Islamic Education For Adult New-Muslims (Mualaf) In The Global Era: Malaysian And Indonesian Curricula Comparison

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Abstract

This study examines the structure, content, and implementation of Islamic education curricula for adult new-Muslims (Mualaf) in the contemporary global context, utilising a comparative analysis of two established institutions: Hidayah Centre Foundation (HCF) in Malaysia and Mualaf Centre Indonesia (MCI). This research aims to analyse the objectives and components of each curricula, identify their similarities and differences, and evaluate their appropriateness for adult new-Muslims within a multicultural and globalised context. A qualitative multiple case study design was applied, involving data collection through in-person interviews with curriculum developers and educators, together with document analysis. The research uses Bereday's Comparative Model as a structural framework and employs Transformative Learning Theory and Andragogy principles to analyse the findings. Results indicate that HCF employs a tiered and structured methodology, incorporating individual foundational knowledge (Fard 'Ayn) alongside community-oriented skills, whereas MCI utilises a more informal and adaptable framework that responds to local contexts. Both programs prioritise practical application and learner transformation; however, they differ in terms of standardisation, assessment, and scalability. The study concludes that both curricula provide valuable educational frameworks; however, improvements in structure and global adaptability could enhance their effectiveness. The findings provide essential insights for the development of globally applicable Islamic education curricula for new-Muslims.

A. Introduction

The modern global era sees many people choosing to accept Islam as their faith of choice. Despite the unfavourable representations of Islam often portrayed in international media, recent studies indicate that Islam remains the most rapidly expanding religion globally. A significant number of individuals embracing Islam have been motivated by an inward quest for understanding and spiritual significance, rather than external pressure or influence (Ana Fardila, Mahmudatul Imamah, and Sari Dewi 2020). New-Muslims, often referred to as Mualaf, need suitable and appropriate guidance in learning and understanding their new faith. Mualaf have unique needs and come from a vast variety of backgrounds. Abidin and Murtadlo (2020) pose that multicultural-based Islamic curricula play a vital role in promoting rahmatan lil-'alamin (mercy to all creation) values and strengthening religious moderation in diverse educational settings. A well-designed curriculum is an essential aspect in assisting Mualaf to gain an Islamic education suitable to their needs.

As Mitchell, Rane, and Duderija (2023) argue, post-conversion Islamic education plays a crucial role in shaping the way new-Muslims engage with religious, political, and social ideas particularly in Western societies. Sabna, Abidin, and Azma (2024) analysed converts in Indonesia who,

through regular participation in study circles and spiritual mentoring, became active community leaders and religious educators, thereby underscoring the transformative potential of effectively designed Mualaf education programs.

The era of globalisation necessitates the development of a relevant and contextually appropriate Islamic education curriculum for adult new Muslims (Mualaf). This research analyses two curricula from established Islamic educational programs tailored for new Muslims. The chosen curricula originate from two Muslim-majority nations: Malaysia and Indonesia. These have been chosen for the study as both are majority-Muslim countries with access to religious scholars and support. In addition, Malaysia and Indonesia are both non-Arabic-speaking countries. As Islam is being accepted by people around the world from various cultural backgrounds, particularly in non-Arabic-speaking societies, it is relevant to analyse how Islamic education is conducted in such non-Arabic societies with their own rich cultures. By doing so, it is hoped that this study will benefit the broader global population

For this study, Islamic education for adult new-Muslims (Mualaf) in the global era: Malaysian and Indonesian curricula comparison, the problem formulation in this research is: How is curricula of established Islamic education centres for adult new-Muslims in Malaysia and Indonesia? What are the similarities and differences between the adult new-Muslim curricula? How suitable are these curricula for new-Muslims in the modern global era?

This is not the first study in this field. Previous studies have been published related to the current research topic. Previous researchers' findings from accepted thesis submissions, periodicals, and journals are cited, and the current study tries to build on these earlier findings. Current research is primarily focused on unique institutional or national contexts, with limited comparative examination across countries. Research on the significance and diversity of Islamic education methods for Mualaf underscores the necessity of a well-structured and pertinent curriculum. Adenan et al. (2021) examined three prominent Malaysian institutions that have developed Islamic education programs for Mualaf students: Hidayah Centre, Darul Hidayah, and Baitussalam. The study was a comparative analysis of the education and teaching modules used by the three institutions. Each centre differed in curriculum levels, subjects taught, and duration of instruction. While six foundational subjects were commonly taught in each program: Aqidah, Ibadah, Akhlaq, Sirah, Qur'an and Hadith, there was a noted absence of integration between personal obligations (Fard 'Ayn) and communal obligations (Fard Kifayah), particularly in terms of Da'wah and life management skills. This finding reinforces the notion that a unified and comprehensive curriculum is still absent, even in organised institutional environments.

A study conducted in Malaysia by Awang & Che Mat explored the function of Islamic guidance centres in promoting education and the integration of new-Muslims in the country. Their research found that these institutions not only impart fundamental religious principles but also foster unity among individuals of many faiths and backgrounds. The study examined the effectiveness of services designed to assist new Muslims in integrating into the predominantly Muslim population in Malaysia. The researchers proposed that the management of Mualaf guidance classes in such centres "should prioritise a comprehensive and accessible framework for their programs" (Awang & Che Mat, 2024,p.338), highlighting the necessity for an optimal Islamic education curriculum for new Muslims. Similarly, Shuhadah et al. (2024) studied the management and instruction of Islamic studies for new-Muslims. They found that learners experience genuine challenges, such as time constraints, familial responsibilities, and language obstacles. The research indicated that educational curricula need to be flexible and suited to the actual circumstances of Mualaf learners. The quality of a program significantly relies on its management and its alignment with the learners' needs.

Syarifah (2017) conducted a comprehensive study at the An-Naba Mualaf Boarding School (pesantren) in Indonesia, emphasising the impact of a non-formal, immersive religious education setting. This centre aided new-Muslims by way of financing formal education externally, and non-formal education in a boarding setting (pesantren) internally. The research found that learners benefited not only spiritually but also developed preaching skills, public speaking confidence, and Qur'anic memorization. This centre differs from many others in that learners also study Christology.

However, practical obstacles, such as age-mixed classes, irregular funding, and teacher availability were mentioned as barriers to consistent implementation.

Complementing this, Siregar, Nor, and Hajrullah (2020) further analysed the learning process of new-Muslims within An-Naba Mualaf Boarding School, identifying a four-stage pedagogical model: shahadah (acceptance), ta'aruf and tafahum (introduction and understanding), ibthan (internalization), and muwafaqah (acceptance and practice). This framework illustrates a transformative educational trajectory while implying the necessity for curriculum refinement and standardisation.

These previous studies have provided useful insights into Islamic education for new Muslims, assessing the benefits and drawbacks of various institutions. However, there is a research gap in comparing Mualaf education in different countries. Specifically, educational institutions in Indonesia and Malaysia which apply different teaching methodologies, languages, and organisational systems. With more people accepting Islam around the world, from increasingly diverse cultural backgrounds, there is an increasing need to understand how Islamic education curricula can be adapted and structured in a way that is both globally and locally relevant. This study aims to address the gap by comparing the curricula, teaching methods, and appropriateness for adult new-Muslim learners in the contemporary globalised and multicultural context of two prominent institutions: the Hidayah Centre Foundation (HCF) in Malaysia and the Mualaf Centre Indonesia (MCI).

B. Methods

This research employs a qualitative multiple case study approach with comparative analysis to study the structure and implementation of Islamic education curricula for adult new-Muslims in Malaysia and Indonesia, and their suitability in the modern global era. This methodology allows for in-depth examination of each curriculum within its real-world context and allows for insightful cross-case analysis. A qualitative approach was selected because it provides rich, descriptive data regarding curriculum objectives, instructional practices, and learner transformation. A comparative case study enables the identification of similarities and differences across different institutional and national contexts. According to Yin (2008), a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life setting, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear.

This study's research design incorporates several key features that enhance its analytical depth and contextual relevance. First it emphasises real-life settings, concentrating on the observation and analysis of the implementation of Islamic education curricula in practice. Second, the design incorporates various data sources, including semi-structured interviews with curriculum developers and educators, as well as document analysis of curriculum materials and institutional publications. Third, the study applies a cross-case comparative approach, enabling an in-depth analysis of curricular responses across diverse sociocultural and institutional contexts. This research examined two prominent Islamic educational institutions: Hidayah Centre Foundation (HCF) in Malaysia and Mualaf Centre Indonesia (MCI) in Jakarta. The selection of these institutions is based on their significance in new-Muslim education, availability of religious scholars, and differing formal and informal educational methodologies.

The study utilised semi-structured interviews with curriculum developers, administrators, and educators from each institution. The researcher conducted in-person visits to both locations, ensuring informed consent was acquired from all participants. The analysis of documents encompassed a review of curricula, and institutional materials. Participants in this study were chosen using purposive sampling, focusing on their direct involvement in curriculum development and delivery. The primary participants were from two significant groups. The first group included curriculum developers and institutional administrators who offered essential insights into curriculum objectives, design rationale, and institutional strategies. The second group consisted of educators whose roles in curriculum delivery offer valuable insights into the day-to-day realities of teaching. Perspectives of these participants contributed to learn of pedagogical methods, content adaptation, learner engagement, and assessment practices in each institution.

Data collection for this study employed two qualitative techniques: First, semi-structured interviews which were designed to explore curriculum goals, implementation practices, and educator

experiences. Second, a document analysis of curriculum materials and institutional texts was carried out to examine the formal structure, content scope, delivery strategies, and evaluation mechanisms embedded within the curricula. Combining interview data and document analysis enabled a comprehensive insight of the curriculum aims and its practical application across each institutional context. The use of multiple data sources strengthens the reliability of findings by way of triangulation. Interviews with administrators and educators offer essential firsthand insights, while document analysis validates institutional practices.

This study applied theoretical triangulation to improve research credibility by applying three established theoretical frameworks for interpreting the findings:

a. Bereday's Comparative Education Model, Bereday's model Bereday (1964) outlines four stages of comparative education research: description, interpretation, juxtaposition, and comparison. This methodology is used to systematically present, analyse, and compare the curricula at HCF and MCI. This ensures that the comparison is grounded, transparent, and considers both contextual and content-based factors.

b. Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory, Mezirow (1991, 2000) asserts that adult learning includes critical reflection, which ultimately results in a transformation in one's worldview. The concept of transformative learning is especially relevant for new-Muslims who experience identity change because of their conversion. Through the application of this concept, one can better understand how educational programs contribute to the intellectual and spiritual growth of students, as well as their incorporation into Muslim communities.

c. Knowles' Andragogy (Adult Learning Theory), Knowles (1973) proposes that adult learners are self-directed, bring life experience to learning, are motivated by internal goals, and learn best when content is relevant to real-life challenges. This framework supports the evaluation of curriculum delivery and design, particularly the alignment of learning strategies with adult needs such as autonomy, relevance, and practical application.

Collectively, these three frameworks establish a comprehensive and reliable foundation for data analysis. By using these frameworks, the research encompasses structural and procedural curriculum elements, as well as pedagogical effectiveness and learner transformation.

C. Result and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the research findings from interviews with curriculum developers and educators at two prominent Islamic education centres for new-Muslims (*Mualaf*): Hidayah Centre Foundation (HCF) in Malaysia, and Mualaf Centre Indonesia (MCI), in addition to documents related to the curriculum used in each centre. The design and implementation of *Mualaf* education curricula requires consideration for the unique needs of adult learners. Knowles (1973) emphasised that adults demonstrate self-direction and inner motivation, utilising their extensive life experiences to shape their learning processes. MCI's personalised instruction model exemplifies adaptability in lesson delivery, customised to the life contexts of learners. The structured modules of HCF offer flexibility via blended delivery modes, aligning with Knowles' principle that adult learners are problem-centred and achieve optimal learning when content is relevant to real-life contexts.

Hidayah Centre Foundation (HCF)'s curriculum adopts a structured, multi-tiered approach to Islamic education for adult new Muslims in various languages including English, Malay, and Chinese, emphasising fundamental Islamic knowledge and individual obligations (*Fard 'Ayn*) as well as communal responsibilities (*Fard Kifayah*), particularly through the integration of *Da'wah* training. The use of government-produced modules alongside internal materials illustrates institutional adaptability and responsiveness.

Teaching strategies include mobile outreach, in-person classes, and online platforms, supported by a significant volunteer network of 4000 Qur'an teachers nation-wide. Structured assessments, regular program evaluations, and consultations with scholars highlight a formalised,

quality-focused model. The curriculum adopted by HCF aligns closely with andragogical principles, fostering learner autonomy and valuing life experiences. It demonstrates Transformative Learning by promoting personal spiritual growth and empowering learners to assume roles such as community leaders. The program demonstrates institutional maturation, national scalability, and a defined goal for global implementation.

Mualaf Centre Indonesia (MCI) adopts a flexible, community-oriented approach for adult *Mualaf* education, focusing on personalised instruction and local relevance. The program primarily operates through informal education, with a focus on theological comprehension, Qur'an literacy, and fundamental religious practices. Although it does not have a tiered structure, its adaptive format enables instructors to customise delivery according to individual learner contexts. Curriculum development is informed by religious scholars and the centre's foundational mission of spiritual and social support for *Mualaf*. MCI also utilises resources provided by the Indonesian government's National Amil Zakat Agency (BAZNAS), including Curriculum and Module for the Training of *Mualaf* (Mualaf Center BAZNAS 2018); Fiqih Mualaf – discussing aspects of *Aqidah* (theology), *Ibadah* (rituals), and *Muamalat* (transactions and social interactions) (El Ayyubi, Nafis, and Zubaidi 2020); and an Advocacy Guide Book for *Mualaf* (Mualaf Center BAZNAS & Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Pusat Advokasi Hukum dan Hak Asasi Manusia Indonesia (Mualaf Center BAZNAS & LBH PAHAM, 2020), providing legal advice and advocacy for *Mualaf* in Indonesia.

Instructional delivery includes both in-person and online learning, addressing practical challenges through community-based teaching and peer support. MCI's model exhibits a notable link with Transformative Learning Theory, emphasising identity reconstruction and spiritual empowerment in the post-conversion stages. The informal nature supports specific aspects of andragogy; however, it may lack structured pathways for learner progression or standardised assessment. Overall, MCI exemplifies a flexible, needs-oriented curriculum tailored for diverse and localised learner groups; however, its scalability and standardisation may be constrained relative to more formal educational models. This research utilises Bereday's comparison model, principles of andragogy, and transformational learning theory. Interviews were conducted based on themes, with interpretations that include educational philosophies, institutional objectives, practical considerations, and comparative applicability for worldwide use.

Following is a discussion of the interviews and document data by thematic analysis:
    a.   Background and Institutional Context
        1.   Mission and Vision Alignment

Both centres emphasize the spiritual empowerment of *Mualaf*, but with slightly different emphases. HCF's vision, as stated on their website, focuses on being "a reference organization in Islamic sharing and the empowerment of Mualaf" (Hidayah Centre Foundation 2025), while MCI aims to be a professional, accountable foundation offering broad benefits to *Mualaf* and society (Mualaf Center Indonesia 2025). Both adopt a comprehensive *Da'wah*-focused purpose, including education, advocacy, and assimilation. This corresponds with previous study by Awang and Che Mat (2024), which emphasised that *Mualaf* centres function as both educational institutions and integrating hubs.

        2.   Motivations Behind Curriculum Development

The curricula exist to address why *Mualaf* require structured guidance. HCF originally relied on resources supplied by state religious authorities but has seen the need for a more comprehensive and transformative curriculum that also equips *Mualaf* to become *Da'i* (one who calls people to Islam) and ambassadors of Islam promoting their religion to others. Similarly, MCI evolved from the necessity to assist *Mualaf* through online discussions, paralleling their function to that of the *Ansar* aiding the *Muhajirun*, referring to the early Muslims of Madinah who welcomed and assisted Muslim migrants from Makkah during the Emigration (*Hijrah*). These results support the foundational inspiration for the curriculum development at each centre, demonstrating alignment with Mezirow's

transformative learning theory, whereby learners and institutions participate in reciprocal growth via meaning-making and spiritual advancement.

    3. Challenges Faced by *Mualaf*

Both centres expressed similar challenges faced by adult new-Muslims including:
1. Lack of basic Islamic knowledge.
2. Misunderstandings about Islamic beliefs.
3. Motivational issues: some seemingly attend each institution seeking Zakat funds, and some attend programs because of intent to marry a Muslim.

  b. Curriculum Objectives and Design

To develop curricula that meet the complex needs of *Mualaf* in the global era, Islamic education must aim for both religious formation and broader social and intellectual integration. Moslimany, Otaibi, and Shaikh (2024) emphasize the importance of designing holistic curricula that combine Islamic ethics with modern disciplines, community engagement, and digital literacy to prepare learners for global participation without compromising their religious identity.

1. Learning Objectives, HCF's objectives are multi-tiered: building a foundational knowledge of individual obligations (*Fard 'Ayn*), correcting misunderstandings, instilling Islamic values, and preparing *Mualaf* to become role models and *Da'wah* practitioners. MCI shares these goals, especially in terms of instilling foundational Islamic understanding in *Aqidah*, *Ibadah*, and *Muamalah*. This aligns with previous research (Afifah et al. 2022), which found that Islamic education programs consistently include core subjects but vary in pedagogical and spiritual depth. HCF is unique in preparing *Mualaf* for communal religious leadership through *Da'wah* training.

2. Curriculum Design Philosophies, HCF utilises modules from each of the thirteen Malaysian State Religious Agencies they operate under, along with its own developed materials (such as for *Da'wah* training), whereas MCI refers to modules prepared by BAZNAS and seeks guidance from scholars to maintain consistency with the Qur'an and Sunnah. While neither institution directly references a guiding philosophy like *Tarbiyah*, *Ta'dib*, or *Ta'lim*, their focus on spiritual refinement, ethical conduct, and comprehensive personal development resonates with Al-Attas (1980)'s interpretation of *Ta'dib*—a notion of Islamic education that weaves together knowledge, ethics, and *Adab* (right action) as interconnected components of the educational journey.

3. Consideration of Cultural and Social Factors, Both centres recognise the diverse backgrounds of learners, yet they emphasise adapting through flexible teaching styles rather than modifying the curriculum content. HCF serves rural communities by offering classes in homes and suraus (prayer halls), while MCI respects local cultural norms and relies on the expertise of local educators.

These adaptive strategies are consistent with Knowles' andragogy principles, especially the need to respect learners' life experiences and tailor instruction accordingly.

1. Curriculum Content and Structure
   This section describes what subjects and modules are taught in each institution.
   Core Subjects

Both centres offer subjects covering personal obligations (*Fard 'Ayn*) and other foundational Islamic knowledge. Key subjects include those shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Core Subjects Taught at HCF & MCI

No.	Subjects Taught	HCF	MCI
1	*Aqidah* (Beliefs/theology)	✓	✓
2	*Ibadah* (Rituals)	✓	✓
3	*Akhlaq* (Moral Conduct)	✓	✓
4	*Sirah Nabawiyah* (Biography of the Prophet)	✓	✓
5	Qur'an & Hadith	✓	Partial (Qur'an emphasized)
6	*Muamalah* (Transactions and Interactions)	✓	✓
7	*Munakahat* (Marriage)	✓	✗
8	*Da'wah* & Comp. Religion	✓	✗
9	Islamic History	Partial	✓ (incl. Indonesian History)

The findings are consistent with those of Adenan et al. (2021) who noted that six subjects were commonly found across Islamic education programs for *Mualaf* at various other institutions: *Aqidah*, *Ibadah*, *Akhlaq*, *Sirah*, Qur'an, and Hadith. HCF's inclusion of *Munakahat* and *Da'wah* makes its curriculum more expansive in terms of communal obligations (*Fard Kifayah*), a noted deficiency in other programs.

2. Integration of Life Skills

HCF includes life skills (e.g., entrepreneurship) via non-core training. MCI offers training on personal finance, though also outside the formal curriculum. Both programs therefore fall short of integrating life management fully within the religious curriculum supporting Adenan et al.'s recommendation to incorporate modules like time management and emotional adjustment into the core structure (Adenan et al. 2021).

3. Qur'an Recitation

Both centres integrate Qur'an instruction through volunteer-based, personalized teaching. HCF stands out for its impressive network of over 4000 volunteer teachers throughout thirteen Malaysian states using the *Iqro* method for teaching Qur'anic recitation, demonstrating institutional capacity and reach.

4. Curriculum Implementation and Delivery

The following explains how the programs are executed in practice:

a. Teaching and Learning Methods

Direct teaching in a classroom environment is standard at both centres. HCF emphasises lecture-style sessions and mobile teaching in remote areas, while MCI grants teachers some degree of autonomy. Both reflect the use of online platforms, highlighting an adaptation to hybrid learning models. These practices improve adult learning theory by allowing for self-paced, contextually relevant instruction and promoting the learner's active involvement in the educational process.

b. Adaptation for Adult Learners

Both programs use general curricula adapted by teachers to match learners' prior knowledge and motivation. This confirms the principle of andragogy that adult learners require adaptable, need-

sensitive education. However, neither institution reports systemic differentiation within curriculum tiers based on learners' background, which may be a limitation.

   c.   Mode and Duration of Delivery

Table 2 shows when classes are held and for how long:

Table 2: Delivery Mode and Duration

Aspect	HCF	MCI
Delivery Mode	Face-to-face, online, mobile	Face-to-face, online
Program Duration	1.5 years (3 levels)	Non-formal, duration varies
Class Frequency	Weekly, 1hr 15min per lesson	Weekly, until topic completed

The structured levels of HCF promote ongoing development and evaluation. In contrast, MCI's flexible non-formal framework could prove more suitable for rural or resource-limited environments, however there is potential for inconsistency in learner progress.

   d.   Assessment Methods

HCF administers end-of-semester examinations that encompass both theoretical and practical components, while MCI conducts assessments following the conclusion of each topic. Although each method has its benefits, structured assessments may offer enhanced support for certification and curriculum evaluation. The findings correspond with earlier studies conducted by Syarifah, which indicated certain *Mualaf* education institutions did not possess standardised evaluation frameworks (Syarifah 2017). Effective curriculum implementation necessitates coherence among the ideal (planned), actual (delivered), and hidden (informal) curricula. This method has proven effective in fostering character development via Islamic education across multiple institutions (Destriani, Botifar, and Wanto 2023).

5.   Instructor and Institutional Support

   a.   Teacher Recruitment and Training

This section details who is involved in the curriculum delivery. HCF advertises for qualified volunteers and avoids sectarian instructors, focusing on inclusivity. MCI ensures competence and holds inter-provincial conventions for teachers. Teacher quality was emphasized in both centres, reflecting Syarifah's observation that teacher dedication is a crucial factor for program success (Syarifah 2017).

   b.   Institutional Challenges

Both institutions report difficulty finding qualified, suitable teachers with appropriate attitudes reflecting Shuhadah et al.'s concern regarding management and human resource constraints in *Mualaf* programs (Shuhadah et al. 2024).

   c.   Consultation with Scholars

Both centres consult with religious scholars and other institutions to ensure doctrinal correctness and pedagogical soundness, enhancing credibility and program quality.

6.   Curriculum Effectiveness and Suitability

   a.   Learner Outcomes

Both institutions report significant spiritual and behavioural transformation among *Mualaf* participants, indicating the deeper impact of curriculum beyond knowledge transmission. Educators at HCF noted that learners gained confidence to lead prayers, recite Qur'anic verses, and even begin engaging in *Da'wah* activities an indication of internalized faith and empowerment. Similarly, MCI educators described learners who, after embracing Islam, developed new senses of purpose and began restructuring their personal lives in alignment with Islamic values. These findings align closely with Mezirow's theory of transformative learning (Mezirow 1991), which emphasizes that adult education involves more than skill acquisition it entails a shift in meaning perspectives through critical reflection and reassessment of prior beliefs. Mezirow further explains that such transformations are often triggered by disorienting dilemmas (Mezirow 2000) in this context, the profound life change of religious conversion that prompt learners to seek new, more inclusive worldviews. In both institutions, educators facilitate this process by creating safe, supportive learning environments where *Mualaf* are

guided through theological content while simultaneously reconfiguring their sense of self. Thus, the educational experience becomes not only informative but deeply formative. This research affirms that adult learners approach learning with a high degree of motivation, often driven by a desire for personal and spiritual transformation. Similar findings were reported by Kadir et al. (2016), whose study in Singapore found that Muslim adult learners developed understanding and spiritual insight through andragogical approaches, supported by learner autonomy, life experience, and strong internal motivation.

b. Program Feedback and Improvement

Both institutions regularly revise their programs based on learner and educator feedback. For example, HCF plans to publish its own textbooks, while MCI is preparing revised materials aiming to train future *Mualaf* educators. This reflects an iterative, learner-centred approach essential for adult education.

7. Future Adaptation and Global Relevance

a. International Adaptability

To remain relevant in the modern world, Islamic education must be rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah while evolving to address contemporary challenges. Kabir (2016) stresses that such curriculum must develop spiritually and intellectually balanced individuals, capable of functioning as vicegerents of Allah in a globalized era. Both institutions believe their curricula are suitable for global implementation. HCF has presented its program to ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) representatives, and MCI aspires to global usage. Their use of online platforms further enhances this possibility. However, adaptation for diverse contexts requires culturally relevant teaching and localized support systems. This necessitates incorporating contextually adjusted resources, a need identified by Siregar, Nor, and Hajrullah (2020) and echoed by the localised teacher strategies at both centres. HCF offers classes in Malay, English, Chinese and other languages, while MCI currently only offers programs in Indonesian.

Table 3 offers a summary of comparative insights using Bereday's model:

Table 3: Comparative Insights Using Bereday's Model

Bereday's Stage	HCF (Malaysia)	MCI (Indonesia)
Description	Structured, multi-level curriculum with *Da'wah* focus	Non-formal, flexible curriculum with faith focus
Interpretation	Developed in response to educational policy gaps	Emerged from online discussions, social needs
Juxtaposition	Stronger in curriculum scope and structure	Stronger in community-based, peer-led flexibility
Comparison	More suitable for formal global adaptation	More responsive to rural, informal community needs

While this study provides valuable insights into the structure and implementation of Islamic education curricula for adult new-Muslims in Malaysia and Indonesia, it is not without limitations. The research focused primarily on two case study institutions, which, while significant, may not fully represent the diversity of *Mualaf* educational programs across both countries. Additionally, the data was collected from curriculum developers and educators, without direct input from the learners themselves. As such, the learner experience and long-term impact of the programs remain areas for further exploration. Future research could include perspectives from *Mualaf* participants to better assess curriculum effectiveness from the learner's point of view. Longitudinal studies could also be conducted to evaluate how participation in these programs influences religious understanding, identity development, and social integration over time. Comparative studies involving institutions in other regions or non-Muslim-majority countries would further enrich the understanding of global best practices in Islamic education for new-Muslims

D. Conclusion

The comparative analysis of Islamic education curricula for adult new-Muslims at Hidayah Centre Foundation (Malaysia) and Mualaf Centre Indonesia reveals both shared foundations and distinct contextual strategies. Both institutions reflect a sincere commitment to spiritual development and community integration of Mualaf. HCF offers a structured, expansive model that is globally scalable, while MCI provides a grassroots, flexible approach tailored to Indonesia's diverse settings. This study is limited to two institutions, and while it offers comparative insight, broader sampling across multiple centres in both countries would enhance generalizability. Additionally, learner interviews would provide direct insights into the lived experience of the curriculum.

By applying adult learning theory and comparative frameworks, this study highlights the need for curricula that are both doctrinally sound and pedagogically responsive, ultimately contributing to the conceptualization of an ideal Islamic education curriculum for adult Mualaf in a global era. Recommendations for future research include incorporating learner perspectives for more holistic evaluation; piloting integrated life skills modules within the core curriculum; exploring digital curriculum delivery effectiveness; and conducting longitudinal studies on Mualaf progression post-program.

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