# Religious Conversion on Students' Characters: a Study at Rumah Yatim and Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung

**Dindin Jamaluddin\*)**
Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung
Djati Bandung, Jawa Barat, Indonesia
E-mail: din2jamaluddin@uinsgd.ac.id

**Aan Hasanah**
Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung
Djati Bandung, Jawa Barat, Indonesia
E-mail: aan.hasanah@uinsgd.ac.id

**Qiqi Yuliati Zaqiyah**
Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung
Djati Bandung, Jawa Barat, Indonesia
E-mail: qiqiyuliatizakiah@uinsgd.ac.id

**Siti Rahmawati**
Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung
Djati Bandung, Jawa Barat, Indonesia
E-mail: rahmawatisiti098@gmail.com

*\*) Corresponding Author*

**Abstract:** The development of individual characters was inseparable from the influence of social environment. Particularly in the era of Industrial Revolution 4.0, the development is attached to the importance of Information Technology (IT). This study investigated the impact of religious conversion on the students' characters in the industrial revolution 4.0 era. It was conducted to the students of *Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Bandung*, who lived in *Rumah Yatim dan Tahfidz Qur'an Madani* Bandung. It was a qualitative method using case study, designed to comprehensively explore the students' experiences during the process of their religious conversion and to understand how the experiences transformed their characters. The study used the three-stage data analysis, involving data reduction, presentation and conclusions. From the analysis, it concludes that: 1) The religious conversions done by the students were influenced predominantly by their mental and environmental factors, especially by the place where they lived; 2) The religious conversions were motivated by certain events such as parents' divorces or deaths; 3) Their character transformations were varying with three dimensions. In the cognitive dimension, they showed an improvement of critical thinking. In the psychomotor dimension, they were more skilled to socialize. Finally, in affective dimension, they became more emotionally matured because of the improved memorization of the Qur'an.

*Abstrak: Perkembangan karakter seseorang tidak terlepas dari pengaruh lingkungan, apalagi pengaruh teknologi informasi di Era Revolusi Industri ke empat. Penelitian ini membahas tentang dampak konversi agama terhadap karakteristik peserta didik di usia remaja, khususnya pada mahasiswi Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Bandung yang tinggal di Rumah Yatim dan Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengetahui bagaimana dampak konversi agama terhadap perubahan karakteristik informan. Sehingga bisa mempelajari lebih dalam setiap kejadian dari proses konversi agamanya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus, yang bertujuan untuk mempelajari penuh dari setiap kejadian yang dialami informan. Teknik analisis datanya meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data dan penarikan kesimpulan. Dari hasil analisis dapat disimpulkan bahwa: 1) Konsep konversi agama adalah sebagai berubahnya suatu keadaan agama yang didominasi karena faktor batin (kejiwaan) dan faktor lingkungan tempat mereka tinggal. 2) Motivasi konversi agama mereka karena adanya kejadian-kejadian*

157

*tertentu seperti keluarga broken home, orangtua meninggal, dan lainnya. 3) Dampak karakter setelah mereka konversi agama sangat beragam, dimulai dari kognitif mereka daya berpikir semakin kritis, dari psikomotor mereka lebih terampil untuk bersosialisasi, serta yang terakhir dari afektif karakter mereka lebih terjaga karena salah satu penguatnya adalah hafalan al-Qur'an.*

## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, many problems in human life result from false religious understandings, such as mental turmoil or worthless feelings (Oakley, 2020). For some people, to get a new grip or a peaceful soul, having religious conversion becomes the right option (Saeed, 2017). In general, religious conversion means an act of a person or a group of souls entering or shifting to a new system of belief or behavior that is different from the previous one (Jalaludin, 1993).

The era of Industrial Revolution 4.0, where humans and machines are harmonized to solve problems and discover the possibility of innovations, has shifted how people act and see the world and the community, including religious conversion (Hangabei, Dimyati, & Surbakti, 2020). Religious conversion, now, is more regarded as a part of someone's personal development than an apostasy, it is seen as the product of a mental process (Sumbulah & Purnomo, 2017). This phenomenon is research-worthy because additional factors contribute to it, such as the environment and technology (Chan & Islam, 2015) .

The phenomenon of changing characteristics due to the influence of religious conversion on a character, not only occurs in people with adulthood (Rosyid, 2013; Raka & Sudarsana, 2018), but also can occur at adolescence (Rosita, 2014) including students at a school such as the institution of Rumah Yatim and Tahfidz Qur'an. Munir & Hartono (2016) assert that injecting character value in educational institution is a need in today's era.

Rumah Yatim and Tahfidz Qur'an is the one of social foundation that aims to accommodate and care for orphans living in the Bandung area and its surroundings with the form of activity is in the form of guidance for Tahfidz al-qur'an as the main program.

Research on the impact of religious conversion on the characteristics of students in adolescence in Indonesia, especially in female students who live in Rumah Yatim and Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung has never been reported. Several studies have been reported including by Kéri & Sleiman (2017) in Europe, Allas (2018) in Pakistan, Yee et al., (2019) in Malaysia and Rogozen-Soltar (2019) in Spain's. Therefore, research on the impact of religious conversion on the characteristics of students in adolescence in Indonesia that is associated with information technology in the era of the fourth industrial revolution needs to be done.

The shifting meaning of religious conversion motivated us to study how the environment and technology affected the students' religious conversions and how their characters changed throughout the process (Rambo & Bauman, 2012). This study discusses the impact of religious conversion on the students' characters from the religious psychological approach and examines their traits individually at the Rumah Yatim and Tahfidz Qur'an, so the actual impact is comprehended.

## METHOD

This research is a qualitative field study and naturalistic inquiry, exploring the natural phenomenon (Reeves, Peller, Goldman, & Kitto, 2013). It is because the study examines the actual phenomena and facts of religious

conversion, students' characters, and the authentic situation of Industrial Revolution 4.0 comprehensively. This study does not only describe the existing phenomena but analyses how the impact of religious conversion on students' characters.

**Research design**

This study used the qualitative data analysis postulated by Miles and Huberman (Usman & Setiady, 2008). It consists of three simultaneous stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification.

*a. Data reduction*

Data reduction is a data analysis that focuses more on important things, discards unrelated ones to the research, chooses the main points, and summarizes the data information that has been obtained (Jamaludin, 2018). Data reduction is done with minimizing questions which is unrelated to research problems, or with focusing the appropriate data to facilitate the conduct of interviews and observations. Thus the data collected through observations and interviews provide a clearer picture. It will be easier for researchers to conduct further data collection.

*b. Data Presentation*

The data were presented in narrative texts. The presentations can also be supported by matrices, graphs, networks, and charts. This stage can be interpreted that researchers make understanding the facts or phenomena, obtained from the data collection, by describing them. The description is to understand the research problems.

*c. Conclusion or Verification*

The last stage was the conclusion of the data-analysis results. The conclusion explains the impact of religious conversions on the students' character from the perspective of religious psychology. It concludes the answers of the research problems, it is drawn from the breakdown of the data obtained from observing and interviewing the students who have converted their religions.

**Research site and participants**

The research sites were Rumah Yatim and Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. In these places, students with different origins, educational background and age levels stayed to study in the formal institutes and to memorise the Qur'an. Among the students, 8 (eight) as samples were selected because of their religious and educational background (such as whether or not they graduated from *pesantren*), family background, social experiences, responses to technology, and behaviors presented in the preliminary observation. The students are observed and interviewed in 8 days, from 15 to 23 March, 2020. The interview involved eight students. The interview started at 09.00 each day because in the morning the students were still fresh, good condition and before doing other daily activities.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

The data were collected with observation, interviews and documentation.

**a. Observation**

In this study, the observation was conducted as a non-participatory type, where researchers paid attention only to particular activities (Surmiak, 2018). To do a good observation, there are several patterns available to be chosen. The pattern that the observers acted as an open actor known and possibly supported by all the research participants was chosen. The support could help the observers acquire the data. The data collection was transparently informed to the eight students so they could help the observers to answer the research questions.

*b. Interview*

In this stage, the researchers acted as interviewers, who dealt with the eight students (interviewees). The interviewees were given several questions about their religious conversion. The interview was unstructured (Husaini & Akbar, 2014). This means that the dialogue session was not based on the guideline, there were no restrictions in giving questions to the interviewee. This made the interviewer easier to gather more information and the interviewees more open to express their opinions, accordingly the obtained data would be much deeper.

To find out the impact of religious conversions on students' characteristics in the

era of Industrial Revolution 4.0, the explored factors in the interview are as follows:
1. Family and education background
2. Social experience.
3. Passion.
4. Motivation and process of conversion.
5. Physical conditions and presented behavior
6. Effects of technology on religious conversion and presented behavior
7. Environmental responses to character building.

The identified factors helped us to gather information and data, which were then concluded to be the results of research, which answered the research questions.

### c. Documentation

In this study, the previous related documents such as books, journals, previous research and publications greatly supported the observation and interview. They became secondary data. Besides, documentation of primary data that recorded data collection was also used in this study (Husaini & Akbar, 2014). Taking photographs and recording sounds were conducted during the process of research planning and implementation. Both of these data were legitimate evidence of the validity of the data in the study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
### Results

The eight students expressed different experiences and processes of religious conversion. Some were internally driven, others were externally motivated (by family or/ and environment). However, in the end, the environmental factor (Rumah Yatim and Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, which they lived in) is the strongest factor in their religious conversions.

### Informan 1: ESM (initial name)

Enur was the informant who previously had no memorization of the Qur'an but she had learned how to read the Qur'an from her father when she was a child. She began to memorize the Qur'an when she joined Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. At this time, she has memorized all chapters of the Qur'an.

Additionally, Enur has studied in a *pesantren* for two years when she was in the second and third grade of high school. She was forced to enter the boarding school by her father because she has been trapped in the bad social environment. In this manner, the bad social environment is defined as having a romantic dating, being a friend with men, and being too much exposed on social media.

> "*Malu juga sih dulu tuh kan zaman-zamannya nakal ya, jadi karena orangtua tegas ya gaboleh pacaran. SD gaberani, SMP mulai, SMA sih berani-beraninya. Pas lagi masa-masanya mulai pacaran terus ada konflik eh terus ayah ngajakin buat masuk pesantren dan pindah pesantren. Awalnya gamau karena nanti taku gabisa bebas lagi, tapi darisitu mikir masa ga taat taat dan nakal terus. Katanya pengen bahagaiain orangtua. Kebetulan bapak juga ssakit-sakitan, sekarang juga masih sakit engga kerja keluar, udah lama jadi sekarang mamah yang kerja. Jadi ibaratnya ayah kerja kalo lagi sehat aja. Jadi dari situ makin sadar juga kenapa ga ada pikiran untuk taat. Dulu juga bapak masukin saya ke pesantren bukan untuk apa-apa dan banyak uang, tapi ingin ada penerus untuk syi'ar.*" (Enur Sri Muldiani)

> **Translated** – It's a shame that I was rebellious. Actually, my parents are strict. At the first, I was an obedient kid. Attending high school, I began to break my parents' rules. My parents don't allow me to have a boyfriend. But in high school, I started dating with men. And, this became conflicts with my father. After that, my father persuaded me to study in a *pesantren*. Previously, I was worried. I think I would not be free anymore. But, at the same time, I thought that my rebel manners couldn't last forever. My father is sick, he has been unproductive for long time. My mom do for our lives. So, I started to think to transform myself. In the past, my father sent me to a *pesantren* not for earning a lot of money, but for continuing his *dak'wah*.

The family encouragement had arisen Enur's awareness to transform herself. In particular, she wanted to be a better person because of her father, who was a religious figure. She was also worried about him, who is no longer young and fit. She said her father wanted her to be a good example and his heir to continue the *da'wah*. She thought it was the right time to be dutiful to her father and to follow his wishes before he passed away.

> "*Karena dulunya ga pernah pegang HP, dan baru pegang HP itu ya disini jadi serasa aku ngerasa ngenalin dunia, apalagi disini difasilitasi ada wifi. Tapi ya baiknya lebih mudah untuk kajian, sampe nemuin hukum pakai kaos kaki karena auratpun ya*

| *belajar dari manfaatin HP. Kajian-kajian ustad yang kritis seperti Ustad Felix. (...)*" (Enur Sri Muldiani) |
|---|
| **Translated** – "I never had a cellphone before, and just got a cellphone here [in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung] so it feels like I know the world. Especially here there is Wi-Fi. The internet makes my learning easier.  I found the obligation for women to use socks from the internet. I love watching Islamic shows on the internet, such as the critical discussion with Ustad Felix. |

Since the time she enrolled in the *pesantren*, she could control the impact of technology on her life, she utilizes technology wisely. She managed her way to communicate on and use social media and learned how to use technology to strengthen her process of religious conversion (*hijrah*). At the moment, she presented better behaviors in terms of worship and social skills. It was supported by the accommodating atmosphere in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, which was discipline but encouraging.

### Informan 2: WR (initial name)

Wulan was one of the informants who learned and memorized the Qur'an for the first time at Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. In the past, she read the Qur'an regardless of the rules of recitation. She also did not have any experiences of studying in a *pesantren*. Moreover, it was said that at the beginning she stayed in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung to spare her time after being failed in the admission test to public universities.

She joined Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung because of her mother, who was very concerned about her education.  Her mother was also the main reason why she wore niqab. Even though her mother was a dominant factor, she consciously took the opportunity to stay in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung to transform herself, to be a better person.

| "*Dirangkul, sering curhat. Jadi kaya welcome banget. Ini bercadar juga dorongan dari ibu.*" (Wulan Rahmayanti) |
|---|
| **Translated** – My mom is a warm person, I talk many things with her. I used *niqab* because of her. |

Wulan had good family support. Although in the past, she was exposed to the bad social environment, she could find the way back to the family and the religious norms.

Additionally, the supportive atmosphere in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung improved her traits and persona.

| "*Bisa jadi keduanya, tapi yang lebih dominan ya lingkungan. Jadi kita teh ada dorongan dari yang tau sampe terbiasa, (...)*" (Wulan Rahmayanti) |
|---|
| **Translated** - It could be both, but the environmental factors are more dominant [in my religious conversion]. It means that we have people who always remind us to follow the rules until we get accustomed to it (...) |

Wulan had been familiar with the technology before and after her conversion (*hijrah*). Her utilizing of technology was limited to social media. She said she used it to strengthen her conversion.

| "*Dulu yah biasa aja teh gimana ya gimana gitu lah, tapi sekarang da kebawain pagi-pagi bangun lebih awal. Heeh tahajud, (...). Nah dari rutinitas itu jadi ngerasa ya Allah alhamdulillah sjerang lebih baik semoga isttiqomah.*" (Wulan Rahmayanti) |
|---|
| **Translated** - I used to worship modestly but now I am more obedient. In the early morning, I wake up to do *tahajud*. Doing this routine makes me a better and mature person. |

After the religious conversion, she had acquired a drastic change in her behaviors and apparel.  The change was no longer only motivated by the family factor, but the surroundings in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. Wulan added her transformation process was not easy, especially when she got contra from the surroundings. She kept trying to ignore all external bad vibes and comments, and enjoying the best version of herself she had made so far.

### Informan 3: SA (initial name)

Annisa was one of the informants who never enrolled in a *pesantren*. However, she had memorized one chapter of the Qur'an before joining Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. She had been fluent in reciting the Qur'an. In Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, she focused on exploring her reciting skills and memorizing the Qur'an.

| "*Gimana ya kalo hijrah, ini juga niqab kan semenjak disini. Sebenarnya ingin dari dulu pas SMA, cuman ya masih belum siap faktor luar omongan tetangga yang nganggep engga-engga, karena Annisa kan ga pesantren. Pas udah lulus SMA baru diajak kesini sama kakak. (…)*" (Siti Annisa) |
|---|
| **Translated** – How is my hijrah? I have used *niqab* since staying in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. |

> Actually, I wanted to wear it when I was in high school. But, I was doubtful because of people's bad words. They think it is awkward if I wear *niqab* because I have never enrolled in a *pesantren*. After graduating from high school, I was invited to come here by my brother.

Annisa was educated by a though and religious family. When she was in the fifth grade of elementary school, her mother had an accident which made her unable to walk. This made Annisa aware of her parents' emotional and financial struggles; how they worked hard to protect and give her the best education and living. Annisa's older brother also stayed in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung as a caretaker. He also took part in educating her. Her brother was the person who motivated Annisa to wear a niqab.

Her social experiences with technology had not changed before and after the conversion. She did not intensively use the technology. She recently got her first smartphone when she had stayed in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. She used it to access religious shows or discussions on YouTube.

> "*Diasrama dirumah sama aja sih teh, tapi paling mendukung ya disini kalo dirumah kan banyak yang kontra.*" (Siti Annisa)
>
> **Translated** – I feel the same, living in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung or at home. But, I think living here is most supportive here, compared to the cons I got at home.

Annisa said that the other reason she wanted to change was to prove to the neighbors that her family's upbringing was not in vain. She added that she began to realize the importance of covering her body perfectly. Her transformation could be seen from her appearance and her commitment to doing *sunnah*. She remembered her grandfather's message that Muslim women needed to protect their bodies and to honor the one and only God.

### Informan 4: IW (initial name)

Irna was a unique informant. She had never attended a *pesantren* and experienced a rebellious life. When she was a child, she did male stuffs, such as playing soccer with men. She said in the past she was so boyish and people called her '*tomboy*', which meant her characters were similar to men's. She really liked doing physical exercises and sports. This made her friend with men.

Although she never enrolled a *pesantren*, she has memorized several verses in the Qur'an and been adept at reading the Qur'an. Therefore, in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, she focused on memorizing the Qur'an.

She came from a broken family, her parents have divorced since she was in the fifth grade. However, he was grateful that his father was concerned about her, especially her education.

In terms of religious observance, she was not that obedient. It might be caused by her incomplete family support. She first became aware of religion when she attended to religious subjects in schools.

Regarding to the technology, she was also very enthusiastic. She used the technology as learning media rather than a means of communication with her family and friends. She often accessed religious studies and shows on YouTube and other similar applications.

> "*Dulu mah kurang sopan masih suka marah-marah sekarang mah lebih terkontrol teh, sekarang lebih tawakal dan aku jadi lebih pemaaf karena takut pas mati masih pada punya salah.*" (Irna Wanti)
>
> **Translated** - I used to be rude when I was angry. Now, I am calmer and emotionally stable. Moreover, I become more trustworthy and forgiving. I'm afraid that when I die I still have mistaken.

Overall, she showed a very drastic change. In terms of appearance, she no longer looked like a man, now she was feminine, her clothes were so considerate. In terms of worship, her emotions and praying routines had been settled down since she lived in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. Her strong commitment was also triggered by the domestic factors. She considered her parents and wanted to upturn his parents in the world and the life after.

### Informant 5: PNH (initial name)

Putri was one of the informants who had an excellent religious background. Before joining Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, she had memorized the Qur'an. She had enrolled a *pesantren* for three years, during her junior

high school. She also came from a good family, which always supported her dreams and her decision of religious conversion.

When she was in senior high school, she left the *pesantren* and was exposed to bad surroundings. It did not take a long time until she realized what she did was dissident. The situation in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung strengthened her awareness and commitment of *hijrah*.

> "*Lagi seneng buku-buku agama teh, kisah-kisah inspirasi dan juga buku tentang kunci hidup. Karena bagi Putri agama tidak akan bisa dipelajari kalau kunci hidupnya belum sejalan.*" (Putri Nida Husnaeni)
>
> "*Semenjak disini aja teh, di madani.*" (Putri Nida Husnaeni)
>
> **Translated** - "I am enthusiastic with religious books, inspirational stories and books about the keys of life. For me, religion cannot be learned if the keys to life are not in line with us. " - "This enthusiasm started in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung."

In terms of technology, since the conversion, she had become wiser to control her utilization of gadget. This control made her calmer. It also increased her worship and managed her anger. The control was supported by the daily routines in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, which do not allow the residents to use of gadgets frequently. Moreover, she said, she and her friends mutually supportesd to strengthen their religious transformations.

### Informant 6: SMSL (initial name)

Siti Mulyani S. Lekai (or Neng) was the youngest informant in this study. She was thoroughly educated by her parents. She enrolled in a *pesantren* when she was in junior high school. Since that time, she decided to wear *niqab*. Her father passed away when she was in the fifth grade of elementary school. Her mother has taken over all the responsibilities in educating her. Looking at her persona, she was soft and quiet. She typically looked like an introvert person who was unsociable and self-ego centric. In Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, she focused only on growing her socializing skills. She was successfully to make friends from different backgrounds and cultures. In terms of technology literate, she was familiar with it. She had obtained the bad and good effects of technology.

> "*Kalo disini lebih ke sosialnya teh, Neng merasa hadir dan nampak sekarang di mata orang. Ya meskipun belum semuanya, ya bertahap semoga Neng bisa belajar untuk terus jalin komunikasi yang baik.*" (Siti Mulyani S. Lekai)
>
> **Translated** – Here I've improved my socializing skills. I think people have noticed me more than the previous one. The improvement is gradual. I hope my skills keep improving.

To sum, after moving to Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, she argued that she had made a huge change in her way of communication. She enjoyed every phase of her *hijrah* journey because she understood that what she did in the world must be in the name of Allah SWT and she wanted to praise to her mother and father in the life after.

### Informant 7: EAT (initial name)

Erma was the informant coming from Aceh Singkil, far away from Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. However, she was so motivated to learn and memorize the Qur'an, and also to transform herself to be a better being. She did not have any experience of studying in a *pesantren* and memorizing the Qur'an. She basically hated memorizing activities. She said she prefered mathematics to memorization.

> "*Hijrah untuk jadi lebih sabar, itu sih pada intinya. Jadi gini, dulu pas pertama kali Erma beranikan diri untuk mondok di madani disini, Erma kan ga ngabarin ayah sebelumnya, tau-tau H- berapa ya lupa Erma tiba-tiba minta uang ongkos ke Bandung buat ikut tes tahfidz ini, kenapa Erma berani? Satu karena di Bandung juga ada abang, dan yang ke dua Erma pengen nyobain keluar rumah, merantau lah istilahnya. Ayah sempet marah dan ga ngizinkan, tapi akhirnya di bujuk sama ibu, karena Erma takut kalo diem dirumah ga lanjut study takut ga jelas kedepannya ngapain. Akhirnya, jadilah Erma ada disini teh.*" (Ermawida Abbas Tinambunan)
>
> **Translated** - The point of my *hijrah* is becoming a more patient person. This is the story: when I moved to Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, I hadn't told my father. I let my father know my plan on days before my leaving. I suddenly asked for a fare to Bandung to take the test of Tahfidz. Why was I not afraid? Firstly I have my brother living in Bandung. And I want to live independently with my own abilities. My father was angry and didn't allow my plan, but my mother helped me to persuade him. My mom knows that I intend to reach my brighter future.

She came from a strict family. Her parents were concerned with her education and religion. Before joining Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, she wanted to enroll at a public university. Unfortunately, she was failed in the admission test. Then, she decided to stay in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung and to learn the Qur'an. She understood her decision would be challenging. After moving to Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, she got to know how tough life is and understood that to live away from home is uneasy.

> "*Ketaatan dari segi ibadah ya biasa aja teh, sekedar menuhi kewajiban. Apalagi dirumah kami keturunan keras, baik dari agama maupun pendidikan. Tapi dari pribadi Erma sendiri yang bermasalah, Erma orangnya cuek banget sampe saking cuek nya ya ga peduli sama siapapun termasuk keluarga Erma sendiri, entah kenapa entah Erma terlalu asik sama dunia Erma sendiri entah gimana. Makanya Erma tekadin untuk hijrah kesini, ke Bandung ke madani biar ngerasain gimana pahitnya merantau dan jauh dari keluarga, ya ternyata kerasa banget teh. Pulang setahun sekali, rasanya rindu dan dulu nyesel kenapa pas dirumah cuek-cuek aja.*" (Ermawida Abbas Tinambunan)

> **Translated** – I was not that obedient in the worship. However, my family is so strict in terms of religion and education. It's my own personal problems. I was so ignorant. I didn't care about anyone, including my own family. I was swayed by my own world. When I moved to Madani, I realized how hard living away from family was. It's not easy, to come home once a year. I feel homesick. And I feel so sorry why I was so ignorant.

In terms of worship, she was not that obedient. The routines and rules in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung trained her to be more dutiful and committed to the God and its teachings. With regard to technology utilizations, ICT devices were really predominant in her life. She used them to get connected with her family.

Overall, the impact of religious conversion on her life was varying with many aspects, starting from her worship, her way of thinking, to her emotion. She began to experience all the changes when she arrived in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. She made the time and space between her and her family a motivation to study the Qur'an better. For her, memorizing the Qur'an was the correct way to control her attitudes and behaviors.

### Informant 8: SS

Sulis was the only informant studying Informatics Technology. She never enrolled in a *pesantren*. She studied the Qur'an from the teacher who came to her house. She had an adequate understating of the Qur'an. She also had memorized one chapter of the Qur'an before staying in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung.

She came from an ordinary family, which supports her decision completely. Her mother passed away when she was in the fifth grade of elementary school, her loss made her understand the life essence. She began her religious conversion when she was in junior high school. At that time, she frequently attended religious studies in her school.

> "*Jujur aja teh, sebenarnya ya Sulis gaptek banget kan ya teh, intens gunakan HP juga pas disini. Tapi Sulis bersyukur dikenalkan sama teknologi, ternyata masyaaallah teh, teknologi membantu kita banget*" (Sulis Setiawati)

> **Translated** – To be honest, I am technologically backward. When staying in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, I got a cellphone. I am so grateful to know the technology, it really helps me.

She did not have an outstanding sociable experience but had a great concern for technology. Her enthusiasm motivated her choice to study Informatics Technology in the university, even though she claimed that previously she was technologically backward.

> "*(…) Sulis udah hijrah terutama setelah pake niqob ini, selain banyak yang kaget lebih nya mungkin di hujat sama temen, bahkan sodara juga, banyak yang nolak. Tapi disamping itu ya Sulis cuek aja teh, justru dari situ Sulis belajar untuk sabar menerima keadaan.*" (Sulis Setiawati)

> **Translated** - When I started my *hijrah*, especially after I used *niqab*, many people were surprised and underestimated what I did. They refused my decision. However, I ignored them. I take this as an exercises to be patient.

The impacts of religious conversion on her was numerous. She started to wear *niqab* and was able to manage her attitudes and feelings of prejudice. Staying in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung, she could control her activities. She realized that the biggest challenge in her religious conversion was the social environment. The chance to live in

Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung became exercises to strengthen her faith. She added what she had done would be presented to her late mother in the life after.

**Discussion**

In the study, the research concerns are the impacts of religious conversion on the students' characters. It is found that the eight students' behaviors are dominantly influenced by their environmental and educational experiences. In general, the concept of students is learners who are affected by a person or group of people who carry out education (Ullman, 2013). Students are the key element in the educational interaction because they are the center of learning activities. Learning also becomes students' initial references for further decisions they should take in their lives, especially in their teens (Hermawan, 2014).

The dynamics of an early adolescent may start with stagnant problems, like religious issues because, at the age, they begin to ponder if religion creates a peaceful mind. They begin to search for a new grip (mindset) or to reinforce previous principles to take further decisions. Religious conversion is an act of a person or group of souls shifting to a new system of belief or behavior that is different from the previous one (Rakhmat, 2013).

Students' characters are the lifestyle of individuals in general (which is influenced by age, gender, and background) that have been brought from birth and their social environment to determine the quality of life. Teenagers are usually in the process of searching for their identity. This condition has a considerable influence on their religious life. According to Piaget's theory, the cognitive development of early adolescence who has reached the operational-standard level allows adolescents to think abstractly, theoretically, and critically (Young, 2019). This critical attitude also appears in religious life. They no longer take for granted the religious teachings given by their parents. Even the religious lessons that they had learned in childhood began to be questioned,

so it is not uncommon to raise religious doubts. Clark sees that religious doubts are indeed a prominent characteristic of religious life in early adolescence (Norenzayan et al., 2016). Doubtful things can involve ritual worship (Rakhmat, 2013).

In this increasingly sophisticated era, people have been served by the technology and familiar with instant thinking (Rotman, 2013). Consequently, their characters have been increasingly eroded by the times. Industry 4.0 has become the disruption of people who are not wise to use the technology (Kumar, Raut, Narwane, & Narkhede, 2020). With easy internet access, many improper shows are easily accessed by people, particularly young students who are still looking for an identity (Duarte Torres, Weber, & Hiemstra, 2014). Moreover, they become busy with their mobile phones because they want to express themselves on social media. Then, mobile phones and internet access are godlier than God, teachers who should be humanized in education become friends without limits. Finally, there are no manners embedded in students because of the loss of noble character in humans. As a result of technological advances, the rapid spread and steps taken by humans can reach a very broad scope in seconds. So, industry 4.0 can change several things in education including the emergence of on-demand educational services, skills, and applications which are mobile, responsive, and unlimited (Shahroom & Hussin, 2018). Learning in the technological era can change the way of life and bring us into a positive or negative world interaction (Prasetyo & Sutopo, 2018).

However, for smart and critical users, they make this facility a means to make them easier to access information and make changes. From the observation of this study, some of the informants started their transformation by attending religious studies on YouTube. They continue their virtual exploration until they decided to change. Besides, they are also strengthened by their experience on technology and the internet. For example, they use their smartphones to

165

listen to *muroja'ah* and to record their memorization.

Thus, the situation in the industrial revolution era 4.0 can have a positive impact on those who want to get it. Simply, the impact can be seen from someone's visual behavior and traits. In this case, the study focuses on students, who are relatively affected by various kinds of education.

Religious conversion, in general, means shifting from one situation, or from one religion to another. In this view, we focus on the scope of the internal religious conversion, as a transformation of someone's religious state (*hijrah*). Based on Klöckner (2013), religious conversion is dominated by psychological problems and the influence of the environment in which they are located.

The eight informants showed the greatly varied changes in their religious state. Some changes were motivated by mental factors (*hidayah*), their willingness to explore and get closer to God. Other changes were preceded by environmental factors, such as their activities in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung and the set of rules and regulations applied to them in Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung.

The typology of the changes could be categorized into volitional type (gradual changes) and type of self-surrender (drastic changes) (Sairah & Syamsuddin, 2019). Gradual changes involve the students who have changed since middle school and gradually continued the transformation until they are consistent to wear *niqab* and their behaviors reflect on their clothes and memorization of the Qur'an. Drastic changes involve those who first experienced the transformation when they joined Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. It is because many of them started the change with external forces which were not under their willingness.

According to Tumanggor, (2016) and Darajat (1996), the transformation can be grouped into five phases. The first stage is the silent period that as children the informants had been nurtured with a strong religion. The second is the conflicting period that they began to be influenced by the social environment/relationships. The third is the uplifting periods that they began to be comfortable with the social distortion. The fourth is the calming period that they rediscovered self-awareness to realize what they did was wrong and find a solution to change. The final stage is the restoration period that they have become a better person (King & Boyatzis, 2015).

The factors affecting the change are dominated by their feelings of tension, such as the consequences of violating Islamic law and parents. However, it does not mean the mental factor does not exist because every change in people is triggered by the mental experience (Remaud, 2015; Bridges & Bridges, 2019).

Motivation, in this study, is defined as a specific reason initiating the change (Han & Yin, 2016). The eight informants had diverse reasons. First, one informant wanted to be the heirs of her father as a religious figure, others wanted to spare their time after being failed in the admission of public universities, to prove what the neighbors said was wrong, to learn from divorced parents, to improve the sociable skilled, or to praise their parents and family in the world and the life after. The motivations strengthened their commitment of *hijrah* as well (Reda, 2017).

The concept of character based on Fallah et al. (2015), it is regarded as a form of an effort to realize positive (intellectual, social, emotional, and ethical) development as an individual. According to Bloom's Taxonomy, character is seen from the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. From the cognitive realm, one of the informants experienced a positive effect after she moved to Madani. She began to memorize the Qur'an. Now, she got accustomed to it even though she said she disliked memorizing activities in the past. From the psychomotor realm, some informants became more active in utilizing existing facilities, such as technology and the internet. Finally, from the affective domain, their characters were most affected, especially the characters which were concise in the rules and regulation in Madani. The regular activities in Madani changed their attitudes and behaviors better.

Concerning environmental factors, all the informants had different backgrounds but most of them were influenced by their social surroundings and technology. The two factors could not be denied. They were influenced by them or they controlled them. It is in their hands to transform themselves. Although their challenges of religious conversion are uneasy, they look survived with the conditions.

The new finding in this research are about the concept of religious conversion, motivation of religious conversion and the impact of characters after they convert religion on students cognitive, pshycomotor, and affective aspects of student character especially students in the Bandung Economic Institute who live in Rumah Yatim and Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. The results of this study can be used as a reference for teachers in conducting learning in schools, especially in the Rumah Yatim and Tahfidz Qur'an. For students, the results of this study can be an example in worship and for stakeholders it can be used as a reference in determining policies and other considerations in managing education in their institutions.

**CONCLUSION**

The concept of conversion concluded from the data source in this study shows the various changes of religious state. Some changes are triggered by the mental factor (the God's calling) to get closer to the God and explore its teachings deeper. Others are driven by the environmental factors, in particular Rumah Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. Their motivations are also various. Some wanted to follow their fathers' figures, to spare their free time after being failed in the admission test to public universities, to argue the neighbors' talks, to learn from their divorced parents, to improve their social skills, or to praise their parents in the world and the life after.

The impacts of religious conversion on the students' characters are grouped into three aspects. In *the cognitive aspects*, one informant reported that after the conversion, she began to memorize the Qur'an, even though she used to be unpleasant with memorization. In *the psychomotor aspects*, some informants became more active in utilizing the existing facilities, like technology, to improve themselves. In *the affective aspect*, many informants argued that their attitudes and behaviors grew positively due to the regulations and activities in Rumah Tahfidz Qur'an Madani Bandung. This aspect is the most improved dimension. With regard to the environment, although the informants had different environmental factors, all of them were affected by technology and the surroundings.

Recomendation for future research is to study the phenomenon of internal religious conversion, like *hijrah*. It's phenomenon can be related to the study of psychology and sociology.

**REFERENCES**

Allas, A. (2018). Religious Conversion and Kinship Cohesion: Intermarriage Amongst British Pakistani Muslims. *Interreligious Studies and Intercultural Theology*, *2*(1), 27–45.

Bridges, W., & Bridges, S. (2019). *Transitions: Making sense of life's changes*. Hatchette UK: Hachette UK.

Chan, A., & Islam, M. S. (2015). State, religion, and environmentalism: fostering social cohesion and environmental protection in Singapore. *Environmental Sociology*, *1*(3), 177–189.

Darajat, Z. (1996). Ilmu Jiwa Agama, Cet. *XV,(Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1996)*.

Duarte Torres, S., Weber, I., & Hiemstra, D. (2014). Analysis of search and browsing behavior of young users on the web. *ACM Transactions on the Web (TWEB)*, *8*(2), 1–54.

Fallah, V., Khosroabadi, S., & Usefi, H. (2015). Development of emotional quotient and spiritual quotient: The strategy of ethics development. *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, *49*, 43–52.

Han, J., & Yin, H. (2016). Teacher motivation: Definition, research

development and implications for teachers. *Cogent Education*, *3*(1), 1217819. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2016.1217819

Hangabei, S. M., Dimyati, K., & Surbakti, N. (2020). Oversee Investment and Indonesia Economic Regulatory Reform in the Era of Globalization and Industrial Revolution 4.0. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, *29*(4), 5123–5138.

Hermawan, A. (2014). Mengetahui Karakteristik Peserta Didik untuk Memaksimalkan Pembelajaran. *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*, *7*(1), 14–25.

Husaini, U., & Akbar, P. S. (2014). *Metode Penelitian Sosial*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara: Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.

Jalaludin, R. (1993). Metode Penelitian Sosial. Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya.

Kéri, S., & Sleiman, C. (2017). Religious conversion to Christianity in Muslim refugees in Europe. *Archive for the Psychology of Religion*, *39*(3), 283–294.

King, P. E., & Boyatzis, C. J. (2015). Religious and spiritual development. *Handbook of Child Psychology and Developmental Science*, 1–48.

Klöckner, C. A. (2013). A comprehensive model of the psychology of environmental behaviour—A meta-analysis. *Global Environmental Change*, *23*(5), 1028–1038.

Kumar, M. S., Raut, R. D., Narwane, V. S., & Narkhede, B. E. (2020). Applications of industry 4.0 to overcome the COVID-19 operational challenges. *Diabetes & Metabolic Syndrome: Clinical Research & Reviews*, *14*(5), 1283–1289.

Munir, M., & Hartono, R. (2016). Islamic Magazine Articles to Enhance Students'reading Skill and Build Their Character Values. *International Journal of Education*, *9*(1), 69–74.

Norenzayan, A., Shariff, A. F., Gervais, W. M., Willard, A. K., McNamara, R. A., Slingerland, E., & Henrich, J. (2016). The cultural evolution of prosocial religions. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *39*. https://doi.org/doi:10.1017/S0140525X14001356

Oakley, J. (2020). *Morality and the Emotions*. Routledge.

Prasetyo, H., & Sutopo, W. (2018). Industri 4.0: Telaah Klasifikasi aspek dan arah perkembangan riset. *J@ Ti Undip: Jurnal Teknik Industri*, *13*(1), 17–26.

Raka, I. N., & Sudarsana, I. K. (2018). Konversi Agama: Dampak dan Makna Bagi Masyarakat Pakuseba. *Jayapangus Press Books*, i-132.

Rakhmat, J. (2013). *Psikologi agama: sebuah pengantar*. Jakarta: Jakarta: Mizan Pustaka.

Rambo, L. R., & Bauman, S. C. (2012). Psychology of conversion and spiritual transformation. *Pastoral Psychology*, *61*(5–6), 879–894. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-011-0364-5.

Reda, L. (2017). The Socio-economic Aspects of hijra: Approaches to Migration in the Islamic Tradition. *Sociology of Islam*, *5*(2–3), 161–178. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1163/22131418-00503002

Reeves, S., Peller, J., Goldman, J., & Kitto, S. (2013). Ethnography in qualitative educational research: AMEE Guide No. 80. *Medical Teacher*, *35*(8), e1365–e1379. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3109/0142159X.2013.804977

Remaud, O. (2015). Accelerating Change and Trigger Events. In *Afterlife of Events* (pp. 62–78). London: Springer.

Rogozen-Soltar, M. (2019). Murabitun Religious Conversion: Time, Depth, and Scale among Spain's New Muslims. *Anthropological Quarterly*, *92*(2), 509–539.

Rosita, R. (2014). Gambaran Resiliensi pada remaja muallaf: Study kasus pada remaja yang melakukan Konversi Agama. UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.

Rosyid, M. (2013). Konversi Agama Masyarakat Samin: Studi Kasus di

Kudus, Pati, dan Blora. IAIN Walisongo.

Rotman, D. (2013). How technology is destroying jobs. *Technology Review*, *16*(4), 28–35.

Saeed, A. (2017). *Freedom of religion, apostasy and Islam*. Routledge.

Sairah, A. R., & Syamsuddin, M. M. (2019). Religious Experience and Character Building: Philosophical Study of The Spiritual Dynamics of Umar Bin Khattab (583-644 AD). *International Journal of Arts and Social Science*, *2*(6), 50–66.

Shahroom, A. A., & Hussin, N. (2018). Industrial revolution 4.0 and education. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, *8*(9), 314–319. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i9/4593

Sumbulah, U., & Purnomo, A. (2017). Muslim Debates on Riddah and Freedom of Religion. *Medwell Journals*, *12*(12), 2299–2307.

Surmiak, A. D. (2018). Confidentiality in qualitative research involving vulnerable participants: Researchers' perspectives.

In *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* (Vol. 19, pp. 1–25). https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.17169/fqs-19.3.3099

Tumanggor, R. (2016). *Ilmu Jiwa Agama*. Prenada Media.

Ullman, C. (2013). *The transformed self: The psychology of religious conversion*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Usman, H., & Setiady, P. (2008). *Metodologi Penelitian Sosial Budaya*. *Jakarta: Bumi Aksara* (Kedua). Jakarta: Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.

Yee, L. T., Elias, N., & Ghani, M. A. (2019). The Religious Conversion Process Of The Malaysian Chinese Muslim Converts. *Journal of Islamic*, *4*(23), 64–77.

Young, W. L. (2019). *Young Adults, Intimacy, and Mutuality in Late Modernity: Contemporary Updates to Theological, Psychological, and Marginalized Perspectives on Relationship Ethics*. Faculty of the Graduate School of Vanderbilt University.