

Need Analysis in Aspect of *Akhlak* for Indigenous *Muallaf* Development Module

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the need for the content of *akhlak* (Muslim ethic) constructs in developing the indigenous conversion module. This study uses a quantitative design. Research data was collected using a questionnaire instrument. A total of 173 respondents, indigenous *muallaf* educators (PMOA) under the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), were selected using a simple random sampling method. The data were descriptively analyzed using frequency, percentage, and mean score interpretations. The study found that the average value for *akhlak* construct requirements at a high level is 4.57 (mean = 3.67–5.00). The items in the construct of *akhlaks* accepted for the development of the indigenous *muallaf* module are the topics of doing good to parents and family members, doing good to neighbours and friends, halal and haram, halal sustenance, patience and gratitude, and *aurat* (Muslims dress code). The study's implications show that the module requires a systematic arrangement by considering the attraction factors that help explain *akhlak* aspects and increase the interest and earnestness of the indigenous *muallaf* to learn and appreciate Islamic teachings in life.

Keywords: Need Analysis, *Akhlak*, Indigenous, *Muallaf*, Module

Introduction

The indigenous community is a small entity that forms the plural society population in Malaysia. Sources from the Orang Asli Development Department in 2018 recorded that the total population of Orang Asli was 178,197 people, and 35,975 are Muslims (JAKOA 2018). The number of indigenous people who are Muslims is increasing every year. It needs to require more practical guidance in understanding Islam. Islamic teaching materials that are more systematic and practical should be emphasized so that the indigenous *muallafs* can better understand Islam. According to Ramle (2015), the quality of knowledge and appreciation of Islamic teachings among the indigenous *muallaf* community is at a minimum level, either in the context of faith or *sharia*. This aspect includes their ability to fulfil their obligations towards

the principles of Islamic teachings such as prayer, fasting, *aqiqah*, and sacrifice (*qurban*). The act of *qurban* consists of slaughtering an animal as a sacrifice to mark the occasion in remembrance of Prophet Ibrahim's sacrifice for Allah SWT.

This situation requires maximum continuous efforts from the educator' to improve the commitment of the indigenous *muallaf* community to the teachings of Islam. Various agencies that have the task of preaching to the indigenous, such as the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), the State Islamic Religious Council (MAIN), the State Islamic Religious Department (JAIN), and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), held various programs through *fardhu ain* classes (religious class), Islamic greatness programs, welfare assistance as well as development projects have contributed to the impact in improving the religious quality of life of the indigenous Muslims (Abdul Ghaffar, 2014).

However, the education issue after the indigenous people's conversion to Islam often arises. Among them is not being able to understand the actual teachings of Islam; the minimal knowledge about Islamic teachings causes them to feel left out even after embracing Islam. As a result, they consider that Islam is only an official "label" of religious status in the context of relations with outside society (Abdullah, 2015). The diversity of teaching materials causes the indigenous *muallaf* to be confused and uninterested in learning. Indigenous *muallaf* also have their own age and life exposure. The teaching materials are still less related to the way of life in the different demographic areas of the settlement. Most teaching materials still depend on the counsellors, who differ from state to state. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the content requirements in the *akhlak* (ethics) module for constructing the indigenous *muallaf* module in Malaysia.

Literature Review

The indigenous community is a minority race, forming a pluralistic society in this country. These people are the first to inhabit the Malay Peninsula. According to Iskandar Carey, the term indigenous (Orang Asli) refers to 'Orang' meaning 'People,' and 'Asli' comes from the Arabic 'Asali,' which means 'original,' 'wellborn' or 'aristocratic' (Abdul Ghafar, 2014). Most of these indigenous people live in remote areas and still practice a traditional way of life influenced by their ancestors' environment and ancient practices (Hood Salleh, 2004). There are three main groups in the indigenous community in peninsular Malaysia, namely Negrito, Senoi, and Proto-Malay. The division groups have been recognized.

In this context, the study aims to evaluate essential *akhlak* constructs for developing the indigenous *muallaf* module. A quantitative design was used in this investigation. A questionnaire tool was used to gather research data. A straightforward random sample technique was used to choose 173 respondents, educators who are indigenous *muallaf* under the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM). The data were descriptively examined using frequency, percentage, and mean score interpretation. According to the study, a high-level *akhlak* construct requirement's mean value is 4.57 (range: 3.67–5.00). The issues of treating parents and family members well, treating neighbors kindly, and being a good neighbour are among the things in the construct of *akhlak* that have been accepted for the construction of the native conversion module by researchers and the JHEOA Indigenous Affairs Department (Ismail, 1995). According to Iskandar Carey (1961), there is a difference between the indigenous tribes and other tribes—this difference is in terms of lifestyle, activities, conversational language and organization. However, there is also a certain amount of similarity in these characteristics; there are half-and-half tribes in one particular group.

Table 1

Distribution of Indigenous (Orang Asli) Population in Peninsular Malaysia

States	Indigenous Populations
Pahang	67,506
Perak	53,229
Selangor	17,587
Kelantan	13,457
Johor	13,139
Negeri Sembilan	10,531
Melaka	1,515
Terengganu	893
Kedah	270
Total	178,197

Source: JHEOA Indigenous Affairs Department, 2018

Based on Table 1, there are 178,197 indigenous populations in Malaysia. The states of Pahang and Perak have the highest number of 67,506 and 53,229 people. At the same time, the states of Selangor, Kelantan, Johor and Negeri Sembilan have a population of indigenous that exceeds ten thousand and above. According to Arshad et al (2017), said the indigenous community is divided into three main groups and each group is represented by six tribes and spread across the Malaysian peninsula, especially in forested areas, mountains, islands, river basins and river banks (Awang & Edo, 2003). The three groups of indigenous people, according to the tribe, are Senoi, Proto Malay and Negrito. The number of tribes by state is as in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Distribution of the Indigenous Community by Race Group

States	Indigenous Race Groups			Total
	Senoi	Proto-Malay	Negrito	
Pahang	29,439	37,140	925	67,504
Perak	50,281	605	2,413	53,299
Selangor	5,073	12,512	3	17,588
Kelantan	12,047	29	1,381	13,457
Johor	55	13,084	1	13,140
Negeri Sembilan	96	10,435	0	10,531
Melaka	28	1,486	1	1,515
Terengganu	818	41	34	893
Kedah	19	0	251	270
Total	97,856	75,332	5,009	178,197

Source: JHEOA Indigenous Affairs Department, 2018

Table 2 shows the distribution of indigenous people according to the population, which is 93,003 men and 85,194 people. The total number of indigenous people is 178,197 people. In comparison, the distribution according to the three primary races can be seen as the Senoi race is the largest race with a total of 97,856 people. Most of the Senoi live in the Perak,

Pahang and Kelantan states. The second highest number of indigenous people is Malay-Proto, with 75,332 people. Most Proto-Malays live in Pahang, Johor, Selangor and Negeri Sembilan. While the Negrito population is 5,009 people. Most Negritos are in Perak, Kelantan, Pahang and Kedah.

For the religion and belief aspect, the indigenous community adheres to Islam, Christianity, Animism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Bahai and others. Table 3 shows the number of Muslim indigenous peoples, 35,975 in 2018. The state of Perak has the highest number of Muslim indigenous peoples at 12,409. In comparison, the state of Pahang has 7,483 native Muslims. There are 5,358 indigenous Muslims in Johor, 4,789 in Kelantan, 3,268 in Selangor, 1,294 in Negeri Sembilan, 893 in Terengganu, 274 in Melaka and 207 in Kedah. The total number of indigenous people who have embraced Islam is 35,975, or 20 per cent of the indigenous people in peninsular Malaysia.

Table 3

The population of Muslim Indigenous Peoples

Num.	States	Total
1	Johor	5,358
2	Kedah	207
3	Kelantan	4,789
4	Melaka	274
5	Negeri Sembilan	1,294
6	Pahang	7,483
7	Perak	12,409
8	Selangor	3,268
9	Terengganu	893
Total		35,975

Source: JHEOA Indigenous Affairs Department, 2018

In the context of this study, the number of indigenous *muallaf* is continuously increasing every year. Indigenous *muallaf* are newly converted to Islam. Wahbah al-Zuhaily (1997) explains that *muallaf* is a group that has embraced Islam but is still lacking in understanding and appreciation of Islam. Accordingly, implementing education for indigenous *muallaf* is very important in ensuring the acceptance of a practical understanding of Islam that suits their situation. According to Azaruddin Awang et al., religious education and guidance are essential to moving from formal conversion to practical conversion (Abu Bakar et al., 2018).

Islam does not focus on ritual or purely spiritual matters such as prayer, fasting, zakat, or worship in mosques. But in every aspect of human life, such as the economy, politics and society (Muhamat @ Kawangit, 2013). All *akhlak* values outlined by Islam are sole to protect and preserve human life. *Akhlak* values are not limited to Muslims only and can even be used by non-Muslims because, as has been explained that Islam brings blessings to all humankind (Suhid, 2009).

Al-Ghazali is one of the figures in Islamic history who talks a lot about *akhlak* and refers to two words, *al-khuluq* and *al-khalq*. *Al-Khalq* refers to the external image of the human self, while the word *al-khuluq* refers to the inner image of the human being. The aspect of *al-khalq* can only be seen through human eyes, while *al-khuluq* is referred to as the aspect of the soul or *al-nafs*. In the meantime, al-Ghazali stated that humans should take care of *al-khalq*

through the seven senses: hands, feet, tongue, eyes, ears, genitals and stomach. While from the inner point of view, people are advised to educate the heart and fight against lust. Ethics involves two components covering human actions through outward and inward attitudes. Good attitudes are called '*al-mahmudah*', such as being forgiving, patient, able to control anger, sincere and others (Stapa, 2001).

In contrast, bad attitudes are called '*al-mazmumah*', such as envy, anger, impatience, swearing, and others will result in adverse effects in life. *Akhlak* appears efficiently and quickly, without thinking and making any judgments. If an act or behaviour appears good from the point of view of reason and *shari'ah*, then that situation is termed a good attitude, but on the contrary, it is called a lousy attitude (Stapa, 2001). According to Shamsuddin (1989), *akhlaks* include those aspects born naturally that have been possessed by a person and integrated into a person through training and education. It becomes a habit and habit in an individual. Nidzam (2011) explains that *akhlak* is a trait possessed by a person who has gone through various training in life and has become a habit and becomes a habit. It reflects a person's inner nature that emerges through subjective behaviour that needs to be explained. Islam is not just in the name or ID card but in actions and behaviour, and fear Allah SWT because Allah always sees the attitude as a Muslim.

The method of teaching and learning to indigenous *muallaf* using modules can emphasize *akhlak* elements so that they can change attitudes, behaviour and thinking. Modules are units or parts built according to specific methods in teaching and learning for the purposes set. The division of units or parts provides a superficial understanding to someone in the teaching and learning process. According to Noah and Ahmad (2019), modules are tools, resources and materials that provide learning facilities for students to achieve a goal and master the objectives set.

According to Greager and Murray (1985), a module is a complete and independent teaching unit with the main focus on achieving the objectives that have been set. Russell (1974) has stated that a module is a teaching package related to a unit of subject concept. Module activity is an individual teaching effort and allows a student to master one subject content unit before mastering the other content (Noah & Ahmad, 2019).

Husen and Postlethwaite (1985) have stated that such modules represent a set of complete teaching packages covering a unit of concepts or subjects. Kamil Kamdi (1990), on the other hand, defined a module as a teaching and learning package or self-study package that is complete and contains components of teaching and learning such as objectives, materials and learning activities, assessment activities as well as systematic instructions and procedures so that students can follow the steps for a master learning unit and make learning can be carried out individually (Noah & Ahmad, 2019).

Therefore, the indigenous *muallaf* module was developed by analyzing the needs in all topics of understanding Islam, including *akhlaks*. It involves several processes of determining and identifying the problem to be solved. Once a problem can be identified, the analysis will be carried out to find the cause or factor related to or caused the problem. This process involves various aspects, including analysis of module users, analysis of the learning environment, and identifying teaching goals.

Research Methodology

Need an analysis of *akhlak* constructs in the construction of the indigenous *muallaf* module using a survey method with a quantitative design. The study respondents were indigenous

muallaf educators under the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM). The research data was collected using a questionnaire in three zones, as shown in Table 4. The questionnaire instrument was built to include demographic aspects and *akhlak* constructs. A pilot study was conducted to see the instrument's reliability before conducting the actual study. The internal consistency of the pilot questionnaire was tested using the Cronbach alpha test. The test results show that the Cronbach alpha value of the *akhlak* construct is 0.965. In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient value was classified based on the reliability index classification by (Kirk, 1984; Babbie, 1992). In general, many suggest that an alpha coefficient value that exceeds >0.8 usually indicates a high level of reliability and is acceptable for an instrument (Chua, 2006). The questionnaire was distributed to all zones, and 173 respondents answered and returned to the researcher, as shown in Table 4. This amount is sufficient based on Krejcie and Morgan's sample table.

Table 4
Respondents by Zone

Zone States	Respondent	Per cent
Zone 1 (Johor, Melaka and Negeri Sembilan)	50	28.9
Zone 2 (Selangor, Perak and Kedah)	58	33.5
Zone 3 (Pahang, Kelantan and Terengganu)	65	37.6
Total	173	100

The data were analyzed descriptively using frequency, percentage and mean score interpretation. Interpretation of the mean score shows the mean average of the module's content requirements in the *akhlak* aspect. The interpretation level of the average mean score for values 1.00 to 2.33 is low, 2.34 to 3.66 is medium, and 3.67 to 5.00 is high. The mean value can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5
Interpretation of Average Score Mean

Mean score	Interpretation
1.00 to 2.33	Low
2.34 to 3.66	Moderate
3.67 to 5.00	High

Results of the Study and Discussion

(a) Demographics of Respondents

The study found that 131 respondents (75.7 per cent) were male, and 42 (24.3 per cent) were female. Table 6 shows that most male respondents have many positions as *muallaf* educators in the field and inland areas of the indigenous community. However, it must be added to balance education and welfare, per Jamilah and Engku Ahmad Zaki's study (2017). Similarly to the findings of Asmadi and Ramlan's (2020) study, the need for energy resources is very significant in dealing with issues in teaching and learning for indigenous *muallaf*.

In terms of the age of the respondents, a total of 72 people (41.4 per cent) were aged between 36 to 45 years, 67 people (38.7 per cent) respondents aged between 26 to 35 years, 19 respondents (11 per cent) aged 46 to 55 years, 11 people respondents (6.4 per cent) aged 18 to 25 years and four respondents (2.3 per cent) aged 56 years and above. The age group of

26 to 45 years is the highest respondent. While from the point of view of educational background, 74 respondents (42.8 per cent) have a certificate at the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM), 49 respondents (28.3 per cent) at the Malaysian Higher Certificate of Religion (STAM), 28 respondents (16.2 per cent) at the bachelor's degree, 15 respondents (8.7 per cent) at Sijil Tinggi Pendidikan Malaysia (STPM), five respondents (2.9 per cent) at level IV thanawi, and two respondents (1.2 per cent) from boarding schools. The respondents with educational levels at the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) and the Malaysian Higher Religious Certificate (STAM) level are the highest.

In terms of the state work placement, a total of 38 respondents (22 per cent) were assigned to indigenous villages in the states of Kelantan and Terengganu, 37 respondents (21.4 per cent) in the states of Perak and Kedah, 27 respondents (15.6 per cent) in the states of Pahang, 21 respondents (12.1 per cent) in the states of Selangor and Negeri Sembilan, 19 respondents (11 per cent) in the state of Johor, ten respondents (5.8 per cent) in the state of Melaka. While the working period as an Orang Asli Community Mobilizer (PMOA), 135 respondents (78 per cent) have been on worked for more than five years, 22 respondents (12.7 per cent) have a work period of 3 to 4 years, nine respondents (5.2 per cent) have tenure of 1 to 2 years, and seven respondents (4 per cent) have a tenure of less than a year.

This study's findings show that 149 respondents (86.1 per cent) have attended courses or workshops related to teaching and learning. In comparison, 24 respondents (13.9 per cent) have not followed the course. The Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), and the State Islamic Religious Department (JAIN), always provide training courses for *muallaf* educators (PMOA) respondents in the teaching and learning of the Muslim Indigenous community. It is to improve staff competence in implementing education and welfare services in indigenous villages throughout Malaysia.

Table 6

Demographics of Respondents

Num.	Item		Frequencies	Per cent
A1	Gender	Male	131	75.7
		Female	42	24.3
		Total	173	100
A3	Age	18-25 years old	11	6.4
		26-35 years old	67	38.7
		36-45 years old	72	41.6
		46-55 years old	19	11
		56 years old and above	4	2.3
		Total	173	100
A4	Educational Background	Bachelor	28	16.2
		STPM	15	8.7
		STAM	49	28.3
		4 Thanawi	5	2.9
		SPM	74	42.8
		<i>Pondok & Madrasah</i>	2	1.2
		Total	173	100
A5	Work Placement	State of Johor	19	11
		State Melaka	10	5.8
		State of Negeri Sembilan	21	12.1
		State of Selangor	21	12.1
		State of Perak & Kedah	37	21.4
		State of Pahang	27	15.6
		State of Kelantan & Terengganu	38	22
		Total	173	100
		A6	Period Work as <i>Muallaf</i> Educator (PMOA)	Less than one year
1-2 years	9			5.2
3-4 years	22			12.7
Five years and above	135			78
Total	173			100
A7	Participation in previous Teaching and Learning Courses	Always	149	86.1
		Never	24	13.9
		Total	173	100

(b) Module Content Requirements in *Akhlak* Aspects

Table 7 shows the average mean of module content requirements in *akhlaks* at a high level of 4.57. Item B1 shows that 107 respondents (61.8 per cent) stated that it was essential, and 66 respondents, equal 38.2 per cent, stated that explaining the topic of doing good to parents was necessary. Item B2 found that 103 respondents (59.5 per cent) stated that it was essential, and 70 respondents, equal to 40.5 per cent, stated that it was necessary to explain the topic of doing good to family members. Next, item B3 shows 98 respondents (56.6 per cent) stated that it is essential, and 74 respondents (42.8 per cent) stated that it is necessary. One person, equal to 0.6 per cent, chose not sure about explaining the topic of doing good to neighbours and friends. Item B4 found that 108 respondents (62.4 per cent) stated that it was essential, and 65 respondents, equal 37.6 per cent, stated that it was necessary to explain the topic of halal and haram. Item B5 shows that 97 respondents (56.1 per cent) stated that it was essential, and 76 respondents, equal 43.9 per cent, stated that it was necessary to explain the topic of child/family education. Next, item B6 found that 92 respondents (53.2 per cent) stated it was essential, and 80 respondents (46.2 per cent) stated it was necessary. One respondent, equal to 0.6 per cent, stated that it was less necessary to explain the topic of trying to earn a halal livelihood. Item B7 found that a total of 87 respondents (50.3 per cent) stated that it was essential, 83 respondents (48 per cent) stated that it was necessary, and one respondent (0.6 per cent) stated that they were not sure. Two respondents (1.2 per cent) stated that explaining the topic of patience and gratitude was less necessary. Finally, item B8 shows that 106 respondents (61.3 per cent) stated that it was essential, and 67 respondents, equal 38.7 per cent, stated that explaining the topic of *aurat* was necessary.

Table 7

Content Requirements in Akhlak Aspects

Num.	Item	Not sure	Necessary	Very necessary	Mean
B1	This module will contain topics about being kind to parents		66 (38.2%)	107 (61.8%)	4.62
B2	This module will contain topics about doing good to family members		70 (40.5%)	103 (59.5%)	4.60
B3	This module will contain topics about doing good to neighbours and friends	1 (0.6%)	74 (42.8%)	98 (56.6%)	4.56
B4	This module will contain topics on <i>halal</i> and haram		65 (37.6%)	108 (62.4%)	4.62
B5	This module will contain topics on child or family education		76 (43.9%)	97 (56.1%)	4.56
B6	This module will contain topics about trying to earn <i>halal</i> sustenance		80 (46.2%)	92 (53.2%)	4.52
B7	This module will contain topics on patience and gratitude	1 (0.6%)	83 (48%)	87 (50.3%)	4.47
B8	This module will contain topics about <i>aurat</i> (Muslim dress code)		67 (38.7%)	106 (61.3%)	4.61

Average mean = 4.57

Based on Table 6, showing the need for *akhlak* constructs is an essential topic in learning indigenous *muallaf*. The findings of this need analysis show that the topics of doing good to parents, doing good to family members, doing good to neighbours and friends, *halal* and haram, *halal* sustenance, patience and gratitude, and finally about *aurat* are essential in the module teaching and learning of indigenous *muallaf*. This point is reinforced by the study results for each topic showing that the average mean score's interpretation level is 4.57 (high).

The aspect of *akhlak* needs to be emphasized in teaching and learning to indigenous *muallaf*. *Akhlak* education should be done theoretically and practically (Abd Hadi, 2020). Zulkefli and Abdul Ghafar (2020) stated that the selection of topics and explanations that are

easy to understand are the basic skills of educators to convey the understanding of Islam to the community of indigenous *muallaf*. In the study of Othman et al (2019) found that the level of awareness of indigenous *muallaf* regarding halal aspects is still at a minimal level. The approach through education is the best platform to raise such awareness. It requires continuous preaching efforts, especially in the early stages of childhood.

This *akhlak* education is essential in building an Islamic identity for the indigenous *muallaf* community. Islam is comprehensive; it is not just a matter of belief or ritual worship (Muhamat @ Kawangit, 2013). Other aspects are also emphasized in Islam. Therefore, the *akhlak* values outlined by Islam are to preserve human life towards a more harmonious one. According to Asmawati Suhid (2009), these Islamic *akhlak* values are a blessing to all people because they are not limited to Muslims only and can even be applied by non-Muslims.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, it can be stated that *akhlaks* are an essential aspect of constructing the teaching and learning module for indigenous *muallafs*. The finding of this study shows that the average mean for analyzing module content requirements regarding *akhlak* at a high level is 4.57. *Akhlak* is vital for the indigenous *muallaf* to improve the quality of their Islamic life. Some indigenous people embrace Islam but still lack an understanding of Islamic values in their lives. At the same time, the indigenous community is still behind compared to other communities in Malaysia. It is a challenge for educators of indigenous *muallaf* to convey an understanding of Islam. Therefore, the needs of the indigenous translator module are developed for effective teaching and learning, especially in the aspect of *akhlak*. Modules can help *muallaf* educators understand the priority of content in moral aspects during the teaching and learning process.

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