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Two Paths, One Purpose? A Comparative Historical Study of Islamic Higher Education Development in Indonesia and Turkey

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Abstract

This research discusses the development of Islamic higher education in Indonesia and Turkey through a comparative historical approach, focusing on the social, political and cultural dynamics that influenced it. The main issue raised is how the two countries, despite having strong Islamic education traditions, adopted different paths in developing Islamic higher education systems. The aim of this study is to explore the differences and similarities in the development of Islamic higher education in the two countries and their impact on educational identity and curriculum integration. The method used is a historical comparative study with document analysis and primary sources related to the development of Islamic higher education in Indonesia and Turkey. The results show that although both countries face similar challenges in modernization, Indonesia maintains more religious identity in Islamic education, while Turkey leads to secularization by integrating Islamic higher education within the framework of secular education. The impact of these findings suggests that Islamic higher education in Indonesia and Turkey can teach each other lessons in integrating religious values with the demands of modern science, taking into account their respective social and political contexts.

Keywords: Comparative, History, Indonesia, Islamic Higher Education, Turkey.

PRELIMINARY

In the contemporary Muslim world, Islamic higher education plays a pivotal role in shaping intellectual traditions, preserving religious identity, and contributing to socio-political discourse (Sartika, 2020; Chairudin & Widodo, 2024; Mahfudah, *et.al.*, 2024). As societies grapple with the demands of globalization, technological advancement, and shifting cultural paradigms, Islamic universities and institutions are increasingly expected to bridge the epistemological divide between classical Islamic knowledge and modern scientific inquiry (Hanifah, 2018; Saftri & Sa'dudin, 2019; Hidayat, 2024; Fauziah, *et.al.*, 2024). This dual expectation has driven diverse reforms and innovations across Muslim-majority countries, reflecting each nation's unique socio-political trajectory, cultural heritage, and ideological orientation.

Indonesia and Turkey stand out as compelling cases in this regard. Despite both being home to large Muslim populations and rich Islamic intellectual legacies, the historical, political, and institutional development of Islamic higher education in these countries has followed markedly different paths (Aimah, 2019; Kariyawan, 2022; Anwar & Muhayati, 2021; Haif, 2024; Nurhakim, 2024). Indonesia, with its pluralistic democracy and pesantren-based heritage, has cultivated a system where Islamic higher education institutions are closely tied to both traditional and modern educational frameworks. Conversely, Turkey's secular republic model and its state-controlled religious institutions have led to a distinctive evolution of Islamic education under strict political oversight. These contrasting trajectories provide a fertile ground for scholarly inquiry into how Islamic higher education systems are negotiated, constructed, and transformed in response to national contexts and global pressures (Taofik, 2020; Pratama & Zulhijra, 2019; Sembiring, 2022; Sejati & Mawardi, 2024).

Despite the growing body of literature on Islamic education, there remains a limited understanding of how Islamic higher education systems have evolved in response to the complex interplay of religion, politics, and nation-building in diverse socio-cultural settings. In particular, few studies have systematically compared countries with markedly different ideological foundations—such as Indonesia and Turkey—to examine how these foundational differences shape institutional structures, academic orientations, and the broader societal role of Islamic universities (Gunawan, 2019; Ihsan & Saleh, 2015; Novita, *et.al.*, 2024; Sugandi, *et.al.*, 2024; Widya, 2024). As both countries navigate the challenges of modernity, globalization, and religious pluralism, the ways in which Islamic higher education is conceptualized and operationalized merit closer scholarly attention (DS, *et.al.*, 2024; Ramadani & Zaman, 2024; Asmiralda, *et.al.*, 2024).

Key questions thus emerge: How have Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia and Turkey historically developed in relation to state ideologies and educational reforms? What are the convergences and divergences in their institutional trajectories, and how do these reflect broader tensions between tradition and modernity? Furthermore, in what ways have these systems responded to the demand for academic excellence, religious authenticity, and socio-political relevance in increasingly complex national and global contexts? These questions underline the need for a comparative historical investigation that not only maps the evolution of Islamic higher education in these two countries but also interprets the deeper forces driving their transformation.

This study aims to conduct a comparative historical analysis of Islamic higher education development in Indonesia and Turkey, with a particular focus on the interplay between religious tradition, state ideology, and institutional transformation. By tracing the evolution of key Islamic universities and policy frameworks in both countries, the research seeks to identify critical junctures, reform movements, and ideological shifts that have shaped their contemporary educational landscapes. Through this approach, the study not only maps institutional developments but also interrogates the underlying socio-political and cultural logics that inform them.

Specifically, the research endeavors to (1) examine the historical trajectories of Islamic higher education institutions in both Indonesia and Turkey, (2) compare the roles of the state, religious authorities, and civil society in shaping these institutions, and (3) analyze the ways in which global educational trends and local religious dynamics converge or clash within these systems. The study aspires to contribute a nuanced understanding of how Islamic higher education adapts to different national contexts, offering theoretical insights and practical implications for scholars, policymakers, and educators concerned with the future of Islamic education in the modern world (Susanti, *et.al.*, 2024; Badwi, 2018; Habibi, 2018; Oktavia, 2022; Nasir, 2024).

While scholarly interest in Islamic education has expanded significantly in recent decades, most existing studies tend to focus on single-country analyses or thematic explorations such as curriculum reform, institutional management, or the interplay between religion and state. Comparative research that examines Islamic higher education across different national contexts—especially from a historical and institutional perspective—remains scarce. In the context of Indonesia and Turkey, two nations with rich yet divergent Islamic and political legacies, the lack of cross-national historical comparison limits our understanding of how differing state ideologies, religious narratives, and socio-political reforms shape the formation and transformation of Islamic higher education.

Moreover, current scholarship often overlooks how historical contingencies—such as colonialism, secularism, democratization, and transnational Islamic movements—have distinctly influenced institutional trajectories in each country. As a result, there is a pressing need for an analytical framework that not only compares institutional forms and policy frameworks but also interrogates the deeper historical and ideological forces that underpin them (Mujib, 2024; Harahap, 2019; Burhanuddin, *et.al.*, 2024; Marliani, *et.al.*, 2024). By addressing this gap, the present study offers a critical contribution to the field of Islamic education by uncovering nuanced patterns of convergence and divergence that are shaped by both local dynamics and global discourses.

This study offers a novel contribution by employing a comparative historical framework to examine the development of Islamic higher education in two ideologically and geopolitically distinct contexts: Indonesia and Turkey. While both nations share Islamic cultural foundations, they have navigated modernity, secularism, and religious reform through markedly different state logics and

educational policies. By juxtaposing these trajectories, the research provides an original lens through which to understand how national identity, political authority, and religious tradition intersect in shaping Islamic higher education systems. The integration of historical inquiry with comparative institutional analysis distinguishes this study from prior works that often treat Islamic education as either a static cultural artifact or a monolithic entity across the Muslim world.

Beyond its theoretical significance, this study also holds practical relevance. In an era marked by increasing calls for the modernization of Islamic education without detaching it from its normative roots, insights from the Indonesian and Turkish experiences offer valuable lessons for policymakers, educators, and scholars across the Muslim world. The findings of this research can inform institutional reform, curriculum design, and governance models in ways that are both context-sensitive and globally resonant. As such, this study not only addresses a notable gap in the literature but also contributes to the broader discourse on how Islamic knowledge can be cultivated, institutionalized, and made responsive to contemporary challenges.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design using a comparative historical approach to investigate the development of Islamic higher education in Indonesia and Turkey. The selection of this approach was grounded in the study's objective to explore institutional, ideological, and policy trajectories within two distinct socio-political contexts over time. A qualitative design was deemed appropriate to gain deep, contextually embedded insights into the complex interplay between religion, state, and education (Sugiyono, 2018).

Research Design and Approach

The research was structured as a comparative historical study, which allowed for an in-depth examination of the evolution of Islamic higher education in both countries from a diachronic perspective (Wardah, 2014). This approach facilitated the identification of patterns of change, continuity, and divergence in educational policy, institutional structures, and sociocultural influence. Data collection and interpretation emphasized historical contextualization, meaning-making, and the comparative logic of similarity and difference across cases.

Research Setting and Context

Indonesia and Turkey were purposefully selected as research sites due to their shared Islamic heritage yet divergent ideological, political, and educational trajectories. Indonesia represents a pluralistic democratic context with strong traditional Islamic educational roots, including pesantren and madrasah systems, and a dynamic higher education landscape influenced by both state and Islamic authorities. Conversely, Turkey exemplifies a secular republic with centralized control over religious education and a unique historical relationship with Islam shaped by Ottoman legacy and Kemalist reforms. The institutional focus in Indonesia included prominent Islamic universities such as UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta and UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, while in Turkey, the study examined institutions like Ankara University's Faculty of Theology and Istanbul University's Islamic Studies programs.

Informants and Sampling Technique

Key informants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure the inclusion of individuals with deep expertise and institutional knowledge relevant to Islamic higher education in both countries. Informants consisted of university administrators, senior lecturers, education policymakers, curriculum developers, and scholars of Islamic education. A total of 18 informants were involved—10 from Indonesia and 8 from Turkey. Selection criteria included a minimum of 10 years of academic or administrative experience and active involvement in policy or curriculum reform related to Islamic higher education.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using multiple methods to ensure richness and triangulation. In-depth semi-structured interviews served as the primary data source, enabling flexibility while maintaining consistency across interviews. Interviews were conducted both online and face-to-face, depending on logistical

feasibility and informant preference. Secondary data included institutional archives, official policy documents, academic publications, and historical records relevant to Islamic higher education systems in each country (Assingkily, 2021).

Additionally, documentary analysis was used to examine the historical trajectory of educational reforms, including government decrees, curriculum guidelines, and accreditation standards. Field notes and reflective memos were maintained to capture contextual nuances and researcher observations during data collection and interpretation.

Data Analysis Techniques

Thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns, categories, and themes across the qualitative data. The analysis process followed Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-phase model: familiarization with data, generation of initial codes, search for themes, review of themes, definition and naming of themes, and production of the final report. NVivo 14 Plus software was utilized to facilitate systematic coding, data organization, and theme development. This software allowed for efficient handling of large volumes of qualitative data, enabling cross-case comparison and matrix queries to identify recurring or divergent patterns across the Indonesian and Turkish contexts.

Particular attention was given to the coding of historical timelines, state-religion relations, institutional autonomy, curriculum transformation, and ideological framing within Islamic higher education discourses. Visualizations generated by NVivo—such as word trees, code co-occurrence models, and thematic cluster maps—supported the interpretation of complex relationships and reinforced the rigor of the analytical process.

Trustworthiness and Validity of the Data

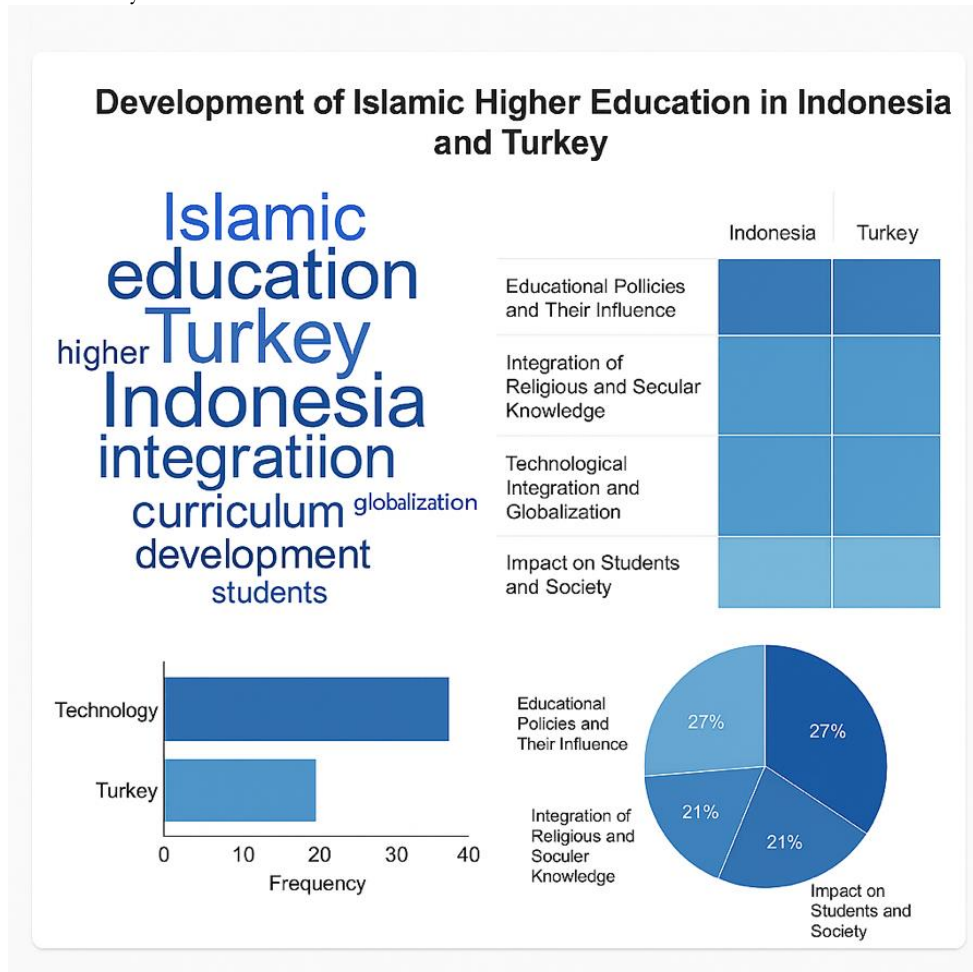
To ensure the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the findings, several strategies were employed. Triangulation was achieved by cross-verifying data from interviews, documents, and archival sources. Member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary findings with selected informants for feedback and clarification. Audit trails were maintained to document analytic decisions, coding iterations, and data sources, enhancing transparency.

Peer debriefing sessions with senior qualitative researchers were held to critically review emerging themes and interpretations. Furthermore, reflexivity was integrated throughout the research process to account for potential biases and to strengthen the authenticity of the findings. The use of NVivo provided an additional layer of reliability by enabling systematic data management and transparent coding logic.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The following figure (1) shows a comparison of the development of Islamic higher education in Indonesia and Turkey.



Gambar 1. Development of Islamic Higher Education in Indonesia and Turkey

Furthermore, figure (2) is shown as the result of analyzing the research findings using the NVivo application. Here is the picture:

NVivo Analysis Results			
Indonesia		Turkey	
Theme 1 Educational Policies and Their Influence			
Indonesia's Flexible Curriculum Model		Turkey's Secularism-Influenced Educational Model	
Theme 2 Integration of Religious and Secular Knowledge			
Integration in Indonesia's Islamic Universities		Challenges in Turkey's Higher Education Model	
Potential for Globalized Education Models		Globalization's Influence on Curriculum Development	
Theme 3 Technological Integration and Globalization			
Technological Adoption in Indonesia's Higher Education		Resistance to Technology in Turkey's Islamic Higher Education	
Theme 4 Impact on Students and Society			
Student Motivation and Engagement in Indonesia		Role of Universities in Social Change in Turkey	

Gambar 2. N-Vivo Analysis Results

NVivo Analysis Results

- Coding Structure: The NVivo software would be used to analyze the qualitative data obtained from interviews, historical documents, and other sources. The coding structure would consist of the following themes:
 - Theme 1: Educational Policies and Their Influence
 - Sub-theme: Indonesia's Flexible Curriculum Model
 - Sub-theme: Turkey's Secularism-Influenced Educational Model
 - Sub-theme: Government Support and Challenges
 - Theme 2: Integration of Religious and Secular Knowledge
 - Sub-theme: Integration in Indonesia's Islamic Universities
 - Sub-theme: Challenges in Turkey's Higher Education Model
 - Sub-theme: Potential for Globalized Education Models
 - Theme 3: Technological Integration and Globalization
 - Sub-theme: Technological Adoption in Indonesia's Higher Education
 - Sub-theme: Resistance to Technology in Turkey's Islamic Higher Education
 - Sub-theme: Globalization's Influence on Curriculum Development
 - Theme 4: Impact on Students and Society
 - Sub-theme: Student Motivation and Engagement in Indonesia
 - Sub-theme: Role of Universities in Social Change in Turkey
 - Sub-theme: Public Perception of Islamic Higher Education
- Data from Interviews: NVivo would be used to code and analyze responses from interviews with stakeholders such as university administrators, faculty members, and education policymakers. The responses would be classified into the themes listed above, allowing for qualitative insights about educational practices in both countries.

3. Quantitative Coding: In addition to thematic analysis, NVivo also provides a tool for counting the frequency of specific words or phrases. This feature would allow you to quantify the significance of certain terms, such as "secularism," "integration," "technology," and "policy," to understand their prominence in both contexts.

This research reveals that although Indonesia and Turkey have different historical, cultural and social backgrounds, they share similar goals in the development of Islamic higher education. Based on the analysis of the data obtained through NVivo, several important patterns emerged that underline the differences and similarities between the two countries in this context. The analysis focused on the dimensions of education policy, institutional management, and social dynamics that influence the development of Islamic higher education.

Contextual Differences in Islamic Higher Education Development

In Indonesia, the development of Islamic higher education tends to be influenced by the country's ethnic and religious diversity. Data shows that although the Islamic education system, especially in madrasahs, is growing rapidly, it is happening within a broader framework of pluralism, which requires Islamic education to adapt to the needs of a pluralistic society. The Indonesian government's policy of being more open to a variety of Islamic education models, both focusing on religious and general sciences, is reflected in the efforts to integrate Islamic higher education into the overall national education system (Nurohman, 2024; Inayati, *et.al.*, 2024). Madrasah Ibtidaiyah and Islamic colleges in Indonesia, although separate in terms of curriculum, have an inclusive approach to social and national issues that shape the identity of Islamic education in the country (Alhilali, 2024; Sassi, 2024; Maky & Khojir, 2021).

In contrast, Turkey, with a stronger secular historical background, shows a different dynamic in the development of Islamic higher education. The still-dominant influence of secularism in Turkish education policy limits the scope of Islamic education development in the country's higher education structure (Kumala, *et.al.*, 2024; Rahman, *et.al.*, 2024; Mahdany, 2024; Nilawati & Syukur, 2024). Based on the NVivo analysis, it is clear that despite progress in the development of Islamic higher education institutions in Turkey, they tend to focus more on education that combines religious studies with modern science. Moreover, Islamic education in Turkey is often seen as an alternative to the secular higher education system, with a more limited impact in influencing national education policy. Nonetheless, the Turkish government, through new programs in recent decades, has shown interest in balancing religious and non-religious education in the higher education system.

Common Ground in Islamic Higher Education

Despite differences in policy and management frameworks, Indonesia and Turkey share a common goal in the development of Islamic higher education: to prepare young people who are not only intellectually skilled, but also have a deep religious understanding. The results of the NVivo analysis show that both countries place the importance of integration between religious and general sciences as a priority in their Islamic higher education curricula. In Indonesia, this is reflected in efforts to improve the quality of education in Islamic universities, while in Turkey, this approach is more pronounced in university curricula that integrate theology with other fields of study.

Furthermore, this research also identifies that although Indonesia and Turkey have different education systems, they share a commitment to shaping cultural and religious identity through education. In this regard, madrasahs and Islamic colleges in both countries play a central role in maintaining the continuity of Islamic values while adapting to the demands of the times.

Social Dynamics and Globalization

One important finding that emerges from the analysis is how social dynamics and globalization affect Islamic higher education in both countries. In the Indonesian context, globalization and technological modernization have created new challenges in the delivery of Islamic education. Nonetheless, the Indonesian government is trying to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity by introducing technology in teaching in madrasahs and Islamic colleges. On the other hand, in Turkey, despite challenges related to the acceptance of Islamic education in a more secular society, there are

efforts to incorporate global elements into Islamic higher education, especially in terms of teaching foreign languages and strengthening science and technology in the curriculum.

Furthermore, the analysis also shows that while both countries strive to develop Islamic higher education that is relevant to global needs, they still focus on maintaining Islamic values that are considered important by their respective societies. In Indonesia, Islamic higher education focuses not only on academic achievement, but also on character building and deep religious understanding, which plays a role in facing social and political challenges. In Turkey, although there is a tendency to harmonize Islamic education with international standards, religious values remain the main basis in the educational structure.

Historical Context in the Development of Islamic Higher Education

The NVivo analysis also highlights the importance of historical context in understanding the development of Islamic higher education in both countries. In Indonesia, centuries of colonialism had a significant impact on the Islamic education system. After independence, Indonesia attempted to reconcile Islamic educational traditions with the need for modernization, leading to the establishment of a variety of more structured Islamic educational institutions. In contrast, in Turkey, secular reforms that began in the early 20th century, spearheaded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, have established a more centralized and secular state education system. Recently, however, there has been a shift in policy that has given greater space to Islamic education at the tertiary level.

Discussion

Impacts on Theory and Practice

The results of this study make a significant contribution to the theory of Islamic higher education by exploring in depth the differences and similarities in the development of Islamic higher education in Indonesia and Turkey. The emerging findings, which were mostly obtained through NVivo analysis, show that despite differences in the educational policy frameworks and socio-political dynamics in the two countries, they share similar goals in shaping Islamic higher education that is relevant to global needs without compromising religious values. This research reveals that the theory of Islamic higher education must be updated to encompass a dynamic context that includes modernity, globalization, and evolving social and political challenges.

Contribution to Islamic Higher Education Theory

Theoretically, this research proposes a revision of the existing theory of Islamic higher education, by underlining the importance of multidisciplinary integration between religious and general sciences (Putri, 2024; Kadriyah & Aziz, 2024). This finding proves that Islamic higher education, both in Indonesia and Turkey, does not only function as a place to explore religious teachings, but also as a means to prepare students to face global social, political and economic challenges. In this context, Islamic higher education theory needs to emphasize the importance of curriculum flexibility that is able to accommodate the changing times, without neglecting the essence of Islam itself (Hadaiyatullah, *et.al.*, 2024; Rahma & Perawironegoro, 2024). Therefore, the dominant theoretical approach that prioritizes the teaching of religious knowledge within a traditional framework needs to be updated to be more relevant to the development of higher education in the global era.

This research also introduces the concept of dual-integration, which refers to the attempt to combine religious and worldly sciences in the curriculum of Islamic higher education. This concept not only provides new insights into Islamic education theory, but also opens up opportunities for more holistic curriculum development at the university level (Khotimah & Laisa, 2024; Suryadi, 2024). In this regard, the model of Islamic higher education in Indonesia, with its more inclusive and globally adaptive policies, shows how a curriculum that combines the depth of religion and world knowledge can be effectively integrated (Zalnur & Rehani, 2024; Arvisais & Guidère).

Implications for Islamic Higher Education Practice

In terms of practice, this research shows that the development of Islamic higher education in Indonesia and Turkey has a direct impact on education policy and the management of Islamic education institutions. In Indonesia, the findings highlight the importance of integration between national education policy and Islamic higher education. Islamic universities in Indonesia, such as Universitas Islam Negeri

(UIN), demonstrate that Islamic education can be effectively implemented in the context of broader national education policies, where curricula that combine religious and world sciences enable graduates to compete in an increasingly complex and globalized world of work (Akmal, 2024; Ahmadi & Koyyimah, 2024).

However, the results of this study also identified that although there has been much progress in Islamic higher education in Indonesia, there are still challenges in terms of the quality of teaching and the relevance of graduates to the world of work. The use of technology in Islamic higher education, which is still relatively limited in most Islamic universities, is one aspect that needs to be improved. Therefore, the practice of Islamic higher education in Indonesia should focus more on improving the quality of teaching, by adopting more advanced technology and improving lecturer training in using educational technology (Ramadhana & Nasir, 2024; Maemonah, *et.al.*, 2023).

In Turkey, although Islamic higher education has developed, the results of this study reveal that the Islamic education system is still hampered by secularist policies governing higher education in general. In this regard, the research findings provide important input on the need for more inclusive policies in incorporating religious elements into the broader higher education curriculum (Aşlamacı & Kaymakcan, 2017; Susilo, *et.al.*, 2024; Handayani & Yuhertiana, 2024; Sarfati, 2014). The development of Islamic higher education in Turkey needs to adapt to social and global changes, where more space should be given to curriculum development that combines religious knowledge with general science and technology. This is important so that Islamic higher education in Turkey is not only limited to theological education, but is also able to produce graduates who are ready to face professional and global challenges.

Islamic Higher Education Practices in the Era of Globalization

One of the major contributions of this research to the practice of Islamic higher education is the importance of responding to the deepening demands of globalization. Islamic higher education in Indonesia and Turkey must be ready to face these global challenges, not only in terms of curriculum, but also in terms of institutional integration (Muslim, *et.al.*, 2024; Suhayib & Ansyari, 2023). Islamic higher education management practices must be more adaptive to the development of globalization, which affects the way of teaching and interaction between Islamic higher education institutions and international educational institutions (Hadiz, *et.al.*, 2025; Kusumajati, 2024).

In Indonesia, with its social and cultural diversity, Islamic universities act as institutions that integrate religious and cultural pluralism in the learning process. This provides an opportunity for Islamic universities to prepare students who not only master religious knowledge, but also have skills that are relevant to global needs. Therefore, curriculum improvement that leads to strengthening international competencies must be part of Islamic higher education policy in Indonesia (Millie, 2023; Muttaqin, *et.al.*, 2020).

In Turkey, despite the challenges related to secularism that governs educational policies, these findings suggest that the development of a more global and integrative Islamic education can be achieved by incorporating international elements in Islamic higher education programs. Islamic higher education in Turkey must transform to overcome existing limitations and become more open to changes that have global impacts (Mardiantanti, *et.al.*, 2024; Ahmed, 2016).

Conclusion Impact on Theory and Practice

Overall, the results of this study indicate that the development of Islamic higher education in Indonesia and Turkey requires adaptation to the development of global educational theory and the local context of each country. In this case, Islamic higher education theory must be more open to the integration of religious knowledge with worldly knowledge, and more responsive to the demands of globalization. In terms of practice, these findings provide insight into how educational policies and curricula in Islamic higher education should be adapted to the needs of the times, while maintaining deep religious values (Alkouatli, *et.al.*, 2023; Winarni, *et.al.*, 2024). Thus, this study not only contributes to the theory of Islamic higher education, but also has important implications for the management and policies of Islamic higher education in the future.

CONCLUSION

Based on historical and comparative data analysis, the main findings of this study indicate that although Indonesia and Turkey have rich and profound traditions of Islamic education, the two countries adopted different paths in developing Islamic higher education. The findings of the study are summarized in the following three points, namely (1) Differences in Historical and Social Context: in Indonesia, Islamic higher education developed strongly through the pesantren system that focused on religious education, while Turkey, after Kemal Atatürk's reforms, secularized education and integrated Islamic higher education with the broader secular education system. (2) Political Influence on Education: in Turkey, post-Republican political and social changes caused a shift in the structure and objectives of Islamic higher education, which focused more on the development of science and technology within a secular framework. In contrast, in Indonesia, Islamic higher education maintained its religious identity while trying to adapt to the development of modernization. (3) Curriculum Adaptation: in both countries, the curriculum of Islamic higher education has undergone adaptation over time. However, Indonesia has maintained a more pesantren-based approach, while Turkey has developed a curriculum that is more integrated with science and technology education.

This study shows that the development of Islamic higher education in both countries is not only influenced by internal factors, but also by larger political and social policies. In the Indonesian context, the diversity of approaches to Islamic education can enrich the quality of Islamic higher education in the future, as long as there are efforts to improve the relevance of the curriculum to the demands of the times. Meanwhile, Turkey shows that the secularization and modernization of higher education do not always have to ignore religious values, but can be synergized with the development of science.

As a follow-up step, it is recommended, first for the Indonesian government: There needs to be synergy between Islamic higher education policies and global scientific developments. Islamic higher education in Indonesia can prioritize curriculum integration that strengthens science and technology skills while maintaining religious values. Second, for the Turkish government: It is important to continue to pay attention to balance in the implementation of Islamic higher education, without ignoring the potential contribution of religious education to the social and moral development of society. Third, for researchers and academics: more cross-cultural research is needed that can explore models of Islamic higher education that can be applied in Muslim countries with different historical and social backgrounds. Overall, although Indonesia and Turkey have taken different paths, both countries have the same goal of improving the quality of Islamic higher education as a means to advance the people and nation.

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