

Communication patterns between coaches and *mualaf* in realizing the steadiness of Islam at the *mualaf* development Center Daratan Maju Kuat Mandiri (Muda Makudiri) Yogyakarta

Alyani Widyo Putri^{1*}, Suciati¹

¹ Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

*Corresponding author email: alyaniwidyo18@gmail.com

Abstract

Converts often need help with challenges, such as a lack of understanding of Islamic teachings, social pressure, and difficulty building social relationships. Effective coaching is critical in helping converts overcome these challenges. However, this coaching process often faces various obstacles, such as the lack of communication intensity between coaches and converts and the lack of confidence. This research aims to find effective communication patterns in the coaching of Mualaf Daratan Maju Kuat Mandiri (Muda Mukadiri) in Yogyakarta. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. Data collection techniques through in-depth interviews and observation. The data validity test technique uses source triangulation. Data analysis techniques in this study include data collection, reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that the communication patterns used in the coaching of Muda Makudiri convert are top-down communication patterns when the coach delivers the coaching, bottom-up communication patterns when converts respond to the coaching material and informal communication that occurs outside the coaching activities. Muda Makudiri also has a WhatsApp group where coaches and converts can share information about various converts' activities. This research implies the need for openness and confidence of converts so that communication can run effectively.

Keywords

Group communication patterns, *Mualaf*, *Mualaf* coaching, Informal communication

Introduction

In the modern century, Islam, especially in Indonesia, has constantly been growing rapidly, and this has been marked by a significant increase in the number of converts in recent years. Yogyakarta, as one of the centres of religious and cultural studies in Indonesia, also experiences the same trend, with the number of converts growing every year.

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Converts linguistically in the Oral al-Araby dictionary refer to someone who is attracted or inclined to Islam [1]. However, the understanding of converts is broader than that. Al-Ghazali [2] provides a broader sense, namely that a convert is someone who has just embraced Islam and needs intensive guidance.

Someone who becomes a convert believes in the goodness and truth of Islam. However, due to the need for more knowledge about Islam, there are certainly many complaints related to concerns and problems faced by converts, so appropriate guidance and guidance are needed for converts.

Several problems are often faced by someone who has just converted, such as disharmonious communication with family and the surrounding environment and shyness and lack of confidence from converts to ask questions or consult with the coach. Shyness and lack of confidence sometimes make the intensity of communication with the coach less effective.

So, in some cases, converts despair because they feel they are not cared for by the coach. Mualaf Daratan Maju Kuat Mandiri (Muda Makudiri) is a self-help coaching program that has a central location at the Nurul Asfar Mosque, Yogyakarta. For a long time, Nurul Asfar Mosque has often been a place for converts from Minggir, Sleman, and Yogyakarta. However, due to the absence of intensive converts coaching, ten converts felt hopeless and decided to return to their old religion. Armed with this experience, Mr. Darum, as the head of the converts' guidance, initiated building the Muda Makudiri converts' guidance. It was established in 2018 and currently has 54 converts, which previously only numbered 12 people.

Pembinaan Mualaf Muda Makudiri is not only limited to providing teaching material but also emphasizes the importance of practice in religious learning. The routine recitation held every Sunday, Pon, for example, is filled with lectures and question-and-answer sessions and worship practices. In addition, Makudiri Young Muslim converts also facilitate ustadz by teaching Iqra reading every day to equip the converts with the ability to read the Qur'an properly and correctly. Furthermore, Muda Makudiri's guidance of converts also involves converts in every mosque activity. Through participation in social activities such as slaughtering sacrificial animals, converts can directly apply Islamic values in real life.

Some previous studies, such as those conducted by Lukman [3] entitled Communication Patterns Between Caregivers and Santri in Improving *Akhlakul Karimah* at Manba'ul Hidayah Asahan Islamic Boarding School and Azhari [4] Communication Patterns of Da'wah in Guiding Religious Understanding of the Cikoneng Sumedang Hamlet Community, have examined communication patterns in a religious context. Lukman found an effective star/whole channel communication pattern in improving *Akhlakul Karima* in pesantren, while Azhari identified da'wah communication patterns such as *majlis ta'lim* and *silaturahmi*. Amelia's research [5], Communication Patterns of the Syubanul Wathon Alumni Organization (Aswa) Balapan in Improving Ukhuwah

Islamiyah, also highlighted communication patterns in alum organizations, namely the circle chain pattern, wheel pattern, and total channel. These studies generally focus on communication patterns in a broader religious context, identifying patterns that effectively improve morale, spiritual understanding, and *ukhuwah Islamiyah*.

In contrast to previous studies, this research will specifically analyse group communication patterns in the context of converts mentoring. With the increasing number of converts assisted by Muda Makudiri, researchers are interested in knowing the communication patterns mentors use to assist converts. This research will also identify the most effective communication patterns and how these patterns work. The results of this study are expected to make a broader contribution, namely increasing understanding of effective communication in the context of converts mentoring. In addition, the results of this study can also be a reference in developing converts' coaching programs and a reference for further research.

Methods

This research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the unique characteristics of the coaching process for converts in the Muda Makudiri program. In other words, this research aims to describe the unique characteristics of the research subject, be it an individual, group, or event, and build a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied [6].

This research combines two data collection techniques, namely in-depth interviews and observation. In-depth interviews allow researchers to explore informants' understanding, experiences, and perspectives [7], while with observation, researchers can be directly involved to gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon under study [8].

The data obtained from interviews and observations were then analysed using the qualitative data analysis model developed by Miles and Huberman. This data analysis process includes systematic data collection, data reduction into a more structured form, data presentation in narrative or visual form, and drawing meaningful conclusions [9]. To ensure the validity of the research findings, researchers used data source triangulation techniques, namely the combination of data obtained from various points of view, especially from the coaches of converts and the converts themselves. By comparing data from these two sources, a complete and more complex picture of the dynamics of the coaching process can be revealed [10].

Results and Discussion

There are 5 informants in this study, consisting of 2 coaches and 3 converts. The following are the results of research based on interviews and observations conducted which can be seen in the Table 1.

Table 1. Research information

Communication Pattern		Coaching Form		
		Ahad Pon Recitation	Read Iqra	Consultation
Formal	Top Down	In Ahad Pon Recitation, the coach is the primary learning process facilitator. The coach is responsible for delivering religious materials, such as prayer procedures. This material usually begins with an explanation of the valid requirements of prayer and then continues with the practice of prayer movements by the converts.	The coach is the leading facilitator in the learning process of reading Iqra'. They play a role in guiding learners to understand and practice various basic concepts of reading the Qur'an, such as introducing hijaiyah letters, harakat, and tajweed.	The coach acts as a counsellor, whose role is to listen to the complaints of converts and help or provide advice to converts on their problems.
	Bottom Up	Converts not only receive information in Ahad Pon recitation but also play an active role in the learning process. This can be seen from the opportunity for converts to ask questions or provide responses to the material presented.	In the guidance of iqro reading, communication that occurs from the bottom up is when converts ask questions about the explanation of iqra reading, such as letters, tajweed or harakat.	During the consultation, communication occurs from the bottom up when converts consult about the problems they face and ask about things about Islam that are still confusing and need clarification.
	Horizontal	During the ahad pon recitation, horizontal communication between the coaches is very lacking because the coaches only meet once a month (during the recitation), while the communication between the converts is also considered to be very lacking because they come from different areas, so they are awkward with each other.	There is no horizontal communication between coaches or converts.	There is no horizontal communication between coaches or fellow converts.
Informal		During the ahad pon recitation, the communication is formal.	During the reading of Iqra, the established communication is formal.	The established communication is informal during consultation, such as WhatsApp or private chat between the coach and the converts.

This study identified four communication patterns in the Muda Makudiri convert coaching program, which consist of the following patterns:

Top-down communication

The findings in this study state that top-down communication plays a very significant role in helping converts achieve religious stability in the Muda Makudiri coaching program. Good downward communication can motivate individuals to continue learning and developing [11]. One measure of the effectiveness of top-down communication is the level of understanding of the message [12]. The three respondents interviewed consistently stated that the materials and guidance provided by the coaches had contributed significantly to their understanding of Islamic teachings. Effective communication is key to conveying information clearly and purposefully [13]. In the context of coaching converts, effective communication between coaches and converts becomes the foundation for transferring religious knowledge and building strong faith.

Bottom-up communication

Although top-down communication dominates the coaching process, this study also revealed a significant two-way communication dynamic. Two coaches in this study stated that the converts were actively involved in the learning process by asking questions and sharing the difficulties they faced. Two-way communication is important in monitoring the program [14]. In addition, two-way communication is important to ensure that tasks are carried out as expected [15]. Bottom-up communication can run effectively by providing suggestions, opinions, or complaints [16]. Although there are obstacles, such as the lack of effective communication media, the questions asked by the converts, and the various complaints that are conveyed both during coaching and outside of coaching, of course, they become input for the coaches to develop more relevant and effective coaching materials and methods.

Horizontal communication

This research reveals that one of the areas for improvement in the Muda Makudiri converts coaching program is the need for horizontal communication. Interaction between coaches and between the converts themselves is very limited. Meetings between coaches often only happen once a week or even only during routine coaching. Meanwhile, the converts from different villages also have little opportunity to interact with each other. The absence of communication groups such as WhatsApp specifically for coaches or converts hinders horizontal communication. At the same time, interaction between group members is very important to provide emotional and social support [17]. In addition, open communication encourages members to collaborate and respect each other [18]. To increase the effectiveness of the conversion development program, efforts need to be made to increase the intensity and quality of horizontal communication. This can be done by facilitating informal meetings between coaches and converts outside the routine coaching schedule.

Informal communication

Although Muda Makudiri's convert development program has a formal structure and schedule, informal communication often occurs outside official activities. More casual interactions, such as personal consultations or social activities, allow coaches and converts to build closer and more personal relationships. Informal communication can minimize misunderstandings [19] and can build positive interpersonal relationships [20]. Openness between fellow members, of course, can build cohesiveness and foster social and emotional feelings to establish effective informal communication [21]. Converts feel involved in many ways by being involved in various events. In addition, WhatsApp groups involving both coaches and converts facilitate more intense informal communication. Openness in informal communication makes subordinates feel very involved and included in everything. Through informal communication, parties can share experiences, provide emotional support, and build mutual trust.

Conclusion

The results of this study show that the communication patterns applied in the Muda Makudiri convert coaching program have been successful in helping converts achieve religious stability. The combination of top-down communication, which is effective in knowledge transfer, bottom-up communication, which allows for feedback, and informal communication, which builds positive relationships, has created a conducive learning environment. Although, this study also identified room for improvement, especially in terms of enhancing horizontal communication. However, overall, the coaching program has achieved quite optimal results.

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