was born as a Muslim or just embraced Islām. Then, this also invited some problems. For example, the word seems to indicate there are gaps between them, and for sure it will be considered a racism issue. On the other hand, the *Muallaf* have prior complex feelings because they assume they are on their own, without any support from their surroundings. All this makes the interaction between Malays as a majority, and the *Muallaf* as 'new comers' to Islām, get worse. The problem appeared to be not a simple matter, and it was faced not only by *Muallaf* but also by other minorities. The difference that what was happening to *Muallaf* was considered as being between Muslims, for the others it was different between races. (Razaleigh Muhamat @ Kawangit, et.al. 2012. Retrieved 24th of October, 2013 from <http://www.aensiweb.com/anas/2012/504-510.pdf>: 505)

In this research, the term *Muallaf* will be used with the same meaning as 'convert'. It is also applied in the Constitution of Malaysia⁶ to refer to a person who has changed his religion, and to some regulations especially concerning the *Zakāt* funds by State Religious Departments in Malaysia who usually refer to such a term.

5. Criteria's for Collecting and Measuring Data

For this research, 600 questionnaires were distributed to *Orang Asli Muallaf* to measure their actual interaction. This 600 respondents represent around 10% of *Orang Asli Muallaf* (from 6,000 strong populations in Malaysia who was embraced Islam). The criteria's for collection data including level of age, gender, occupation and educational background, monthly income basis and marital status. Meanwhile twelve Malay practices were determined as criteria's for measuring the data, which are:

1. *Baju Kurung/Melayu*- a national costume of Malaysia worn by Malaysian at official events.
2. *Batik*- wearing *Batik* means to wear cloths with local concepts decoration.
3. *Songkok*- a traditional Malay cap and this headdress worn with the traditional outfit for Malay.
4. The Malay wedding- The ceremony is a traditional Malay culture.
5. *Kenduri* (feasts)- is a customary occasion where people are invited and gathered to celebrate something.
6. *Kompang*- is the most popular Malay traditional instrument which widely used for all sorts of social occasion

⁶ The word *Muallaf* was used in the Administration of Islamic Law Enactment of Malaysia, 1992 and the Law Reform (Marriage and Divorce) Act, 1976. It also used in the same meaning of *Muallaf* (those who are embraced Islām and not from Malays) in Article 11 (1) and Article 12 (3) and (4), Federal Constitution of Malaysia.

7. *Nasi Lemak*- a rice cooked with coconut milk and served with anchovies, nuts, cucumbers, a chili paste known as '*Sambal*' and a choice of curries.
8. *Jawi* script- a traditional Malay writing. It is an adapted Arabic alphabet for writing the Malay language, particularly in religious contexts.
9. *Salam*- used in Malaysia equivalent with a handshake.
10. *Bersunat*- means circumcision
11. *Khatam al-Qurān*- a ceremony of completion of the reading of the whole holy Quran.
12. *Eid* celebration- will be started when millions of Muslims gathered at mosques in the early morning on the first of *Shawāl* (one of the months in the Muslim calendar)

6. Respondents' Demography, Instrument Reliability and Research Finding

The whole respondents' demography can be referred from Table 1, appendix 1 at the end of this writing. Meanwhile, reliability in this research means consistency, or the degree to which an instrument will give similar results for the same individuals at different times. The best quotation to explain the instrument reliability in research is through the definition the term given by Joppe (2000). She defined the reliability as "...the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable"(Joppe, M:2000,Retrieved 9th of October, 2012 from <http://www.ryerson.ca/~mjoppe/rp.htm>.)

However, the researcher cannot be sure of unchanging elements in extraneous influences, such as something that might cause an attitude transformation among the respondents. This could lead to a difference in the responses provided. In spite of this, any attitude change that can be considered as unexpected cannot be counted as a cause of an unreliable instrument. Following on what Joppe (2000) illustrated in reliability analysis by using the alpha (α) method, she concluded that an alpha (α) score of 0.6000 and above has a good reliability. The result of reliability testing of this research, after using the same method of testing as Joppe (2000) is shown in the Table 2, appendix 1 at the back. The result shows that each of the instruments (questions) has alpha 0.9000 and above or alpha 0.9990 in percentage. It means the instruments or the questions used in this research are reliable and can be validly applied in the questionnaire.

The word 'level' in this research can be interpreted as certain numbers within the measurement which allows one to conclude that interaction is at the high or low levels. Apparently, the usual formula used to get the levels is by looking at the 'Median'(Y) value score, comparing it with the 'Mean'(X) value score; if the 'Median' (Y) value score is higher than the 'Mean' (X) value score ($Y > X$), it means one can come to the conclusion that the level of interaction at the highest level. On the other hand, if the $Y < X$, this means the degree is at the low level. The testing and analysis of the level are summarized in the Table 3, appendix 1.

Clearly, derived from Table 3, the (Y) value score less than the (X) value score ($Y (2.6667) < X (2.8883)$). This leads to the conclusion that the level of interaction of *Orang Asli Muallaf* is at the low level. The exact numbers and percentages relating to this low level can be obtained from the Table 4, appendix 1.

Noticeably, the (Y) value score of interaction of *Orang Asli Muallaf* is 2.6667 and it was close to 2.67 from the (Y) value score level at Table 3. Commonly, the close value from the score level can be used to conclude the precise percentage of the certain level (in this case, the percentage of interaction of *Orang Asli Muallaf*). Therefore, from the cumulative percentage of the 2.67 (Y) score level is 51.8%. It means, 51.8% of the 600 respondents of *Orang Asli Muallaf* or 311 of them are not interacting socially with the Malays.

7. Conclusion

Briefly, in the side of interaction, through Mean (X) and Median (Y) testing and analyzing, enclosed the degree is in the low level. It was proved on such testing, the Median (Y) value smaller than Mean (X) value to reach the conclusion mentioned. In number, 311 respondents are not interacting with the Malays via social practices, norms and values transferred into a document from questions in the questionnaire, while 51.8% represented them in percentage. It shows that *Orang Asli Muallaf* are not fully socially interacted into the mainstream of Malaysia which was dominated by the Malays.

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Appendix 1

Table 1: Respondents' demography

Data gath. Resp. Cri	Criteria background	Number of data gathered	Percentage
1. Age	15-17 years-old	120	20
	18-24 years-old	60	10
	25-30 years-old	80	13
	31-35 years-old	60	10
	36-40 years-old	60	10
	41-45 years-old	110	18
	46-54 years-old	70	12
	55 years-old and above	40	7
Total		600	100
2. Gender	Male	300	50
	Female	300	50
Total		600	100
3. Occupational background	General workers	431	71.8
	Semi-skilled workers	169	28.2
	Skilled workers	0	0
	Professional workers	0	0
Total		600	100
4. Educational background	Primary school	503	83.8
	Secondary school	97	16.2
	College/Institute/Pre-University Classes	0	0
	University	0	0
Total		600	100
5. Monthly income	Upper income group (RM 5,000.00 and above)	47	7.8
	Middle income group (From RM 1, 000.00 to RM 4,000.00)	433	72.2
	Lower income group (RM 200.00 to RM 900.00)	120	20
Total		600	100
6. Marital status	Single	405	67.5
	Married (including single parent and widow)	195	32.5
Total		600	100

Source: returned questionnaires

Indication: Data gath: Data gathered, Resp.Cri: Respondent's Criteria

Table 2: Reliability analysis results

Item/question number	Item/question total correlation	Alpha (α) analysis result
Q7	0.9724	0.9990
Q8	0.9710	0.9990
Q9	0.9640	0.9990
Q10	0.9891	0.9989
Q11	0.9862	0.9990
Q12	0.9909	0.9989
Q13	0.9886	0.9989
Q14	0.9916	0.9989
Q15	0.9913	0.9989
Q16	0.9643	0.9990
Q17	0.9892	0.9989
Q18	0.9891	0.9989
Q19	0.9922	0.9989
Q20	0.9922	0.9990
Q21	0.9925	0.9990
Q22	0.9874	0.9991
Q23	0.9897	0.9990
Q24	0.9744	0.9989
Q25	0.9239	0.9989
Q26	0.9642	0.9990
Q27	0.9891	0.9990
Q28	0.9899	0.9989
Q29	0.9917	0.9990
Q30	0.9876	0.9989
Q31	0.9834	0.9989
Q32	0.9886	0.9989
Q33	0.9657	0.9990
Q34	0.9872	0.9990
Q35	0.9921	0.9990
Q36	0.9929	0.9989
Q37	0.9901	0.9998
Q38	0.9936	0.9989
Q39	0.9932	0.9989
Q40	0.9907	0.9989

Source: Reliability analysis through SPSS

Table 3: Testing and analyzing results of the interaction level

		INTERACTION LEVEL
Respondents	Valid	600
	Missing	0
Mean (X)		2.8441
Median (Y)		2.6667
Mode		1.00
Std. Deviation		1.3782
Variance		1.8994
Range		4.00
Minimum		1.00
Maximum		5.00
Sum		1706.44
Percentiles	25	1.6944
	50	2.6667
	75	4.0000

Source: Testing and analyzing through SPSS

Table 4: Testing and analyzing results of the numbers and percentages of social interaction

(Y) value score level	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00	118	19.7	19.7	19.7
1.11	2	.3	.3	20.0
1.44	1	.2	.2	20.2
1.67	29	4.8	4.8	25.0
1.78	10	1.7	1.7	26.7
1.89	23	3.8	3.8	30.5
2.00	52	8.7	8.7	39.2
2.11	5	.8	.8	40.0
2.33	2	.3	.3	40.3
2.44	11	1.8	1.8	42.2
2.56	2	.3	.3	42.5
2.67	56	9.3	9.3	51.8
2.78	22	3.7	3.7	55.5
2.89	29	4.8	4.8	60.3
3.00	1	.2	.2	60.5
3.11	5	.8	.8	61.3
3.22	15	2.5	2.5	63.8
3.33	3	.5	.5	64.3
3.44	1	.2	.2	64.5
3.56	2	.3	.3	64.8
3.67	8	1.3	1.3	66.2
3.78	7	1.2	1.2	67.3

3.89	1	.2	.2	67.5
4.00	76	12.7	12.7	80.2
4.11	3	.5	.5	80.7
4.22	8	1.3	1.3	82.0
4.33	1	.2	.2	82.2
4.44	1	.2	.2	82.3
4.56	11	1.8	1.8	84.2
4.67	1	.2	.2	84.3
4.78	2	.3	.3	84.7
4.89	5	.8	.8	85.5
5.00	87	14.5	14.5	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Source: Testing and analyzing through SPSS