

Building a Fortress of Faith in East Indonesia: Islamic Religious Education for *Muallaf* Family in Abun Tribe, Tambrauw, Southwest Papua

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Abstract

Building synergy between local culture and education is a strategic effort to create communities and families that have a strong identity, and are able to adapt to global dynamics. This article aims to analyze the implementation of Islamic education in the *muallaf* family of the Abun Tribe in Baun Village, Tambrauw, Southwest Papua who are a minority in their environment and tribe. The existence of inner conflicts, marginalized in social life, causing personal problems, even poverty, is a serious problem in the hearts of these seekers of God. This research uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. Data were obtained through observations and interviews with informants from *muallaf* families. The results showed that the practice of religious education in the *muallaf* family of the Abun Tribe is still weak, so it really needs continuous guidance from various parties. Islamic education coaching based on local culture and tradition is one of the alternative choices to realize the ideal Islamic family, *sakinah, mawaddah wa rahmah* in the Abun *muallaf* family.

Membangun sinergi antara budaya lokal dan pendidikan merupakan upaya strategis untuk menciptakan masyarakat dan keluarga yang memiliki jati diri yang kuat, dan mampu beradaptasi dengan dinamika global. Artikel ini bertujuan menganalisis pelaksanaan pendidikan Islam pada keluarga muallaf Suku Abun di Kampung Baun, Tambrauw, Papua Barat Daya yang menjadi minoritas di lingkungan dan sukunya. Adanya konflik batin, termarginalkan dalam kehidupan sosial, menimbulkan problem pribadi, bahkan kemiskinan, menjadi problem serius pada batin para pencari Tuhan ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan fenomenologi.

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Data diperoleh melalui observasi dan wawancara para informan dari keluarga muallaf. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa masih lemahnya praktik pendidikan agama pada keluarga muallaf Suku Abun, sehingga sangat membutuhkan pembinaan berkelanjutan dari berbagai pihak. Pembinaan pendidikan Islam berbasis budaya lokal dan tradisi menjadi salah satu alternatif pilihan untuk mewujudkan keluarga Islam yang ideal, sakinah, mawaddah wa rahmah pada keluarga muallaf Suku Abun.

Keywords: Abun Tribe; Islamic religious education; minority; *muallaf*

Introduction

Religious education in the family is critical because, with the existence of religious education, a child can improve the quality of understanding and practice of Islamic teachings, which can be used as a guide in his life later (E. Lestari & Satria, 2015; Rahmadania et al., 2021; Tafsir et al., 2020). In the process of Islamic religious education, parents carry out a process to educate, direct, and provide provisions for their children so that they live following the teachings of Islam. Therefore, improving the pattern of children's education in the family is a must and requires serious attention (Mahmud et al., 2019; Pajriah et al., 2020; Shomadah, 2017).

Islam places the family as the foundation for the development of the advanced civilization of Islamic society (Rahmadania et al., 2021; Sari & Zahrani, 2023; Tafsir et al., 2020). Therefore, Islam pays excellent attention to family matters. From pre-marriage to the functioning of the family as a dynamic in the lives of its members, especially children, it truly becomes a pillar of Islamic society (L. Lestari, 2022; Sari & Zahrani, 2023; Tafsir et al., 2020).

An-Nahlawy views the family as the most influential environment for children's education. The Muslim family is the main fortress where children are raised through Islamic education (al-Nahlawi, 2005; an-Nahlawi, 1995; Qosim & Safitry, 2021). The Muslim family is a married couple as the two core figures (father and mother) combine to realize the goals of Islamic education (al-Nahlawi, 2005; Qosim & Safitry, 2021).

Parents play an essential role in the formation of a child's personality. The good and bad aspects of the child's personality in the future are primarily

determined by the education and guidance of his parents. In the family, children first receive education before other education (Haryanti & Lie, 2021; Mualimin, 2017; Nurhanifah, 2018; Rahmadania et al., 2021). The role of the family is essential as it is the first institutional unit that has a direct relationship with people in a society. Within the family environment, children develop and will form the initial stages of the disciplinary process. The interactions encourage children to acquire knowledge, skills, interests, values, emotions, and attitudes.

This condition certainly applies also to *muallaf* (Muslim convert) families who have just embraced Islam. Of course, they need maximum guidance regarding the teachings of Islam. *Muallaf* is a non-Muslim who converted to Islam (Galugu & Sumarlin, 2020; Muhdhori, 2017; Sapiudin & Syarifah, 2018; Siregar et al., 2020). Those who have recited the *shahadat* sentence are among the Muslims who need to be given guidance and attention by those who understand Islam better. After saying the *shahadat* sentence, the assumption arises that individuals will begin to explore Islam (Casmini, 2020; Tasbih et al., 2022). *Muallaf* will encounter several stages that require knowledge, encouragement, patience, support, advice, and continuous motivation to face each stage so that, in the end, they can reach the stage of serenity in living the religion (Firman et al., 2017; Galugu & Sumarlin, 2020; Hidayat, 2021; Muhamat et al., 2012; Santoso et al., 2021; Sapiudin & Syarifah, 2018; Yusri & Abdullah, 2015)

However, this condition differs from what happened to the *muallaf* family of the Abun Tribe in Baun Tambreuw village. Their religious life is minimal in implementing religious teachings, the second pillar of Islam, the five daily prayers, and sunnah worship. Although since the last year a Mushollah has been established in the village, it is not utilized correctly. Similarly, there is learning to read the Qur'an, but only a few students join. Even worse, there are still those who are cohabiting, living as a married couple without going through the Islamic marriage contract. This condition is assumed to be due to the lack of guidance and attention, both from fellow Muslims and from the government. It can be seen by the absence of continuous guidance related to Islamic teachings after they become Muslims.

This results in their lack of religious knowledge, especially considering that they have just become *muallaf* and they still must guide a happy family according to the demands of Islam. It is certainly not easy for a *muallaf* to educate his children and family with the teachings of Islam as prescribed. It is undoubtedly a separate issue for a *muallaf* when applying religious education to his child.

Many academics have carried out research related to the development of *muallaf*. The pattern of assistance is carried out in the form of learning the Qur'an and the implementation of prayer (Adenan et al., 2021; Ikran et al., 2022; Jamal et al., 2022; Madjid et al., 2020; Napri, 2021; Sulkipli & Nirwana, 2022; Umin et al., 2019; Yusri & Abdullah, 2015), vocational education and development program (Kholilurrohman, 1970), and coaching (Casmini, 2020; Firman et al., 2017; Ikran et al., 2022; Sahari et al., 2021; Syifa, 2019; Syuhadak & Farkhanudin, 2019). By using a persuasive approach, religious guidance for *muallaf* can be carried out properly so that their knowledge of sharia and faith can increase (Ikran et al., 2022; Muhdhori, 2017; Tamuri, 2015).

From the above opinion, it can be understood that there is a profound hope from every Muslim for Islamic religious guidance or guidance for *muallaf* in a sustainable, directed manner so that it can help converts to know, understand, and apply the teachings of Islam in a *kāffah* manner in everyday life, so that none of the converts will apostatize (return to their original religion). Therefore, this research will reveal aspects that academics have not studied, namely the impact of religious guidance on the religious attitudes of *muallaf*, by looking at the model of Islamic religious education in the *muallaf* family that gives them the ability to maintain their social piety in a minority environment.

Based on this phenomenon, the author considers this study necessary. Moreover, there are still those who do things that are contrary to the teachings of Islam, which can potentially return to their religion of origin. Furthermore, the attention and religious activities of their religion of origin are very intense, as if to illustrate that we Muslims do not pay too much attention to Muslim families of converts, especially the Abun Tribe in Baun village, Tambrauw Regency.

This research is a type of qualitative field research, which is more directed at understanding the phenomena that occur that are related to the focus of the problem to describe and analyze phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and thoughts of people individually or in groups. This description is used to determine principles and explanations that lead to conclusions. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation using Miles and Huberman data analysis. The source of data from the Abun *muallaf* family in Baun village, Yembun District, Tambrauw, to explore the problems of the *muallaf* family in adapting to changes and practicing religion and social piety in a minority environment.

Parents' Perceptions of *Muallaf* Families of the Abun Tribe about Islamic Religious Education of Their Children

According to their history, the Abun *muallaf* community in Baun Village, Tambrauw, converted to Islam in 1992. Although at that time, there were several incidents and intimidation from the district head for converting to Islam, there were still some of them who remained with their creed. Still, those who could not stand the torture returned to Adventist Christianity. In Baun village, there are still ten family heads with an insufficient 70 people, generally surnamed Yenjau, Yeblo, Yengren, and Yekwam. The rest moved their domicile to Saosapor district in Tambrauw, and some even migrated to the city and district of Sorong.

The *muallaf* family of the Abun Tribe is essentially currently a *muallaf* because of marriage, so the teaching of Islamic religious education to their children is not effectively carried out due to the lack of religious knowledge, and even no religious basis at all since the beginning of their parents *muallaf*. This condition is supported by the demands of making a living, going to sea to fish, and gardening as a daily job to survive and fulfill the obligation to make a living. They realize how vital religious education is. Although their status as parents of converts to Islam is not done because their time is divided by busy work, their children lack attention in implementing or carrying out the teachings of Islam.

The *muallaf* families that the author interviewed realized the importance of religious education. Although their status as parents of converts to Islam is not done how Islamic religious education is for their children because their time is divided by busy work, their children need more attention in implementing or carrying out the teachings of Islam.

In fact, a *muallaf* should experience a process that increases every day. Understanding of Islam increases along with the learning experience in coaching. The growing knowledge of a *muallaf* depends on the factors that encourage conversion. A *muallaf* who converts because of curiosity will certainly be very different from the one who converts because he follows his parents (Madjid et al., 2020; Sapiudin & Syarifah, 2018)

The role of *muallaf* parents here is not optimal in providing an understanding of the values of Islamic teachings to their children, thus making their children unmotivated and even uninterested in implementing Islamic law, such as prayer and the implementation of other worship, even their children still carry out some of the prohibitions of Islam. So, in this case, parental education for children in the Abun family has yet to be effective in securing an understanding of Islamic religious values to their children.

Therefore, it is necessary to maintain the faith of the converts. To develop intellectual acuity and self-integrity as a person who has a strong character for his beliefs, among the things that are done is to guide or internalize Islamic values in the children of *muallaf* through their families. However, when parents cannot provide religious education, the impact of guidance from several parties is not maximized.

Ideally, the first learning for children is by parents, environment, and society, so the consequence of the development of students is undoubtedly the understanding of religion and the way parents are educated in the surrounding environment. When parents have limited religious knowledge owned by *muallaf* parents, of course, it is not conducive for *muallaf* children because their social behavior is still seen in the way and behavior of the previous religion, especially the habit of not praying when entering time and also the words that still use sentences that are not in line with Islamic teachings, due to the limited religious knowledge possessed by parents as

teachers or educators in the home, and associations in the children's environment are still in the direction of previous beliefs that are not in line with Islamic teachings, this is all caused by the limited Islamic values taught.

It is in line with the theory that the position of parents can be said to be the central determinant of the fate of children. Children are not only a logical consequence of marriage but also a mandate for parents. Likewise, a good education will produce pious children applying the knowledge and faith they have to be safe in this world and the afterlife (Galugu & Sumarlin, 2020).

Problematics of Islamic Religious Education among Children of *Muallaf* Families of the Abun Tribe

The reflection of the embodiment of Islamic teachings is divinity or *tawhid*. With this belief, every action must be returned to the core of Islamic teachings because otherwise, it is empty (Hermawansyah & Suryani, 2017; Madjid et al., 2020). There are several main implementation points in internalizing Islamic teachings for the children of converts. Related to the limited understanding of religion for parents who make religious conventions but cannot educate their children directly in their home environment, it is necessary to strengthen parents in introducing *tawhīd*, *sharī'ah*, *'aqīdah* values, and moral values. This critical education will make humans more mature, understand Islam, and intellectually, morally, and socially develop. In addition, it must also be able to transform values as a basis (foundation), mainly Islamic values.

To avoid all of this, there are several main points of implementation in internalizing Islamic values in the children of converts, related to the limited understanding of religion for parents who make religious conventions but cannot educate their children directly in their home environment so that, of course, it is necessary to strengthen guidance for families of converts.

The results of observations and interviews conducted by the author with Mr. H. Adam Yeblo always guide and direct his children to pray five times and go to the Qur'an, even though he is a *muallaf* parent who is still minimal in the field of religion. Still, his children feel objections and are burdened by the order of worship even though they prefer to play at the house of his friends

who are Muslim or Christian, so his children sometimes only obey. Still, they only go but do not carry out worship because they need a high spirit to carry out worship, also because of the association of friends and the influence of the environment, resulting in weak education. It differs from the research on the commitment of several *muallaf* families who try to carry out Allah's commands by worshiping and strengthening their faith (Hakiki & Cahyono, 2015; Santoso et al., 2021).

While the statement of Mr. Abu Bakar Yeblo said that parents try to guide and order their children to pray at the mosque, sometimes, during Maghrib and Isha prayers at the mosque, children choose to hang out with their friends because relationships and the environment still influence many teenagers in the *muallaf* family of the Abun Tribe. At the same time, working parents also have limited attention in supervising their children's worship.

In guiding and educating their children to perform worship, such as fasting, praying, and learning to read the Qur'an, they follow religious guidance at the nearest mosque. However, some of them do not actively participate in religious guidance. The limited ability of parents of converts are not able to teach themselves because of their limited knowledge in reciting the Qur'an. Because of the limitations of parents of converts to Islam in educating and teaching the Qur'an to their children, to cover their weaknesses, they utilize religious teachers around their place of residence to teach religious knowledge to their children.

With the problems of *muallaf* parents in implementing Islamic religious education in children in the Abun Tribe *muallaf* family, including a lack of understanding of parental education and parents' economy at the lower middle level, parents cannot afford to send them to school. It is only taught Islamic religious education, morals, and worship in style. However, in Tambrauw Regency, there are Islamic elementary schools, Qur'anic Education Park, and Majelis Taklim (Fauzi & al Islami, 2022). Therefore, parents can only use exemplary and habituation methods to change their children's moral and social behavior.

In addition, for habituation to be identical to local wisdom, the Abun *muallaf* family must be able to choose the proper method for their

environment and life traditions. Because with this method, the children of the Abun *muallaf* family look more eager to learn. The converts in the Abun Tribe who come from the interior only understand the teachings of their ancestors and depend on nature. Therefore, it is sometimes practiced directly in the surrounding rivers and then in the mosque environment. The following media is a form of using posters. Usually, the preacher explains the procedures for prayer and ablution to the converts of the Abun Tribe, namely showing two posters of prayer procedures from *takbīrat al-iḥrām* (beginning) movements to *salām* (end) and posters of ablution procedures according to Shari'a. All posters are equipped with prayers according to the movement. The converts are enthusiastic and understand more about the practice or procedure of prayer and ablution with direct practice, supported by pictures.

The head of the family stated, "After I embraced Islam, I felt calm. Still, I experienced many temptations and tests to return to the previous teachings, which I understood were the teachings of the customs and ancestors in the Abun Tribe. I finally tried to always actively follow the recitations of the nearest mosque and any form of religious activity I followed in the hope that my faith could be strong and that my religious understanding would also increase."

Therefore, religious guidance is to awaken human spiritual power and increase faith and piety in Allah to overcome all the difficulties of life experienced, so faith and piety are raised in such a way as to become a driving force for their ability to overcome all the challenges of life that are overcome until they rise to awareness as a person who must navigate real life in society and their environment (Kurnia & Khadijah, 2018; Muhamat et al., 2012; Widodo, 2019).

One's faith is directly proportional to one's morals. In other words, the better one's faith, the better one's morals are. It is because faith is the principal capital that shapes one's personality. Faith is a potential that exists in humans since they were born and is inherent in them. It is in line with the growth and development of a person the surrounding environment has touched; this potential will increasingly appear or vice versa, and the potential will slowly disappear. Therefore, faith is a principle that must be nurtured continuously,

especially for *muallaf*, who needs guidance and examples from their mentors. A supportive environment to continue learning about religion will shape the patterns and attitudes of the *muallaf*.

Weak parental understanding, economic conditions, and lack of empowerment from stakeholders and the government make the Abun Tribe's *muallaf* family a minority in their environment. It makes the Abun Tribe's *muallaf* family unable to compete and survive in these conditions. Finally, mental and economic pressure from the previous family is necessary for converts. This becomes a further problem when building a tranquil family. The *muallaf* families are already strong in '*aqīdah*'; they can pray and recite the Qur'an. However, it needs to be balanced with a good economy (Syuhadak & Farkhanudin, 2019).

Likewise, Abidin's research states that in carrying out the *da'wah* approach, it is necessary to emphasize the accuracy of the approach related to the *muallaf* group at hand so that it prioritizes *da'wah* using the Bil-Hikmah method, using the fields of social life to realize a social, economic and cultural order in accordance with the principles of Islamic teachings (Abidin, 2021). Therefore, the form of Islamic education guidance for the *muallaf* family of the Abun Tribe based on culture and local wisdom according to their lives is an ideal offer for them so that the life of Islamic religious education in the *muallaf* family environment can increase.

Islamic Education Model of *Muallaf* Family of Abun Tribe in Baun Village, Tambrau

A family will only be ideal if it meets the requirements set by religion and the laws of the country and society. Among the ideal families are those that can function as a companion and educators for the growth and development of children. In Islamic education, the basis of education in the family is the Qur'an and Hadith (Haryanti & Lie, 2021).

Based on parents' constraints in *muallaf* families, from religious understanding to economy, parents transfer the process of Islamic education to the school institution. The existence of an Islamic-based elementary school

is also sought to help the development of *muallaf* families. However, it is still strengthened by guidance based on the local culture and customs of the Abun Tribe that do not violate Islamic teachings. The approach to Indigenous people requires strengthening through local culture, both from the school and family and community environment (Nur, 2022; Nur et al., 2020).

Some Abun parents communicate using their local language, providing guidance and learning on the importance of performing the five daily prayers, Ramadan fasting, and other values using the local language. One of the efforts made by the younger generation, who were sent to continue their studies in pesantren on the island of Java, is directed at teaching the *muallaf* families the local language. This helps to facilitate their understanding and experience.

In addition to efforts to strengthen Islam through tawhid, worship, and morals, the parents of *muallaf* families inherit by habituation various Islamic traditions on Islamic holidays such as Maulid celebrations, the month of Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha—similarly, the implementation of life circle rituals from birth to death. For example, a tradition that developed in the Abun Tribe was the ritual of hair cutting and naming their children and grandchildren using Islamic methods. At every birth, the child has cultivated Islam in the Abun Tribe by listening to the *azan* and *iqamat* in the right and left ears of the newborn child. Give names by inviting the closest neighbors to read *tablil* and *ṣalawāt* when cutting the infant child's hair (Haris, 2016).

The condition of Islamic education in *muallaf* families proves their position is still adapting to the existing changes. They are still adapting to form a new identity, trying to understand the existence of social pressure, with weak learning resources, lack of access to places of worship, and being in a minority environment. According to Marcia (1966), this identity adaptation is when each individual tries to adapt to new changes, where the converts have a significant identity transformation after embracing Islam.

For Marcia, this identity adaptation focuses on commitment and exploration by identifying four different identity states: 1) *Moratorium* - individuals in this state are not yet committed to a particular identity and are

still exploring other possibilities. They may feel confused or unsure about who they really are. 2) *Achieved identity* - individuals in this status have committed to a particular identity and are actively living life according to that identity. They have a strong sense of self and are confident in their choices. 3) *Foreclosure* - individuals in this state have committed to a particular identity without adequate exploration. They may be following in the footsteps of their parents or friends, or they may be making decisions based on social pressure. 4) *Identity diffusion* - Individuals in this state experience confusion and cannot commit to a particular identity. They may feel lost and uncertain about their future (Marcia, 1966).

So, based on the results of the research and referring to Marcia's theory, the Abun Tribe's *muallaf* families, who are in minority areas, experience social pressure, facing pressure from the family, tribe, clan, and community environment. Although they do not experience discrimination, they experience difficulties in understanding Islam and applying it in their lives. Therefore, the identity adaptation position of the *muallaf* family is in Foreclosure, where the *muallaf* family in this status has committed to a specific identity without going through an adequate exploration process. They may follow in the footsteps of their parents or friends, or they may make decisions based on social pressure.

The lack of personal experience influences the condition of the Abunpun *muallaf* family in shaping their identity; both individuals, family, school, and community can shape their sense of self. Similarly, in the aspect of interpersonal relationships that have yet to be maximized, a mentor can help them explore various identity possibilities. Similarly, the *muallaf's* cognitive development, in the ability to think abstractly and make decisions, can influence how they construct their identity. Thus, in the social context of a minority area, the norms and values of the majority community influence the *muallaf's* choice of identity.

Therefore, to support the strengthening of the identity of minority converts, there is a need for comprehensive education about Islam, which provides time for exploration. Converts are given time and space to explore

Islam independently and without pressure, building a supportive community and providing spiritual assistance.

Muallaf families must be given spiritual assistance from mentors or scholars who can help them understand Islam and apply it daily. Finally, *muallaf* families must form social piety in a minority environment, with various challenges in applying Islamic values. Then, with an Islamic education strategy that adapts to the local context, maintaining good relations with the majority community with non-Muslims, how to introduce Islam in a friendly and polite way, behaving in a way that reflects Islamic values, such as patience, kindness, and justice, to build mutual respect and tolerance.

Religious Practices and Social Piety of the Abun Family in Minority Areas

In a minority environment, Abun *muallaf* families face some difficulties in carrying out religious practices such as praying, fasting, and participating in religious activities. They often seek out supportive communities for knowledge and guidance and try to negotiate their identity in a less supportive environment. Factors such as neighborhood tolerance, access to religious facilities, and engagement with the Muslim community are important in helping them practice their religion.

Therefore, in their current lives, they continue looking for mentors or preachers who can guide them in learning Islam and practicing Islamic worship. Those who can provide guidance and advice in accordance with the needs and situation of *muallaf*, both in understanding various aspects of Islam, ranging from the basics of *'aqidah* to the practice of daily worship.

Similarly, the condition of the *muallaf* family, who still tries to carry out social piety in a minority environment after receiving religious guidance through a model of Islamic religious education in *muallaf* families based on local wisdom *muallaf* families are expected to maintain social piety in a minority environment by trying to remain active in social activities that reflect Islamic values, such as helping their fellow believers, giving alms, and participating in positive community activities such as carrying out mandatory prayers at the mosque in the congregation, learning the Qur'an together,

enlivening major Islamic holidays such as Maulid Nabi, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha holidays. Even though they are in a minority environment, they can find ways to bridge differences with the surrounding community to practice social piety without ignoring the religious principles they profess.

The least piety, they still try to be a good servant in society, showing noble morals in everyday life, such as being friendly, polite, and courteous to fellow local people and helping each other, cooperating with local people in need, and maintaining *silāh al-rahīm* (brotherhood). Similarly, women still show their status as obedient Muslim women by continuing to cover their *‘aurat* (nudity).

In his article, Zeki Saritoprak analyzes the relationship between theology and social responsibility. According to him, theology is a faith that has three dialectical-integral components: believing in the heart (*taṣḍīq bi al-qalb*), reciting with the tongue (*iqrār bi al-lisān*), and manifesting into action (*‘amal bi al-arkān*). These three components can be the measure of a Muslim’s religiosity. He believes that although the lack of action is not considered a lack of faith, realizing what has been regarded with factual actions indicates the strength or weakness of one’s faith. In other words, faith is action (Saritoprak, 2011). In Islam, when someone performs good actions or has the urge to do good, it is based not only on social demands but also on divine awareness (Zuhri & Wahyudi, 2020).

Referring to this statement, the change in the social-religious status of the *muallaf* family, even though they are in a minority area, still do good deeds as a form of awareness of the teachings of Islam, which still shapes their social identity as Muslims. *muallaf* Abun Tribe can maintain its Muslim identity by keeping its community’s religious practices and social class. So, it is not surprising that Jenkins argues that identity is a dynamic and evolving social process, not something static or remains a process of construction and reconstruction along with changes in social relations (Jenkins, 2008).

Conclusion

The family of converts from the Abun Tribe in Tambrauw Regency illustrates that their religious identity in religious practice is in the lack of

awareness from the hearts of converts, indecision in carrying out obligations, taking the time to carry out duties and finding matches in learning the teachings of Islam.

The inner pressure afflicting the *muallaf* of the Abun Tribe from other Christian tribes in the area is a critical force in itself. Disputes, inner loneliness, and not having a place in the hearts of relatives also became severe problems in the hearts of *muallaf*, except the oppressive environment that caused personal issues, a sense of being thrown out of the group life, and then living unusually. Although not absolute, poverty became a severe problem in the hearts of these seekers of God. It caused some of them to leave Baun village in Tambrau Regency to move to Sorong City and Sorong Regency.

Religious practices such as prayer and fasting still require strengthening practices; this also contributes guidance to the Abun Tribe's *muallaf* family in Baun Village, Tambrau Regency, as Muslims still need deepening and guidance on their Islamic activities. They still need direction, advice, and assistance in understanding the teachings of Islam. The life of the converts, as a minority in the surrounding environment, becomes worse with the lack of guidance provided by religious organizations or the government.

Identity adaptation theory can help us understand how converts adapt to changing identities as they embrace Islam. Understanding the stages of identity adaptation and the challenges *muallaf* may provide the support and resources they need to undergo their identity transition successfully. Therefore, with the assistance of local culture-based Islamic religious education, it can emphasize the integration between religious values and local cultural values. It is essential to place religious teachings in the context of local culture, using local language, cultural references to the Abun Tribe, and the presentation of learning materials in accordance with social reality and their daily lives. So that it can realize the ideal Islamic family, which is tranquil, loved, and affectionate (*sakinah, mawaddah wa rahmah*).[w]

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