



The Open Psychology Journal

Content list available at: www.benthamopen.com/TOPSYJ/

DOI: 10.2174/1874350101811010279, 2018, 11, 279-291



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Psychological Impacts on Interfaith Families in Palangkaraya in Educating Their Children

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Received: September 19, 2018

Revised: November 28, 2018

Accepted: December 2, 2018

Abstract:

Objective:

The main aim of this study is to discuss and to explore psychological impacts on interfaith families in educating their children.

Materials and Methods:

This is a qualitative field research that involved 10 study subjects having inclusive criteria to be studied using a snowball sampling technique. The methods of data collection used in this study include observation, documentation, and in-depth interview with a number of informants and subjects. The data analysis was done simultaneously from the beginning of conducting the research to the process of writing conclusions.

Results:

The findings show that interfaith families generally live peacefully and harmoniously although they still feel psychological ripples within their heart. But this does not lead to conflicts, except for subjects' number 10 who decided to divorce. Interfaith marriage causes some psychological impacts on families. The children experience doubts about their religion. On one side, they want to possess the religion that one of their parents have, but, on the other hand, they often have to follow a certain belief due to their parents' agreement. Parents also suffer from psychological stress, both major and minor stress, because of the couples' different religion. Some of them lose their responsibility as a father or as the main teacher for their children, and it happens especially in the process of adhering their children's belief or faith.

Conclusion:

It has been found that two families are willing to make an agreement to decide their children's religion for the sake of eternal enlightenment of their household hereafter.

Keywords: Psychological impacts, Interfaith families, Interfaith marriage, Psychological ripples, Psychological stress, Religion.

1. INTRODUCTION

Humans are homo religious [1] because they have a religious instinct. Since they were born, they bring a primordial human nature of being a Muslim, but they can be a Yahudi, Christian, and Majusi [2] due to some factors coming from their parents, which are caused by environmental influences or education. Daradjat [3] said that people basically have two main needs of physical and spiritual needs and those two should be balanced to avoid pressures or stress. The balance can be found in the need of love, sense of security, sense of freedom, sense of success, and sense of curiosity [3]. The combination of the needs causes people to look for the needs of religion since through religion, all of the needs

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can be addressed. The center of children's religious life lies on their parents. Every children's emotional reaction is highly affected by their parents' attitudes because what the parents teach them will strongly influence to their future life. Children will follow what their parents do and it then becomes their habits.

Discussing on education matter, it is basically the responsibility of the government, community, and family. Based on these three areas of responsibility, education in Indonesia is conducted based on the typology of education programs, *i.e.* formal education, non-formal education, and informal education [4]. According to Indonesian Law No. 20 Year 2003, Informal education conducted by members of family and environment is in the form of independent learning activities. It is because family is seen as the center of education that becomes the first phase, basis, and also the foundation determining the success of education. That is the reason why education in the family is the one that runs naturally if it is compared to the other types of education [5].

Parents, as the ones having the biggest responsibilities to their children's education, have a duty to educate them corresponding to their natural position as given by God. The natural function of parents is to guide their children to become mature, religious adults who have a worthy life and are obedient to their religion, so that they will have a happy life, both in the world and in the afterlife. This desire is possessed by every parent because Allah has given them a sense of love and care for each of His creature as a base to become a true believer in the world. For that reason, parents are demanded to be able to create harmonious household life and to make the physical and emotional needs balanced. If physical needs cover things like clothes, foods, and houses, emotional needs aim to make families unite on an educational basis and as a religious appreciation for all the family members.

Since parents are the center of children's religious life, every children's emotional reaction is strongly influenced by their parents' attitudes and what their parents teach them will have a role in shaping their thoughts and soul. Children will also follow what their parents do and make it as their habits.

In line with children's development stages according to their age, when children grow up to the teenage, for instance, their appreciation of religion will also develop due to experiences they have been through, which cannot also be separated from environmental influences. They often feel anxious when finding that the people surrounding them have different religion comprehension from that they believe, moreover, if it is done by their parents.

A happy family will be difficult to have if a marriage does not have a same-faith foundation. Different faith or religion in a marriage can create psychosocial pressures such as psychological conflicts which can cause a marriage dysfunction. This condition will weaken the couple's faith since each of them tends to take their faith away for the sake of "tolerance". This results in the shallowing of faith or conflicts of faith that can cause depressions because they experience self-blame [6].

A fact shows that interfaith families do exist in Palangka Raya, where a diverse range of ethnic groups live within different religions and cultures. The difference, in fact, occurs after their marriage. Although they got married under Islamic law, for instance, they finally decide to convert back to their previous religion. This leads to confusion when they have children. And the children themselves are even confused seeing their parents' different religions, moreover when the couples give religious education based on their own faith. Based on the fact, mental problems potentially occur such as the presence of unstable emotion or feeling due to the condition mentioned. Even though such problems cannot be seen, they will present in other parts of their lives.

Considering the facts and the background above, the issue of interfaith families is interesting to discuss by proposing a research question: How are the psychological effects make impact on interfaith families in Palangka Raya, particularly in educating religious matters to their children?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociologically, a family is defined as the smallest scope of a community including husbands, wives, and children. This definition includes a dimension of blood relation and a dimension of the social relationship. Within the first dimension, families can be differentiated into extended families and nuclear families, whereas in the latter, families are seen as a social unity where interaction and influence matters are tied together, although they are not related to another by birth.

Definition of a family can also be seen from the psychological and sociological perspectives [7]. From a psychological perspective, a family is a group of people who live together within the same place and each member of the family has emotional contact to one and another so they are affected by each other, pay attention to each other, as

well as give and take relationship exist between them. From a sociological perspective, they live together to complete one another [7].

The need for wholeness in a family is completely expected by a child because the need to help each other can develop children's self-potential and confidence. For that reason, parents' efforts to help their children to internalize moral values well are highly expected [8].

A balanced family is a family having a harmonious relationship between the couples (father and mother) and their children to respect one another without making any demands on them. Nowadays parents tend to have proactive behaviors and are responsible for focusing on duties to respect one another. They focus more on giving supports, attention, and guidelines that are used as their children's references and at the same time give models to follow, so that, practically, children will get guidances, directions, and educations from their parents. This can bring the children to possess a genuine personality based on a given religious concept [9]. That is why a family has a significant role to determine the success of an education process because it is where children firstly get some educational values.

A fact that does exist in communities is interfaith marriages. This phenomenon has become a public discussion, both in academic forums and in infotainments, which then becomes trends and rolls like a snowball. According to Murtado [10], one of the reasons of banning in doing an interfaith marriage is to keep the marriage eternity because the religious differences can possibly give many consequences to the couples, and one of them is problems in educating their children.

In line with Murtado [10], Hamdanah [11] explains that a foundation of religious values can be easily built if parents have the same faith and, on the contrary, it will be difficult to do if they have different faiths. Such a condition makes their children difficult to determine their attitudes and faiths because of parents' dominant influences that create anxiety within the children's mind [11].

Based on the Islamic perspective, parents are given a duty to take care of and educate their children well. Prophet Muhammad saw has also said that parents have a significant role in creating an ideology or faith so they have to have a commitment to give education to their children.

Seen from a religious perspective, family's or parents' responsibilities are absolutely needed because parents or families have responsibilities to encourage their children to go to school or other educational institutions and are also demanded to educate them to become a religious individual, as stated in religion rules. Al-Ghazali said that God gives parents children, as a mandate, whose heart is still pure like beautiful simple jewels without scratches. Children accept whatever scratched on them and anything given to them [12]. In line with the above statement, Empiricism concept, as proposed by John Locke, states that children are like a white clean paper. Later, factors of experiences, environment or education given have a significant influence on the development of their personalities. In his book *Ilm al-nafs al-ma'asir fi daw'i al-Islam*, Mahmud [13], states that environmental aspects influencing children's personalities cover geographical aspect, historical aspect, sociological aspect, cultural aspect, and psychological aspect.

A simple way followed by parents to give their children religious education is through an advice. Within an educational perspective, an advice gives psychological implications to children's development. An advice is always required by the soul because it can make the heart calm and quiet, moreover if the advice comes from a sincere heart and a pure soul [14]. Within the soul, there is a nature of being influenced by others' words. Nature is usually inconsistent so that the words have to be repeated many times.

Qutb [15] gives an illustration of the relation between advice and soul development. He states that an influencing advice will open the soul through the feeling. It moves and shakes the feeling for a period of time. He then gives an example of a metaphor to describe it, that it is like a beggar who is trying to get up from his sorrow, where the positive feeling will cover him, and if he is not able to maintain the good feeling then it will disappear again [15].

Qutb [15]'s statement gives an obvious explanation that an advice given with love and wisdom is able to give some psychological effects to those who receive it. He adds further that a person who is given an advice all the time will always need it as the need of the soul.

Ulwaniy [16] explains further that it has been an agreement among us that a sincere advice, if enters into a clear soul, will touch our heart and stimulates wise thinking. The advice will then get a fast response and leave a deep impression. In other words, the application of "advice method" will be successful if it is employed wisely by a person who has the power to do it and to those who are ready to accept it.

In education, “giving examples” becomes an effective way of forming children’s personality within the moral field, spiritual field, and also the social field. It is because parents, as the main educators, are the best example for children because children imitate their parents’ attitudes, politeness, and words. The parents’ figure is printed in their children’s soul [4].

“Examples” become an important factor in making children aware of the differences between the good and the bad. If parents are honest and trusted, having good morals, and dare to avoid doing something against religion, children will also have the same sense of honesty, have good morals, and will obey religious rules [16].

There is a strong relation between advice and examples. Someone’s advice will be so meaningful if he/she has a good example of others, even when he/she does not say any words, their good behaviors will still become a good example for others.

Kohlberg's [17] theory holds that moral reasoning is the basis of ethical behavior. Kohlberg [17] used stories about moral dilemmas in his research, and he was interested in how people would justify their actions if they were facing the same moral problem. Furthermore, Moral attitudes are not the result of socialization or lessons learned from habits and other things related to cultural values [18]. Children who become the subject give understanding, from the simple to the complex, to some cases of behavior carried out by their parents. The influence of education taught by parents to children, the pressure from the social environment to adjust to the child's environment greatly influences the child's growth and development. The moral development theory put forward by Kohlberg [17] as well as Piaget shows that moral attitudes and behavior are not the results of socialization or lessons derived from habits related to cultural values solely. But it also occurs as a result of spontaneous activities learned and developed through children's social interaction with their environment. The factors that influence Moral Development are as follows; Lack of religious spirit is embedded in every person in society, the state of society is less stable, the number of writings and pictures that do not heed the moral basis, the implementation of good moral education, lack of parental awareness of the importance of basic moral education from an early age. character, poor household atmosphere, lack of guidance to fill spare time.

3. METHODOLOGY

The main objective of this research is to explore the psychological impact on interfaith families in educating their children. To achieve these objectives, the methodology used can bring researchers to achieve the research objectives [19 - 21] where this study uses qualitative methods with a phenomenological approach [22] followed by in the City of Palangka Raya, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia.

Snowball sampling technique was used in collecting data starting from the first subject, the couple with MR (husband)-ID (wife) initials, their characteristics are: husband is a Moslem with Javanese ethnicity, undergraduate, retired, and wife is a Catholic, junior high school, government employee, and they have four children.

Furthermore, the 2nd research subject was obtained based on the recommendation of the 1st subject and so on for the subsequent subject until the 10th subject was obtained based on the recommendation of the 9th subject with all the tenth of subjects given in the following table.

The ten family subjects of interfaith couples as given in Table 1 above were observed in a participatory manner by direct observation of the phenomenon of religious education through direct interaction with informal conversations with conversational situations characterized by spontaneity. Detailed interviews were conducted with key informants in the family, and also with their close relatives / neighbors, their peers, community leaders, and religious teachers of their children. Documentation studies were also carried out to obtain reports or documents in general about the state of the city of Palangka Raya such as population, religion, and places of worship.

Table 1. Research Subjects and Their Characteristics.

Subject and Initials	Religion	Tribe	Educational Background	Job of Husband and Wife	Sum of Children	
1 st	MR (husband)	Muslim	Jawa	Undergraduate	Pension	4
	ID (wife)	Catholic	Dayak	Senior High School	Government Employee	
2 nd	WR (husband)	Muslim	Jawa	Undergraduate	Government Employee	5
	DV (wife)	Protestant	Dayak	Undergraduate	Government Employee	
3 th	PH (husband)	Protestant	Dayak	Undergraduate	Government Employee	1
	NI (wife)	Muslim	Banjar	Senior High School	Housewife	

(Table 1) contd....

Subject and Initials	Religion	Tribe	Educational Background	Job of Husband and Wife	Sum of Children	
4 th	ST (husband)	Muslim	Jawa	Undergraduate	Government Employee	2
	AS (wife)	Protestant	Dayak	Diploma	Government Employee	
5 th	WI (husband)	Muslim	Jawa	Junior High School	Private Employees	4
	LN (wife)	Protestant	Dayak	Junior High School	Housewife	
6 th	WY (husband)	Hindu	Bali	Senior High School	BUMN Employees	5
	MI (wife)	Muslim	Dayak	Senior High School	Housewife	
7 th	BN (husband)	Muslim	Sunda	Senior High School	Swasta	1
	FH (wife)	Catholic	Manado	Senior High School	Housewife	
8 th	AR (husband)	Protestant	Dayak	Senior High School	Private Employees	4
	SM (wife)	Muslim	Banjar	Senior High School	Private Employees	
9 th	JK (husband)	Muslim	Jawa	Senior High School	Army	2
	ML (wife)	Protestant	Dayak	Undergraduate	Government Employee	
10 th	GA (husband)	Protestant	Jawa	Undergraduate	Private Employees	1
	AT (wife)	Muslim	Dayak	Undergraduate	Government Employee	

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The history of establishment of Palangka Raya City [23] was an integral part of the establishment of Central Borneo Province based on Emergency Law No. 10 Year 1957 and State Gazette Number 53 and its explanation (Additional State Gazette Number 1284) that was officially valid on May 23, 1957, which was then called the Law of the Establishment of Autonomous Region of Central Borneo Province. According to Law No. 21 The year 1958, The Parliament of the Republic of Indonesia made Law No. 27 The year 1959 legal on May 11, 1959. It classifies the Central Borneo Province into five regencies; among them Palangka Raya is the capital of the province.

Based on the Decree of Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia No. Dec. 52/12/2-206, December 22, 1959, starting from December 20, 1959, the base transfer of the Government of Central Borneo was moved to Palangka Raya (from Banjarmasin). Then the subdistrict of Kahayan Tengah in Pahandut gradually changed due to some additional duties and functions, such as preparing Kotapraja Palangka Raya. In the same year, the subdistrict was moved to Bukit Rawi. On May 11, 1960, the subdistrict of Palangka Khusus was established to prepare Kotapraja Palangka Raya. The change, improvement, and establishment were done to complete the administrative requirements of Kotapraja Palangka Raya by establishing 3 subdistricts (1) Subdistrict of Palangka in Pahandut; (2) Subdistrict of Bukit Batu in Tengkilang; and (3) Subdistrict of Petuk Ketimpun in Marang Ngandrung Langit

Kotapraja Palangka Raya got its autonomy by the verification of Law No. 5 The year 1965. Then on June 17, 1965, it became Kotapraja Otonom Palangka Raya with a governor as its leader (Tjilik Riwut). The date was then commemorated as the anniversary of Kota Palangka Raya and it is celebrated every year until today. On September 18, 1965, Jantisaconk was elected as the first mayor of Kotapraja. In the Reformation era, Law No. 22 The year 1999 May 7, 1999, about Local Government, the name of Kotamadya Daerah Tingkat II Palangka Raya was changed into Daerah Kota Palangka Raya and the title of Walikotamadya Kepala Daerah Tingkat II Palangka Raya was also changed into Walikota Palangka Raya.

The results of this research show that all families used as the studied subject live in harmony, but there are some hidden psychological problems within the parents' minds. Moreover, the children experienced nervous feelings, embarrassment, doubts, and anxiety in facing the reality, as there are more than one religions kept by the members of their family.

In 10 subjects, the researcher finds two types of psychological problems; there were some minor and major psychological problems which are explained in the next paragraphs.

4.1. Minor Psychological Problems

Mild psychological problems, when associated with the theory of Mental Disorders (DSM5), in the DSM patterns that tend to be abnormal, are classified as a "mental disorder". Mental disorders themselves include emotional distress (especially depression or anxiety) and significant disability in psychological function. The damaged function can be in the form of several difficulties in fulfilling responsibilities within the family, workplace, or in the wider community. In classifying or determining a person experiencing a mental disorder or not requiring conditions, one of them is not

representing a response that is appropriate to culture or an event that causes severe stress, such as being left behind or losing a loved one. However, if the behavior experienced by the person occurs in a vulnerable period of time and remains significantly disturbed in one period, then it is diagnosed as a mental disorder. Even more so when linked to International Illness Clarification (ICD) which describes the types of diseases, one of them is a mental illness. When associated with mild psychology in this study, on the one hand, children want to follow the religion of one parent, but on the other hand, because he/she is bound by the agreement/agreement, the child must remain his/her faith based on the agreement. Parents also actually feel psychological distress both in the form of mild shocks and serious shocks due to religious differences between husband and wife. Some parents feel the loss of responsibility, both as the head of the household, and as a primary teacher for their children, especially in the process of internalizing a belief. Psychologically it has been observed in subject families 3 and 5, which are the only responsible entities maintaining the integrity of the household, even if they are willing to make an agreement but anxiety is always felt. This psychological condition occurs because he feels unable to become a good family head because his wife and children who are very loved do not follow his belief in Islam. So when compared to the above theory, a family that has a major shock is not mentally disturbed as the mental illness is not continuous, but the disorder is very disturbing.

The researcher found 2 subjects (WR/Muslim-DV/Protestant) who experienced a minor psychological problem. WR was not able to explain a variety of ideologies in his household because he totally gave the religious education of his children to his wife and he allowed his children to be a Protestant. But, he still hoped that his last child, who was still studying in Elementary School, to go to a mosque and to join *pengajian* (muslim ibada). On the other hand, DV also used to do the same thing to the child, *i.e.* by asking her child to have ibada in a church. It was also found that there was still no hope of the child's interest in his/her religion, whether he/she wants to be a Muslim or a Protestant. From WR's experience, it can be concluded that WR actually did not use to feel comfortable to be in such a life condition.

A religious-pulling case between father and mother to their children is obviously seen when their children are still in their childhood time. Who will win depends solely on who has a stronger influence on them. This is in line with Karsayuda [24]'s arguments in his thesis stating that the impact of interfaith marriages, where the couples firstly got married under Muslim rule and one of them would convert back to his/her previous religion, will result in the difficulties to direct their children to become a Muslim [23].

Children tend to consider God as their idol, and they even believe that God is a superman, as stated by Allport [25] "*A further characteristic of the child's early religious concepts is their anthropomorphism. How could it be otherwise, since within his world of experience...? Furthermore, he is usually taught that God is, in fact, a male personage. With few exceptions, therefore, children visualize God as an old man, or as a rich man, superman, or king... God possesses the attributes of the physical father.*"

In subject 4 (ST/Muslim-AS/Protestant), the psychological impacts they have on them are not in the form of internal depression, like what experienced by other subjects, but in the form of ignorance of their children's education. The least care for it becomes one of the psychological impacts (of interfaith marriage) on this family. This is caused by the couple's reluctance to take the role over one another. Further, the problem is triggered by the reluctant feeling of the possible occurrence of a conflict within the family that is only caused by different faiths.

In addition, ST-AS had a lack of religious knowledge that made them avoid to take a role of the main educator in the family, mainly related to the formal religious education. The couples were worried about being wrong in giving religious education to their children and they finally led to depend on the religious teachers at schools for their religious education and also leave their education on the social environment.

Such a psychological problem happened not only to ST-AS but also to their children. The children were confused about their parents' ignorance of their religious education, so they had to finally decide their own belief. The couple had no strong religious belief because, according to them, they had no strong religious experiences making them do the same thing to their children. This condition can be categorized in a group of *Islam abangan*, a group of people who do not adhere strictly to their religion and tend to be incapable of differentiating between those belonging to substantive religious contents and those belonging to culture or tradition [26].

Psychological problems were also experienced by subject 5 (WI/Muslim-LN/Protestant), subject 6 (WY/Hinduism believer-MI/Muslim), and subject 7 (BN/Muslim-FH/Catholic). They seemed to live harmoniously but, in fact, psychological problems occurred in these families, particularly in the children. SI, one of the children from the families said that:

“I adhere to Muslim since I was a kid, because, according to my father, I have to be a Muslim although my mom isn’t. My father asked me to learn Koran and read it with teachers in a mosque. Sometimes I went to the mosque, but I was often absent because my friends always asked me: “Your mom is a Christian, isn’t she? She went to a church in Christmas.” I can only answer by saying that it’s true that she is a Christian because my grandparents are also Christians.”

From the utterance, it can be clearly seen that SI has a psychological burden when SI’s surroundings asked about his/her mother’s religion. It seems that there is a “rebellion” in SI’s heart, why does his/her mother have a different religion from his/hers? Why should this condition happen?

As the first child, SI did not have any idea of why he/she and his/her sister (SM) have a different religion. SI was informed later after SI was explained by the parents about their agreement. SI feels uncomfortable knowing that his/her sister possesses a different religion than his/hers. SI hopes that his/her sister will finally find the right religion, i.e. Islam, as explained by SI’s teachers at school.

Subject 6 also faces the same problem. MI, who is quite obedient to her religion (Islam), feels the psychological impact of her interfaith marriage in her life, too. She actually wants her husband to be in the same faith as that when her spouse said *ijab qabul*. MI stated that:

“My heart is actually not feeling comfortable, there is no feeling of calm and I always feel guilty. But I can only keep silent, even I don’t want my children to know about this. A couple of months after the marriage, my husband converted back to his previous religion. I knew it when I asked him about his *shalat* (prayer). He said that he possesses Islam no more. This case is what my parents worried about. They have just known about it, and my grown-up children finally knew about it as well”.

The psychological problem is also experienced by the couple’s children who do really want to have one religion within their family. AF, one of their children, expressed his/her want:

“We also get rich religious knowledge and lessons from *ustadz* (a Muslim expert or a highly skilled person of Islam) or teachers at school and I always participate *Pesantren Kilat*, an Islamic boarding school conducted for a short period of time, at school. With such activities, I hope that my father’s heart will tremble for adhering the religion he kept when he got married”.

The two utterances give an illustration that even though an interfaith family lives in harmony and in peace, there must be psychological problems. But the problems do not cause any bigger more complicated ones.

Subject 7 also faces the same problem. CA, the child of BN/Muslim-FH/Catholic, experiences the psychological impacts of different religions in his/her family although CA tends to follow his/her mother’s religion. CA admits that he/she feels nervous and anxious due to his/her family’s condition. On one hand, CA often goes to a church for having a church service. On the other hand, CA also sees his/her father who has a high commitment to do *shalat*. CA even goes to a mosque when his/her father is at home.

That case leads CA to a confusion. CA follows his/her mother’s religion but he/she and his/her father (BN) also celebrate Eid al-Fitr with their relatives. CA ever asked his/her parents about it and the parents gave a response that CA has an authority to choose the right religion according to him/her when CA has grown up and mature.

4.2. Major Psychological Problems

Considering mild and main psychology in this study, it can be said that on the one hand, children want to follow the religion of a parent, but on the other hand, because they are bound by the agreement, the child must remain their faith based on the agreement. Parents also actually feel psychological distress both in the form of mild shocks and heavy serious due to religious differences between husband and wife. Some parents feel the loss of responsibility, both as head of the household, and as a primary teacher for their children, especially in the process of internalizing a belief.

Psychologically it was seen in subject families 3 and 5, which were the sole families maintaining the integrity of the household but the anxiety was always felt. This psychological condition occurred because he felt unable to become a good family head, because his wife and children who were very loved did not follow his belief in Islam. So when compared to the above theory, a family that has a major shock is not mentally disturbed as mental illness is continuous, but the disorder is very disturbing.

There are 5 families who experience this type of problem; they are subject 1 (MR/Muslim-ID/Catholic), subject 3 (PH/Protestant-NI/Muslim), subject 8 (AR/Protestant-SM/Muslim), subject 9 (JK/Muslim-NL/Catholic) and subject 10 (GA/Protestant-AT/Muslim). As explained before, in subject 1's case, the religious education is more dominated by ID's families who possess Catholic. Again, although they seem to live in harmony, they are not able to hide their psychological problems. It is employed by MR (Muslim) when the researcher did an interview with his children who followed their mother's religion:

"I am actually sad seeing my children raised by their Catholic grandparents and they are closer to them than to me, their father. My wife also supports her parents' way to educate the children. I can do nothing except accepting the condition."

What happens to MR is relevant to Sobur's [27] statement saying that there is a tendency of grandparents' interference in taking care of and raising their grandchildren according to their experiences and their ways of raising children. The level of interference also varies, from common tolerable inferences to big interferences where grandparents can decide every single thing for their grandchildren. In this case, the grandmother has a quite big chance to involve and grandparents usually attach themselves more to the children [27].

MR, who is a Muslim, really wants his wife and children to follow his faith. Moreover, MR has performed Hajj. After coming back from the spiritual journey, he did not even feel peaceful, but anxious. This psychological condition happened because he realized that he was not capable of becoming the good head of the family and because his beloved wife and children did not follow his faith.

Due to his psychological burden, MR (Muslim) then consulted his problem to a *Kyai*, a religious leader, (MY). The *kyai* could only suggest him to always be patient and pray by performing *shalat* well. That is why MR always used to give the *kyai*'s suggestions to calm his heart. The researcher observed this when he had a chance to perform Magrib *shalat* together with MR. After *shalat*, MR had a serious long pray. He then said that God has not answered his prayer.

MR realized that religious education in a family is very important. It is in line with Yafi's statement saying that children always need continuous care from their parents until they become mature individuals or become adults [28].

This psychological impact, in fact, also makes an influence on the family's condition and harmony, especially when MR has retired from his work and his relationship with ID is not as harmonious as before. MR rarely comes home because he is happier living in his friend's house. MR admitted that he could perform his prayer more comfortably when his wife (ID) was not beside him and, surprisingly, ID does not feel upset at all. Seeing the condition, MR's friend, OR, has sympathy for him and suggested him to marry a woman who has the same faith in him so that there will be someone who takes care of him in his future life. MR said that:

"Deep from my heart, I really want to do it but I cannot unless my wife has died. If I die first before her I can do nothing, as long as I die in Islam. I have told my wife that if I die I want her to treat my body based on Islamic concept. I ask RKM to do it and I have given my last will and testament to the mosque's board."

Although MR has given his last will and testament to his wife (ID), ID and her family still want to treat MR's body based on her religious concept. To solve the problem and to decrease the psychological problem, MR always makes himself busy by going to school and to a university where he is working. He also actively participates as the member of the mosque board in his neighborhood to avoid thinking irrationally and to throw away the stressful feeling. Another

same case also happened to subject 3. NI had to face the reality that her child (PH) follows her husband's faith, as stated in the agreement, and this made a psychological effect on her.

NI did not have any right to give religious education to her child, except to tell about ethics or moral principles. NI felt sad since her child could not have the same faith as hers, whereas NI used to think that she had more rights to determine the faith of her child due to much longer time she used to spend with her child. Since agreement was signed, she had to commit to the agreement. In Banjarese language, NI expressed her feeling:

“Almost every day I think about my child who will follow his/her father's religion. I and my husband have previously signed an agreement saying that I will be baby will follow my husband's faith if it is a boy, and will follow my religion if it is a baby girl. I am very upset knowing that I have a bigger chance to deliver a baby boy, as stated by the doctor when I had a 6-month-pregnancy medical check-up. Since then I tend to be more silent while always praying to God to give me a baby girl. I am getting unhappier when my parents knew that their grandchild will have a different religion from mine. I become a victim of my own family since we will have no Muslim generation. The sad thing is my parents seem to not consider me as their daughter anymore.”

NI had more burden due to her parents' ignorance, especially when they knew the fact that she will be a Christian. She had no nobody to talk to, except to her friends and neighbors. But NI realized that she cannot break the agreement, moreover her husband (PH) has been so loving to her and never asked her to follow her religious Islamic activities/prayings. Furthermore, PH gave her the chance to perform Hajj.

NI's son (HR) could feel her mother's sadness. He was sad seeing that his mother is the only Muslim in the family because he, his father and his aunt were Christians. HR employed his bad feeling to his Religion teacher:

“One day when I get married, I will marry to a woman having the same religion with mine because I myself see and feel what (the psychological problems) my parents experience. I know that my mother is really stressful because my grandparents do not acknowledge my mother as their daughter. I also feel depressed for not being acknowledged as their grandson. In one side, I feel so sorry for my mother, but, I'm not doubtful of my faith, and don't want to convert to other religion (Islam) because since I was unborn, my parents have agreed on my religion.”

Even though the problems occur, the harmony in the family can still be maintained. The tolerance is also well built. They respect one to another. On Eid al-Fitr, all of the members of the family celebrate the big Muslim day, with some restrictions, and vice versa.

Different from the previous subjects, subject 8 faces different problems. AR finally has to be the decision maker in influencing the faith and educational process of his/her children. Unfortunately, the process is adopted by not considering democratic values. This makes the family experience psychological pressure, especially pressure on the children who firstly adhered Islam as their faith.

The psychological pressure occurs because SM does not have any comfort to perform her religious prayer since she lives together with her husband's parents and relatives who are Protestants. Her parents-in-law are good believers of Protestant, they often hold religious services at home and go to church. Since they live under one roof, SM feels difficult and reluctant to perform a prayer (*shalat*) at home. Moreover, they have dogs that can freely go around the house.

SM then expressed what makes her stressful to her husband (AR). Unfortunately, instead of getting any protection and support from her lovely husband, she was asked by her husband to convert to Christian. SM who came from obedient Muslim families did not directly agree to her husband's demand. She finally rejected it even when her husband strongly persuaded her by promising her to provide a new house separated from her parents-in-law's. AR also promised her to give a freedom to perform prayers such as *shalat*, fasting, etc. but she had to agree to remarry in a Christian way.

SM did not dare to refuse AR's request, even though she thought to leave him. But for the sake of the unity of her family, she had to hold her will. In the interview session, SM what she felt:

“I don't want to convert to Christian. What will my parents say about it? They ever said to me to keep my husband as a Muslim, so that he wouldn't change back to Christian, but I couldn't stop my husband's

want. If I would marry him in a Christian way, although we only pretended to do it, he promised me to move to a rental house. And he would still allow me to perform Islamic prayers.”

SM's family did not know the affair even though she already had three children: NN (20 years old) who is now studying in a university, SR (16 years old) studying in a senior high school, and AN (15 years old) studying in a junior high school. Her family still did not acknowledge her embracing a different religion until the time when she delivered TM, her fourth child, and TM reached the age of 8. They did not know it since they did not see any suspicious behavior of her. Every Eid al-Fitr SM and her family always went home to Martapura.

When SR was still a young Muslim, SR often saw his/her father angry when seeing SR, his/her mother and siblings performed *shalat*. SR said:

“My father often got angry and he ever hides our *mukena* (cloak covering Muslim woman's head and body worn at prayer). He forbade us to perform *shalat* and fasting in Ramadhan month. We did not dare to fight against him.

The fears and depression made the children follow their father's religion. They did it under pressure. One of the children stated that:

“I was forced to follow my father's faith and we were just baptized in a church. We were also often asked to join a service. We do know that my mother is very sad with our faith, but, what can we do? We can do nothing”.

Finally, in September 2009, SM converted to Protestant and was already baptized. The family is now Christians. This is in line with SR's statements:

“Now my mother is a Cristian, following my father's religion. She can do nothing since she doesn't dare to fight against him. I am also wondering why she can't just leave him and divorce him. With all of our heart and soul, we let her do it.”

According to Misrawi [29], religion is a sensitive matter that has a mission in it. That is why adherents of a given religion compete for one and another to invite others to follow their faith.

A competition is one of the main characteristics of a relationship between religious adherents that cannot be ignored. Competition is a certainty. But a question then comes up, “Must a competition end with force and discrimination?” [29].

Psychological impacts on interfaith families do occur. Subject 9 (JK-ML) also had an impact along their children . They used to feel uncomfortable within a condition where their parents had a different faith. They used to feel sorry for their mother who was accompanied by no one when she used to go to church. One of the children said:

“Now my sibling and I are feeling doubtful with our religion. I often feel anxious and uncomfortable, which religion is the correct one. I feel so sad seeing my mother goes to a church alone and it causes me to think that maybe her religion is the correct one.”

The statement shows the existence of psychological pressure on the child. There was a conflict of ideology in the children's heart, between justifying their father's faith and supporting their mother's religion. The presence of an emphatic feeling of her mother's condition made them question the faith that has been imposed by their father on them.

Another form of psychological problems was experienced by subject 10. The couple had one child only and this led to the presence of a competition of ideology between them. Since the mother used to spend a longer time at home, the child used to follow the mother's faith.

Due to the different faith, both the mother (AT) and the child (RL) suffered from psychological problems. The problems began when AT knew that her husband (GA) converted back to his previous religion.

At the beginning, the couple lived without any conflicts. They trusted one and another, but AT's trust then gradually lost after she heard an information that her husband often used to go to church. But he did not admit it when AT confirmed to him. AT stated that:

"I ever asked my husband whether or not he went to a church because someone saw him going to a church. Then he answered that it might be his brother, not him, because his brother is like him. I believed on his words and it might not happen because I never saw him doing something suspicious."

But after AT, she witnessed her husband's presence in the church, she was then so sure that her husband had converted back to his previous faith. AG finally admitted it. AT then submitted a divorce proposal to a Religion Court in Palangka Raya.

The situation made AT get closer to God. She did some religious activities that she never did before, such as performing night prayers more often, fasting twice a week, and making Dhikr to remember Allah. She also made herself busy by reading religious books to find the answers of her problems.

AT's child, RL, was also affected by the presence of different religions within his/her family. Knowing his/her father converting to his previous religion, RL was shocked and very angry. RL was not ready to face the reality. As a result, RL became a silent exclusive individual. As her/his mother, AT always encouraged RL to endure the difficult situation and strengthened RL by explaining the condition of being in the interfaith family.

A problem that often couples reported having different religions was related to the aspect of children's education. In Catholic law, for instance, there is a dispensation of giving permission to Catholic believers to marry to a person having a different religion from them but there must be a written agreement saying that the children have to be educated in Catholic ways.

From the discussion, it can obviously be seen that both parents and children face psychological problems due to interfaith marriage [30]. Basically, all of the subjects have already known that interfaith marriage is not strongly suggested for them. But they also get information about as long as one of the married couples is willing to get married under his/her spouse's different religion rule so they will not face any obstacles in the future, even though one day they will convert back to their previous religion [31]. Such a principal is strongly kept by them until the marriage happens [32]. Nine out of ten subjects were able to maintain their marriage life, although each couple later had a different religion, whereas there was one subject who got divorced because of the prevailing misconception that their marriage was not religiously legal.

Based on the analysis, we can conclude that psychological problems are experienced by all of the members of the interfaith families. For the children, the problems are in the form of: (1) a depressed feeling by seeing one of their parents performing the religious prayer alone, (2) an uncomfortable feeling when their friends know about their parents' different religions, (3) a shame due to becoming the center of others' attention, (4) a doubtful feeling of the truth of their parents' (different) religions, and (5) a fear of the parents' demands. For the parents, their interfaith marriage makes psychological impacts on their lives in the form of: (1) an uncomfortable feeling of being thrown away by other members of family, (2) poor self-esteem when associating and socializing themselves with other people in community's social activities, and (3) a feeling of failure in educating their family members. These especially happen to MR, a very obedient Muslim, who is feeling unable to apply Koran Surah al-Tahrim verse 6 and it always becomes his self-reflection.

Findings from the results of the discussion are; Four patterns were found that influenced the values of religious education in different families in the City of Palangka Raya, namely the pattern of one way internalization means that the influence of mothers is very dominating, two ways internalization influences both father and mother parents, internalization by agreement and natural internalization.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this research show that the majority of the studied subjects commonly live in harmony although there are psychological problems in them. The good fact is that those problems do not lead to any physical fights or conflicts.

There is only one subject, subject 10th, who decided to divorce.

Interfaith marriages lead to psychological impacts on the given family [33], both on the children and on parents. The impacts on children are in the form of doubt about their own religion/faith. They are confused about which way to follow, whether it is to follow one of their parents' religion based on their own choice or it is to follow the religion that has been written in the agreement. While parents suffer from both minor and major psychological pressures due to their different faith. Some of them lose their responsibilities of being the head of the family and the main teacher for the children, especially those in the process of religion internalization. The fact is revealed in subject 3 and 5, who are willing to make an agreement for maintaining the unity of their household.

In accordance with the results of this study, it is recommended: (1) For couples who are going to get married, they should prepare themselves mentally and understand the risks that will be faced both in the short and long term, if married to people of different religions or beliefs, even though they love each other; (2) For couples who are married with a category of interfaith marriage, with a model of marriage according to the Islamic ordinance should be kept *istiqamah* to maintain the religion adopted, do not return to the original religion, destroy the household as well as possible, be an adherent of an example of religion by offspring in the future, learn religious knowledge well in order to understand the religious teachings contained in the scriptures. Moreover, parents of different religious couples must realize how risky it is to teach children about religion, and should think about the future of their children and be more selective in choosing and determining a child's life partner because if later married, the child does not follow his parents.

ETHICS APPROVAL AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Not applicable.

HUMAN AND ANIMAL RIGHTS

No animals/humans were used for studies that are the basis of this research.

CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

We obtained the written informed consent from each subject or subject's parent.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest, financial or otherwise.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

On this valuable occasion I expressed my highest appreciation and gratitude to the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Institut Agama Islam Negeri Palangka Raya which have provided material and moral support in the context of conducting research and writing of this manuscript. I also convey the highest gratitude and appreciation to Dr. J Dalle has edited and refined this manuscript so that it is worthy of publication in an internationally reputed journal

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