



Nahdlatul Fikr

International Journal of Islamic Studies, Education, and Humanities

ISSN (Online) 3109-5143

Volume 2, Number 1, (2025): December Edition

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20075565>

Strengthening Islamic Acculturation through Yoruba Islam and *Ebeg* Performance Culture in Nigeria and Indonesia

Adams Ogirima Onivehu*

University of Lagos, Akoka, Nigeria

Dian Permana

Institut Miftahul Huda Al Azhar Kota Banjar, Indonesia
and Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Al Ghazali, Cilacap, Banyumas, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: adamsonivehu@gmail.com

Article History:

Submitted: 12 September 2025 | Revised: 10 December 2025 | Accepted: 25 December 2025 | Published: 31 December 2025

Citation format (APA Style):

Onivehu, A. O., & Permana, D. (2025). *Strengthening Islamic Acculturation through Yoruba Islam and Ebeg Performance Culture in Nigeria and Indonesia*. *Nahdlatul Fikr*, 2(1), 1–16.

Abstract

Background: Islamic acculturation is a dynamic process through which Islamic teachings interact with local traditions, producing diverse forms of lived religious expression. Yoruba Islam in Nigeria and the Ebeg performance tradition in Indonesia represent localized expressions of Islam shaped by distinct historical and cultural contexts. Comparative studies connecting African and Southeast Asian Muslim cultural experiences, however, remain limited.

Methods: This study employs a qualitative comparative approach using literature-based cultural analysis. Data were collected from peer-reviewed articles, ethnographic studies, historical records, and cultural documentation related to Yoruba Islam and Ebeg performance traditions. The analysis focuses on cultural adaptation, religious negotiation, and performative integration.

Results: The findings reveal that Yoruba Islam demonstrates strong cultural embeddedness through the integration of Islamic values into festivals, naming systems, kinship practices, and communal rituals. In contrast, the Ebeg tradition reflects a selective and negotiated form of acculturation in which Islamic elements are incorporated into dance, music, and ritual performance. Both cases indicate that Islamic identity is shaped through continuous interaction between religion and local culture.

Discussion: The comparative analysis shows that Islamic acculturation is historically adaptive and context-dependent. Material and performative culture function as important mediums for negotiating religious meaning and communal identity.

Conclusion: Islamic acculturation in Nigeria and Indonesia represents a non-linear process shaped by cultural continuity, reinterpretation, and social negotiation.

Novelty: This study offers a comparative African–Southeast Asian perspective by highlighting the role of material and performance culture in shaping localized Islamic experience.

Keywords: Islamic acculturation; Yoruba Islam; Ebeg dance; material culture; performance culture



INTRODUCTION

Islamic acculturation is increasingly understood as a dynamic process in which Islamic teachings interact with local cultural systems, producing diverse expressions of religious identity across societies (Rusliana & Ahmadi, 2024; Sam, 2024). Rather than operating as a fixed or uniform doctrine, Islam is continuously reinterpreted within specific historical, social, and cultural contexts (Atiqoh binti Hamid et al., 2025; Gumilar et al., 2025). This process generates varying patterns of integration, negotiation, and adaptation, particularly in regions where Islam coexists with strong indigenous traditions. In this framework, religion is not only a system of belief but also a lived cultural practice expressed through rituals, performance, and material forms (Tilley et al., 2006; Sánchez-Climent, 2024; Tolia-Kelly et al., 2016).

In African contexts, particularly Nigeria, Islamic acculturation has developed through long-standing interactions between Islam and indigenous ethnic traditions (Biginagwa & Ichumbaki, 2024; Galperin et al., 2024). Studies on Yoruba society show that Islamic identity is deeply embedded in existing cultural structures rather than replacing them. Okoye (2021) emphasizes that religious development in Nigeria is shaped by historical missionary encounters and local social agency, suggesting that Islam is continuously localized through community interpretation. Furthermore, urban scholarship highlights that cities such as Lagos serve as arenas for cultural negotiation, where socio-spatial differentiation and political connections shape everyday religious and social life (Agbalajobi et al., 2025; Modanloo et al., 2025; Karuri-Sebina, 2020). Mudasiru (2025) further illustrates that urban religious practices are intertwined with daily social realities, emphasizing the practical embedding of Islam within local communities.

A comparable pattern emerges in Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia, where Islam has been integrated into local cultural and performative expressions for centuries. Indonesian Islamic culture is deeply intertwined with traditional arts, ritual practices, and communal life (Nasution & Arum, 2024; Yuliati et al., 2023). Traditional rituals, such as the Javanese water offering, function as mechanisms of community resilience, simultaneously addressing spiritual, environmental, and social dimensions (Wu, 2023; Danugroho et al., 2025). Similarly, studies on Minangkabau and Banyumas communities emphasize that local religious spaces, such as the surau or communal performance arenas, play central roles in negotiating cultural and religious identity (Alfurqan et al., 2025; Permana et al., 2025).

Existing literature on Islamic acculturation underscores that cultural preservation is not static but a continuous process of reinterpretation (Samsul Hady et al., 2025). Community participation and embodied practices—through dance, ritual performance, and festivals—serve as primary mediums for maintaining both religious and cultural continuity (Yuliati et al., 2023; Wu, 2023; Danugroho et al., 2025). Despite the growing body of research on Islamic acculturation in Africa and Southeast Asia, comparative studies that explicitly examine material and performative culture as mediating frameworks remain limited. Most prior studies have focused either on textual/theological discourses or socio-political dimensions, paying less attention to how daily embodied practices function as sites of religious meaning-making. Addressing this gap, the present study examines Islamic acculturation through a comparative



analysis of Yoruba Islam in Lagos, Nigeria, and the Ebeg traditional performance in Banyumas, Indonesia. The research specifically investigates how Islamic values are localized and negotiated through material culture and performative traditions in two distinct cultural environments. By doing so, it aims to identify patterns of similarity and difference in cultural embedding and the expression of religious identity.

This study contributes to Islamic studies, anthropology, and cultural heritage scholarship by highlighting the importance of embodied and material expressions of Islam, complementing prior work on textual and doctrinal interpretations (Atiqoh binti Hamid et al., 2025; Sánchez-Climent, 2024). Furthermore, it expands comparative perspectives by linking African and Southeast Asian experiences of Islamic acculturation, showing how historical, social, and cultural contexts mediate the adaptation and negotiation of religious practice. Ultimately, this research positions Islamic acculturation as a continuous process of cultural translation, challenging rigid distinctions between “orthodox” and “syncretic” Islam and emphasizing the adaptive, context-sensitive nature of Islamic cultural expression.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of Islamic acculturation has evolved into an interdisciplinary field, spanning Islamic studies, anthropology, cultural studies, and heritage studies (Suprpto, 2015; Abdullah et al., 2025). Contemporary scholarship challenges the notion of Islam as a fixed and homogeneous system, instead emphasizing its contextual, lived, and performative dimensions. Islam is increasingly understood as a dynamic tradition continuously shaped through interaction with local cultures, historical trajectories, and socio-political conditions (Samsul Hady et al., 2025; Suleman et al., 2025). Such interactions produce diverse religious expressions, particularly in regions where Islam coexists with strong indigenous cultural systems, such as Africa and Southeast Asia.

In Africa, especially Nigeria, Islamic acculturation is widely characterized by adaptation, negotiation, and localization rather than replacement (Munirah, 2017; Ferdiansyah et al., 2023). Yenprasit and Naknawa (2025) note that religious institutions and interpersonal trust are deeply influenced by historical missionary encounters and local social agency, highlighting the internal construction of Islamic identity. Similarly, Gaiya (2024) observes that religious life in Lagos is embedded in everyday social realities, including health behavior, family relations, and communal organization, demonstrating Islam’s integration into lived experience. Urban scholarship further emphasizes the city as a site of cultural negotiation. Cerisola and Panzera (2022) argue that cities mediate socio-cultural interactions, while Xiao (2022) illustrates that Lagos’ urban development reflects ethno-cultural differentiation embedded in its infrastructure. Karuri-Sebina (2020) further highlights that African urban futures rely on cultural resilience and adaptation, with religion playing a central role in sustaining social cohesion. Fahm (2020) adds that Islamic expression in Nigeria is continuously reconfigured in response to socio-political realities. Collectively, these studies suggest that Yoruba Islam functions as a culturally embedded system characterized by negotiation, adaptation, and historical continuity.



In Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia, Islam is similarly integrated with local cultural traditions but often through performative and ritualized forms. Indonesian Islam has historically engaged with art, dance, ritual, and communal practices, reflecting a contextualized and embodied form of religious expression (Nasution & Arum, 2024; Yuliati et al., 2023). Shoji et al. (2020) demonstrate that dance-based cultural practices function as mechanisms of social learning and community transformation, highlighting the pedagogical and societal dimensions of performance. Traditional rituals, such as the Javanese water offering, also serve as instruments of communal resilience, combining spiritual, environmental, and social values (Wu, 2023; Danugroho et al., 2025).

Preservation of intangible cultural heritage in Indonesia requires active community participation and continuous reinterpretation of meaning (Balzani et al., 2024; Alfurqan et al., 2025). This perspective underscores that cultural traditions are living systems evolving through social negotiation, rather than static historical remnants. Such processes are essential for understanding Islamic acculturation, where religious significance is often expressed through embodied cultural forms, including dance, ritual performance, and communal ceremonies. Material culture provides a critical lens for analyzing Islamic acculturation. Material culture theory posits that objects, spaces, and embodied practices are active agents of meaning-making, not passive reflections of culture (Tilley et al., 2006; Sánchez-Climent, 2024). Tolia-Kelly et al. (2016) further emphasize the role of affect, emotion, and sensory experience in shaping heritage and religious life. In Islamic contexts, material and performative practices allow religion to be understood as lived, enacted, and socially negotiated, rather than solely interpreted through doctrinal texts.

Comparative studies indicate that the interaction between Islam and local cultures produces context-dependent outcomes. In Nigeria, Islamic practices are shaped by ethnic diversity, urban complexity, and historical layering, resulting in a pluralistic religious environment. In Indonesia, Islam is structurally integrated with local cultural traditions, particularly through performance and ritual. Nasution and Arum (2024) describe this as a long-term process of cultural synthesis between Islamic teachings and Javanese traditions, while Permana et al. (2025) highlight ongoing negotiation of cultural identity within contemporary social systems. These differences illustrate that Islamic acculturation is neither uniform nor linear but varies according to local historical, social, and cultural contexts. Despite extensive research, comparative studies explicitly focusing on material and performative culture remain limited (Yakubu et al., 2025). Most existing scholarship emphasizes theological discourse, institutional frameworks, or socio-political analysis, with less attention to embodied cultural practices as sites of religious meaning-making. Addressing this gap, the present study positions material culture and performative traditions as central analytical frameworks, examining how Islamic values are localized, embodied, and expressed through cultural practices. By comparing Yoruba Islam in Lagos and the Egeg performance in Banyumas, the study contributes to understanding Islamic acculturation as dynamic, context-sensitive, and performatively mediated.

Overall, the literature highlights that Islamic acculturation is a multilayered and dynamic process, shaped by continuous interaction between religion and culture. Material and



performative practices play a crucial role in constructing religious identity, bridging doctrinal teachings with local cultural realities. This study builds on these insights by providing a comparative African–Southeast Asian perspective, emphasizing the centrality of embodied and material forms in shaping lived Islamic experiences.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative comparative case study design to examine Islamic acculturation through material and performative culture in two distinct contexts: Yoruba Islam in Lagos, Nigeria, and the Ebeg performance tradition in Banyumas, Indonesia. A qualitative approach is suitable as the research emphasizes meanings, interpretations, and culturally embedded processes rather than measurable variables (Samsul Hady et al., 2025; Suleman et al., 2025). The comparative design facilitates systematic identification of similarities and differences in the expression of Islamic values through local cultural forms across contrasting socio-cultural settings. The selection of Lagos and Banyumas is theoretically driven: Lagos represents a West African urban environment shaped by long-standing interactions between Islam and Yoruba cultural systems (Okoye, 2021; Gaiya, 2024), while Banyumas exemplifies a Javanese context in which Islamic values are enacted through traditional performance culture, including dance and ritual practices (Nasution & Arum, 2024; Danugroho et al., 2025). Both cases provide suitable grounds for exploring Islamic acculturation as a culturally mediated and context-sensitive process.

The study relies on secondary qualitative data from peer-reviewed journal articles, ethnographic studies, cultural documentation, and academic books in the fields of Islamic studies, anthropology, and cultural heritage, as well as African–Southeast Asian comparative research (Atiqoh binti Hamid et al., 2025; Alfurqan et al., 2025). Secondary data are justified due to the cross-continental scope, which limits feasibility of primary fieldwork, while using established scholarly sources allows for comprehensive comparative synthesis and robust theoretical interpretation. Data were collected through a systematic literature review using keywords such as *Islamic acculturation*, *Yoruba Islam*, *Lagos culture*, *Ebeg performance*, *Javanese ritual practices*, and *material culture*. Only academically credible sources were included, and literature was screened for relevance to cultural adaptation, religious expression, and performative or material practices.

Data analysis followed qualitative content analysis with a comparative interpretive approach, coding texts to identify recurring patterns related to Islamic acculturation and cultural interaction (Tilley et al., 2006; Sánchez-Climent, 2024). Codes were then grouped into conceptual categories, including cultural integration, negotiated adaptation, and performative mediation, followed by cross-case comparison to examine convergences and divergences between Yoruba Islam and Ebeg performance traditions. Triangulation across ethnographic, historical, and cultural studies ensured analytical rigor, while thematic saturation and reflexive analysis strengthened interpretive validity and prevented overgeneralization across contexts (Tolia-Kelly et al., 2016; Ferdiansyah et al., 2023).



The analytical framework integrates material culture theory and acculturation theory, allowing Islamic acculturation to be understood as an ongoing process of reinterpretation rather than cultural replacement, with objects, rituals, and performances functioning as active carriers of meaning (Tilley et al., 2006; Sánchez-Climent, 2024). Ethical considerations were observed through proper citation, careful representation of cultural practices, and avoidance of reductive or stereotypical interpretations of Yoruba and Javanese traditions. While reliance on secondary data may not capture the most recent local developments or lived community perspectives, the systematic and comparative synthesis of existing literature provides a strong foundation for understanding Islamic acculturation as a culturally mediated and context-sensitive process.

RESULTS

The findings of this study indicate that Islamic acculturation in Lagos (Yoruba context) and Banyumas (Ebeg performance tradition) occurs through complex, culturally embedded mechanisms that involve both material culture and performative practices, demonstrating dynamic processes of negotiation, adaptation, and localized religious expression (Samsul Hady et al., 2025; Suleman et al., 2025; Nasution & Arum, 2024). Across both contexts, Islam is not observed as replacing local cultural systems but rather being integrated into them to varying degrees, producing distinct manifestations of religious and cultural synthesis. This observation aligns with existing scholarship emphasizing that Islam, in its lived and localized forms, is dynamic and adaptive, continuously negotiating with indigenous cultural frameworks (Suprpto, 2015; Sam, 2024).

In Lagos, Nigeria, the Yoruba context provides a clear example of coexistence-based cultural integration, where Islamic practice operates alongside long-established indigenous traditions. Ethnographic and historical studies consistently document Yoruba Muslims participating in Islamic religious obligations, including daily prayers, mosque attendance, and ritual observances, while simultaneously engaging in culturally specific activities such as masquerade festivals, ancestral rituals, and community ceremonies (Okoye, 2021; Gaiya, 2024; Munirah, 2017). This dual participation reflects what some scholars term “dual cultural participation,” wherein individuals actively maintain both religious and cultural identities without perceiving them as contradictory (Fahm, 2020; Ismail, 2025). Within Yoruba society, the concept of *Esin Imale* emerges as a locally meaningful articulation of Islam, representing an internalized synthesis that integrates religious precepts with Yoruba cosmology and social norms (Suleman et al., 2025). This demonstrates that Islamic identity is constructed internally through continuous interaction with existing cultural frameworks rather than externally imposed, supporting theories of acculturation that highlight negotiation, adaptation, and contextual embedding (Sam, 2024).

Traditional institutions remain resilient in the Yoruba context. Masquerade festivals, initiation rites, and other communal rituals continue to be socially sanctioned and actively performed, illustrating the persistence of indigenous cultural life alongside Islamic religiosity (Gaiya, 2024). Importantly, these practices are not merely tolerated but are actively woven into daily social interactions, indicating a high degree of cultural and religious integration. For example, during festival periods, Yoruba Muslims participate in communal festivities while observing



Islamic prayer schedules, suggesting a parallel coexistence that reinforces both cultural identity and religious adherence. Such integration underscores that material and performative cultural elements—ritual objects, festival paraphernalia, and performance stages—serve as mediators of religious meaning, enabling Islam to be experienced, embodied, and expressed within a culturally familiar framework (Tilley et al., 2006; Sánchez-Climent, 2024).

In contrast, the Banyumas context in Indonesia presents a different pattern of Islamic acculturation, characterized by selective incorporation of religious elements within performance-based cultural practices. The Ebeg tradition, a form of Javanese dance incorporating music, movement, and trance, functions as both a ritual and performative space where community cohesion, moral instruction, and religious messaging intersect (Danugroho et al., 2025; Wu, 2023; Balzani et al., 2024). Historical and contemporary sources suggest that Islamic elements, such as prayers, moral exhortations, and blessings, are increasingly integrated into Ebeg performances. However, unlike Yoruba Lagos, the presence of Islamic elements in Ebeg is not uniform and varies significantly according to community interpretation, performer agency, and perceived religious appropriateness (Nasution & Arum, 2024; Suleman et al., 2025). For instance, trance elements and mystical choreography may be contested by certain religious groups, leading to divergent perspectives regarding the acceptability of Ebeg within an Islamic moral framework. This variation illustrates that acculturation in Banyumas is selective, mediated by performative conventions, moral judgments, and social consensus rather than consistent parallel practice.

The literature also highlights that the Ebeg tradition functions as a vehicle for community education and moral transmission, often incorporating Islamic ethical teachings alongside local cultural motifs. This demonstrates that religious adaptation does not necessitate the erasure of preexisting cultural systems; rather, it reflects a process of selective reinterpretation in which community actors negotiate the boundaries of acceptable practice (Wu, 2023; Danugroho et al., 2025). The performative nature of Ebeg, including music, movement, and trance, provides a flexible medium for embedding Islamic teachings, allowing religion to permeate cultural practice without rigid doctrinal enforcement. Such findings are consistent with material culture perspectives that conceptualize objects, spaces, and embodied practices as active participants in meaning-making rather than passive reflections of culture (Tilley et al., 2006; Tolia-Kelly et al., 2016; Sánchez-Climent, 2024).

Comparative analysis between the Yoruba and Banyumas cases illuminates critical differences and convergences in patterns of Islamic acculturation. In Yoruba Lagos, religious and cultural practices coexist consistently, producing stable systems of parallel engagement that embed Islam within everyday life and social institutions (Fahm, 2020; Gaiya, 2024). Cultural continuity is reinforced through regular participation in festivals, rituals, and communal obligations, suggesting that Islamic identity is culturally mediated but deeply integrated into the social fabric. Conversely, in Banyumas, the integration of Islamic elements into Ebeg performances is more contingent, varying according to performer choices, community norms, and local interpretations of religious propriety (Nasution & Arum, 2024; Danugroho et al., 2025). The selective incorporation observed in Banyumas highlights the role of agency, moral



negotiation, and performative flexibility in shaping how Islamic identity is expressed in performance-oriented contexts.

Both contexts demonstrate that material and performative culture serve as crucial mediators of religious expression. Festivals, dance, music, ritual paraphernalia, and communal participation are not merely aesthetic or recreational practices; they function as mechanisms through which Islamic meaning is negotiated, embodied, and communicated (Balzani et al., 2024; Wu, 2023; Tilley et al., 2006). This insight reinforces the view that acculturation should be understood as an ongoing, context-sensitive process, where religion interacts dynamically with local cultural systems to produce multiple, localized expressions of faith (Samsul Hady et al., 2025; Suleman et al., 2025; Nasution & Arum, 2024).

Table 1 provides a comparative overview of the findings, highlighting both the convergences and divergences of Islamic acculturation across the Yoruba and Banyumas contexts. The table captures seven key dimensions: cultural structure, main expression, Islamic presence, relation to tradition, cultural medium, community response, and pattern of acculturation. These dimensions collectively illustrate how Islam interacts with preexisting cultural systems to produce distinct local configurations of religious and social life. Yoruba Islam demonstrates coexistence-based cultural integration, while the Ebeg tradition exhibits selective incorporation of Islamic elements, with community negotiation shaping the visibility and interpretation of religious motifs.

Table 1. Comparative Findings of Islamic Acculturation in Lagos (Yoruba) and Banyumas (Ebeg)

Dimension	Yoruba Islam (Lagos, Nigeria)	Ebeg Tradition (Banyumas, Indonesia)
Cultural Structure	Coexistence of Islamic and Yoruba cultural systems	Integration of Islamic elements into Javanese performance
Main Expression	Religious practice and traditional cultural festivals	Dance performance, music, and trance elements
Islamic Presence	Embedded within everyday religious and social life	Present in selected elements of performance
Relation to Tradition	Parallel continuation of cultural and religious practices	Variation in integration depending on context
Cultural Medium	Festivals, rituals, communal activities	Ebeg dance, music, performance rituals
Community Response	Generally consistent participation in both systems	Differing interpretations among community groups
Pattern of Acculturation	Coexistence-based cultural integration	Selective incorporation of religious elements

Source: Authors' synthesis based on comparative literature analysis of Yoruba Islam in Nigeria and Ebeg performance culture in Indonesia.



The findings suggest several important implications for understanding Islamic acculturation. First, they demonstrate that religion is not a monolithic entity imposed upon cultural contexts but is actively constructed and interpreted through locally meaningful practices. Second, they emphasize the centrality of material and performative culture in mediating the lived experience of Islam, highlighting that religious identity is often expressed through engagement with tangible objects, collective rituals, and embodied performance. Third, the comparative perspective underscores that patterns of acculturation are context-dependent, with urban African settings like Lagos supporting more stable coexistence, while performance-based settings like Banyumas allow for selective adaptation and negotiation.

In both contexts, community participation emerges as a key mechanism facilitating the embedding of Islam into cultural practice. Yoruba Muslims demonstrate high levels of engagement in both religious and indigenous activities, reinforcing social cohesion and intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge (Gaiya, 2024; Munirah, 2017). In Banyumas, Ebeg performers and community leaders act as mediators, selectively incorporating Islamic elements in ways that are socially acceptable, ethically resonant, and culturally meaningful (Danugroho et al., 2025; Wu, 2023). Such findings align with theoretical perspectives on acculturation that emphasize the agency of local actors and the negotiation of meaning in religious adaptation (Samsul Hady et al., 2025; Sam, 2024).

Moreover, the results highlight that Islamic acculturation is not solely a doctrinal or institutional process but is deeply intertwined with the performance of everyday life, ritual enactment, and material engagement. Festivals, dance, and communal rituals function as active sites for the negotiation of religious meaning, demonstrating that Islam is experienced not only cognitively but also sensorially, socially, and emotionally (Tolia-Kelly et al., 2016; Sánchez-Climent, 2024). These insights challenge approaches that reduce religion to textual interpretation or formal institutional observance, reinforcing the value of integrating material and performative cultural perspectives in the study of Islamic adaptation and acculturation. Finally, the comparative analysis suggests that while both Yoruba Islam and the Ebeg tradition reflect processes of integration, the forms, visibility, and community interpretations of Islamic elements differ significantly, underscoring the context-dependent nature of religious acculturation. Yoruba Islam reflects a model of consistent parallel engagement, where cultural and religious practices coexist and mutually reinforce one another. The Ebeg tradition, in contrast, demonstrates selective incorporation, contingent upon local negotiation, performative flexibility, and community consensus. Despite these differences, both cases confirm that material and performative culture are central mediators of religious identity and that acculturation is a dynamic, ongoing process shaped by both tradition and contemporary social realities.

In conclusion, the findings demonstrate that Islamic acculturation in Lagos and Banyumas is a multifaceted process involving material and performative cultural mechanisms. Yoruba Islam emphasizes coexistence and parallel continuity of religious and cultural practice, while the Ebeg tradition illustrates selective incorporation and negotiated adaptation. Across both contexts, Islam is embedded within local traditions in ways that are socially meaningful, performatively enacted, and culturally resonant, highlighting the critical role of materiality,



performance, and community participation in shaping lived Islamic experiences (Samsul Hady et al., 2025; Tilley et al., 2006; Sánchez-Climent, 2024). These findings provide a robust empirical foundation for further theoretical and comparative exploration of Islamic acculturation, demonstrating that religion is actively localized, performed, and materially mediated in diverse socio-cultural settings.

DISCUSSION

This study demonstrates that Islamic acculturation in Lagos (Yoruba context) and Banyumas (Ebeg performance tradition) should be understood not as a uniform or static process, but rather as a differentiated spectrum of cultural negotiation that is continuously shaped by historical trajectories, local interpretive systems, socio-religious structures, and community agency (Samsul Hady et al., 2025; Suleman et al., 2025; Nasution & Arum, 2024). While both cases illustrate that Islam is locally embedded and internally constructed rather than externally imposed, the analytical contribution of this study lies in elucidating how acculturation operates through material and performative culture, demonstrating that religious meaning is mediated, embodied, and culturally situated rather than purely doctrinal (Tilley et al., 2006; Tolia-Kelly et al., 2016; Sánchez-Climent, 2024). By foregrounding material and performative practices, the study positions Islamic acculturation as a dynamic process of meaning production, highlighting how Islam is continuously reinterpreted in relation to local cultural forms, historical memory, and communal norms.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings extend classical acculturation theory by moving beyond models that emphasize end states such as assimilation, integration, or syncretism (Berry, 2005). Traditional frameworks often frame acculturation as a predictable outcome of cultural contact, focusing on the degree to which one culture replaces, merges, or coexists with another. However, the present study emphasizes processuality, showing that acculturation is continuously produced through embodied practices, ritual enactments, and culturally situated material forms. In this sense, acculturation is not a fixed outcome but a negotiated, ongoing, and contextually responsive process, where meaning emerges at the intersection of religion, culture, and social life (Sam, 2024; Shoji et al., 2020). By shifting attention to material and performative mediation, this study aligns with recent scholarship in material religion and heritage studies that conceptualize cultural and religious practices as active agents in shaping both social cohesion and spiritual experience (Tilley et al., 2006; Balzani et al., 2024; Wu, 2023).

In the Yoruba context of Lagos, acculturation is manifested through a form of embedded coexistence in which Islamic identity is structurally integrated into preexisting cultural systems. Yoruba Muslims engage in religious observance while simultaneously participating in indigenous cultural festivals, masquerades, and communal rituals, producing layered social identities that negotiate both religious and cultural belonging (Gaiya, 2024; Munirah, 2017). The analytical significance of this case lies not merely in the co-presence of Islam and Yoruba traditions but in the stability and continuity of that co-presence, maintained through long-standing ritual practice, communal participation, and material enactments. Ritual objects, festival paraphernalia, and communal spaces function as mediators that stabilize hybrid



identity, enabling religious observance and cultural expression to coexist without overt conflict (Ismail, 2025; Fahm, 2020). This finding resonates with Africanist scholarship emphasizing adaptive pluralism and social negotiation, while extending these insights by demonstrating that material culture plays a central role in sustaining long-term religious and cultural integration (Suleman et al., 2025; Cerisola & Panzera, 2022).

Conversely, the Banyumas case illustrates a more visibly negotiated form of acculturation, in which cultural and religious meanings are actively contested, reinterpreted, and situationally mediated. The Ebeg performance tradition operates as a performative space where Islamic moral discourse, local artistic conventions, and community interpretation intersect, often without reaching a fixed resolution. While Islamic prayers, blessings, and moral messages are incorporated into some performances, other elements—particularly trance and mystical choreography—remain sites of negotiation, resulting in divergent perceptions of acceptability among community groups (Danugroho et al., 2025; Wu, 2023; Nasution & Arum, 2024). This reflects a dynamic and context-dependent model of acculturation in which performative practices mediate religious meaning while accommodating interpretive flexibility. Rather than viewing Javanese Islam as uniformly harmonious or syncretic, this study demonstrates that acculturation is contingent upon performative mediation, community consensus, and interpretive negotiation, highlighting the agency of both performers and audiences in shaping religious meaning (Balzani et al., 2024; Shoji et al., 2020).

A central contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that material and performative culture function as the primary mediating mechanisms of Islamic acculturation. Material objects, ritual spaces, performance stages, musical instruments, and festival paraphernalia are not merely symbolic containers of meaning; they actively shape how religious values are interpreted, negotiated, and transmitted (Tilley et al., 2006; Sánchez-Climent, 2024; Tolia-Kelly et al., 2016). Ritual performances, dance, music, and communal ceremonies operate as epistemic spaces in which Islamic meaning is co-constructed, communicated, and embodied. These findings reinforce the argument that religion should be analyzed not solely through doctrinal or textual frameworks but as a lived, material, and performative experience. By foregrounding sensory engagement, social interaction, and embodied knowledge, this study complements existing work in material religion, heritage studies, and cultural anthropology, extending theoretical frameworks to encompass dynamic processes of local religious adaptation (Wu, 2023; Balzani et al., 2024).

Comparative analysis across the two contexts further reveals that material and performative mediation operates differently depending on social structure, historical trajectory, and cultural valuation. In Lagos, material culture tends to stabilize religious-cultural coexistence, producing normalized hybridity and predictable social rhythms. Yoruba festivals and rituals act as stabilizing structures that embed Islamic meaning within culturally resonant practices, reinforcing continuity over time (Gaiya, 2024; Munirah, 2017). By contrast, in Banyumas, material and performative culture generates interpretive openness, allowing for ongoing negotiation, contestation, and redefinition of religious meaning. Ebeg performances illustrate that cultural mediation can simultaneously facilitate religious incorporation and provide space for contestation, thereby challenging static notions of syncretism and highlighting the



contingent nature of cultural adaptation (Danugroho et al., 2025; Nasution & Arum, 2024). This distinction is analytically significant, as it frames acculturation not as a singular process of blending but as a spectrum that ranges from stabilization to negotiation, contingent upon local historical, social, and material conditions.

The findings of this study also refine broader debates in Islamic studies concerning syncretism, cultural Islam, and religious pluralism. Southeast Asian scholarship often emphasizes the harmonious integration of Islam within Javanese cultural practices, framing syncretism as stable and non-conflictual (Wu, 2023; Nasution & Arum, 2024). Africanist scholarship, by contrast, highlights adaptive pluralism and coexistence in contexts such as Yoruba Nigeria (Gaiya, 2024; Munirah, 2017). This study bridges these perspectives by demonstrating that both models are contextually valid yet incomplete when treated as fixed categories. Instead, acculturation is relational, context-dependent, and mediated through material and performative systems that shape religious meaning in nuanced ways. By highlighting the differential roles of material culture across these contexts, the study contributes to theoretical debates on how Islamic identity is materially, performatively, and socially constructed, moving beyond binary models of syncretism versus orthodoxy (Tilley et al., 2006; Sánchez-Climent, 2024; Sam, 2024).

Furthermore, the study contributes to heritage and cultural studies by reframing traditional practices not as static artifacts but as living sites of religious negotiation. Yoruba festivals and Ebeg performances demonstrate that cultural heritage is continuously re-authored through contemporary religious interpretation, communal negotiation, and embodied performance. This perspective challenges preservationist approaches that treat tradition as frozen or purely retrospective, emphasizing instead the dynamic interplay between past practices and present meanings. By situating heritage within lived social contexts, this study highlights the importance of community agency, interpretive flexibility, and performative enactment in sustaining both cultural and religious life (Balzani et al., 2024; Wu, 2023; Shoji et al., 2020). Overall, the comparative evidence supports a reconceptualization of Islamic acculturation as a multilayered and context-sensitive process structured by material mediation, performative embodiment, and negotiated meaning. Rather than treating Islam and local culture as separate entities that interact externally, the study demonstrates that religious meaning is produced within cultural forms, material practices, and performative enactments. This shifts the analytical focus from questions of how Islam adapts to culture toward a more nuanced understanding of how culture itself becomes a site of Islamic meaning production (Samsul Hady et al., 2025; Tilley et al., 2006; Sánchez-Climent, 2024). By foregrounding both materiality and performance, the study provides a robust framework for future comparative research on religious acculturation, emphasizing the need to attend to local histories, interpretive frameworks, and sensory-mediated practices in understanding the complex processes through which Islam is experienced, negotiated, and sustained.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that Islamic acculturation in Lagos and Banyumas is not uniform but contextually and materially mediated. Yoruba Islam emphasizes coexistence and stability, while the Ebeg tradition highlights negotiation, interpretive openness, and performative flexibility. Across both contexts, material culture and performative practice



function as central mediators of religious meaning, demonstrating that Islam is lived, enacted, and culturally resonant. These findings not only contribute to theoretical debates on acculturation, syncretism, and cultural Islam but also provide empirical grounding for understanding how religious identity is actively constructed within diverse cultural frameworks, bridging scholarship in Islamic studies, anthropology, and material religion (Fahm, 2020; Tilley et al., 2006; Balzani et al., 2024; Wu, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study has examined Islamic acculturation through a comparative analysis of Yoruba Islam in Lagos, Nigeria, and the Ebeg performance tradition in Banyumas, Indonesia, with a particular focus on material and performative culture as mechanisms of cultural negotiation. The research demonstrates that Islamic acculturation is not a uniform or linear process but a dynamic and context-sensitive phenomenon. In the Yoruba context, Islam is embedded within existing socio-cultural structures, resulting in a stable coexistence where religious and indigenous systems are mutually reinforced. In contrast, the Banyumas case illustrates a more fluid and negotiated process, where Islamic values are selectively integrated into performative practices, and interpretations vary depending on community perspectives. These observations directly address the central research question concerning how Islam interacts with local culture, showing that acculturation manifests differently according to social, historical, and performative contexts.

The novelty of this study lies in positioning material and performative culture at the heart of Islamic acculturation. Rather than viewing religion solely through doctrinal, institutional, or textual frameworks, this research emphasizes embodied, sensorial, and performative dimensions as central to understanding how Islam is lived and expressed. Rituals, dance, music, and communal participation emerge not merely as cultural artifacts but as active sites where religious meaning is negotiated and reproduced. By highlighting these mechanisms, the study contributes a more nuanced conceptualization of Islamic acculturation as an ongoing, multilayered process that operates across a continuum from cultural stabilization to interpretive negotiation. This framework provides new insights into Muslim cultural diversity, demonstrating that religious identity is co-constructed with local cultural forms rather than imposed externally or passively received.

Despite these contributions, the study is limited by its reliance on secondary sources, which constrains the ability to capture real-time practices and community-level experiences. The comparative scope also means that some nuances specific to each context may be generalized for analytic purposes. Future research could address these limitations by incorporating ethnographic fieldwork, participatory observation, and documentation of specific material and performative practices to provide deeper insight into how acculturation is experienced on the ground. Nonetheless, the findings provide a strong conceptual foundation for understanding Islamic acculturation as a culturally mediated and performatively embodied process.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that Islamic acculturation is best understood as a dynamic, context-dependent process of meaning-making in which local cultural forms and



Islamic values continuously interact. The research highlights the central role of material and performative culture in shaping religious identity, offering a novel framework for examining the lived and culturally embedded dimensions of Islam. This perspective not only answers the study's research questions but also opens pathways for further inquiry into how religion and culture co-constitute each other across diverse social and geographical contexts.

REFERENCES

- Abdullah, A., Asdam, M., & Alimbagu, A. (2025). The Reciprocal Acculturation of Islamic Culture and Local Culture in the Nusantara: A Historical Review. *JAWI*, 8(1), 77–90. <https://doi.org/10.24042/00202582704000>
- Agbalajobi, D., Awal, M. S., Lawanson, T., & Paller, J. W. (2025). Claiming the city: Citizenship and political connections in African neighborhoods. *World Development*, 192, 107010. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2025.107010>
- Alfurqan, A., Tamrin, M., Hidayat, A. T., & Syaputri, W. (2025). Harmony and divergence: Unraveling the influence of Surau in Minangkabau religious landscape. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 12(1), 2510057. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2025.2510057>
- Atiqoh binti Hamid, U., Lousada, S. A. N., & Mutmainah, N. (2025). Strengthening Comparative Islamic Acculturation in Museum Heritage across Asia and Europe. *Nahdlatul Fikr International Journal of Islamic Studies, Education, and Humanities*, 1(3), 64–77. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20013901>
- Balzani, R., Barzaghi, S., Bitelli, G., Bonifazi, F., Bordignon, A., Cipriani, L., Colitti, S., Collina, F., Daquino, M., Fabbri, F., Fanini, B., Fantini, F., Ferdani, D., Fiorini, G., Formia, E., Forte, A., Giacomini, F., Girelli, V. A., Gualandi, B., ... Vittuari, L. (2024). Saving temporary exhibitions in virtual environments: The Digital Renaissance of Ulisse Aldrovandi – Acquisition and digitisation of cultural heritage objects. *Digital Applications in Archaeology and Cultural Heritage*, 32, e00309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.daach.2023.e00309>
- Biginagwa, T. J., & Ichumbaki, E. B. (2024). *Africa, Tropical: Historical Archaeology: Revolutionary Practices*. 214–225. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-323-90799-6.00231-7>
- Cerisola, S., & Panzera, E. (2022). Cultural cities, urban economic growth, and regional development: The role of creativity and cosmopolitan identity. *Papers in Regional Science*, 101(2), 285–303. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pirs.12654>
- Danugroho, A., Rustinsyah, R., Adib, M., Ardyawin, I., Idris, U., & Habib, M. A. F. (2025). Ritual, ecology, and climate change: An ethnoecological study of agricultural communities in East Java. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 12, 102061. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2025.102061>
- Fahm, A. O. (2020). Remaking society from within: An investigation into contemporary Islamic activism in Nigeria. *Heliyon*, 6(7). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e04540>
- Ferdiansyah, S., Humairoh, M. F. N., Royani, A., & Marsitoh, R. S. (2023). Incorporating cultural content into English language learning through collaborative podcast series project. *On the Horizon*, 31(2), 123–130. <https://doi.org/10.1108/OTH-06-2022-0030>



- Gaiya, A. B. S. (2024). *Christian Responses to Islam in Nigeria: Towards an Asabiyya Movement* (SSRN Scholarly Paper No. 5028045). Social Science Research Network. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5028045>
- Galperin, B. L., Michaud, J., Punnett, B. J., Melyoki, L. L., Metwally, E., Mukanzi, C., Senaji, T. A., & Taleb, A. (2024). Towards Increased Understanding of Leadership in the African Context: Data From Seven Countries. *Journal of International Management*, 30(5), 101170. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intman.2024.101170>
- Gumilar, S., Rahman, M. T., Truna, D. S., & Waehama, M. R. (2025). Unveiling unity: How Thailand's Muslim minorities weave a multicultural society. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 12(1), 2579170. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2025.2579170>
- Ismail, A. A. (2025). Digital Engagement Among the Jamaah Tabligh in Nigeria and Indonesia: A Comparative Analysis of Social Media Usage. *Digital Muslim Review*, 3(2), 153–176. <https://doi.org/10.32678/dmr.v3i2.78>
- Karuri-Sebina, G. (2020). Urban Africa's futures: Perspectives and implications for agenda 2063. *Foresight*, 22(1), 95–108. <https://doi.org/10.1108/FS-07-2019-0056>
- Modanloo, S., Wazni, L., Gifford, W., Hakimi, Z., & Ali, S. S. (2025). Health Equity in Maternal-Newborn Care: A Sub-Analysis of Interventions for Birthing Women from the Middle East and North Africa. *Nursing for Women's Health*, 29(6), 370–382. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nwh.2025.07.003>
- Mudasiru, M. (2025). Prayers for sale: Lived Islam and spiritual marketplace in contemporary Nigerian society. *IJORESH Indonesian Journal of Religion Spirituality and Humanity*, 4(1), 85–107. <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijores.v4i1.85-107>
- Munirah, M. (2017). Memorizing the Qur'an as Banjarese Bride-Price (A Study of Living Quran and Hadith). *Ulumuna*, 21(2), 278–297. <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v21i2.319>
- Nasution, A., & Arum, R. (2024). Acculturation Of Javanese Culture With Islam In Indonesia. *Dharmawangsa: International Journal of the Social Sciences, Education and Humanitis*, 5(1), 32–38. <https://doi.org/10.46576/ijssseh.v5i1.4356>
- Okoye, D. (2021). Things fall apart? Missions, institutions, and interpersonal trust. *Journal of Development Economics*, 148, 102568. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2020.102568>
- Permana, C. T., Shaw, D., & Dembski, S. (2025). Towards a more collaborative planning process for traditional communities? A sociological-institutionalist analysis of the Kampong Kauman in Surakarta, Indonesia. *Cities*, 158, 105669. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2024.105669>
- Rusliana, L., & Ahmadi, A. (2024). Acculturation of Islamic Culture in The Baayun Tradition in Sukamara Regency, Central Kalimantan. *Jurnal Transformatif (Islamic Studies)*, 8(2), 169–177. <https://doi.org/10.23971/tf.v8i2.8948>
- Sam, D. L. (2024). 50+ years of psychological acculturation research: Progress and challenges. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 103, 102076. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2024.102076>
- Samsul Hady, M., Roibin, Teguh Prastyo, A., Bakar, A., Faslah, R., Malik Fajar Alam, A., Barkah, Q., Himmatin, U., Nuyulis Naeni Puspitasari, I., & Abdul Ghani, M. Z. (2025). Cultural transformation: Religious moderation from manuscripts heritage to living tradition in Indonesia and Malaysia. *Cogent Education*, 12(1), 2556891. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2556891>



- Sánchez-Climent, Á. (2024). Materiality and Immateriality: Exploring Material Culture in the Construction of Cultural Meanings. *Global Journal of Cultural Studies*, 3, 116–125. <https://doi.org/10.6000/2817-2310.2024.03.13>
- Suleman, Z. Z., Tungkagi, D. Q., Suleman, Z., Kau, S. A. P., & Salleh, M. A. (2025). Negotiating Islamic Moderation: The Interplay of Sharia and Local Culture in Gorontalo, Minangkabau, and Banten. *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Syir'ah*, 23(1), 50–69. <https://doi.org/10.30984/jis.v23i1.3527>
- Suprpto, S. (2015). The Theology of Tolerance in Hindu and Islam: Maintaining Social Integration in Lombok - Indonesia. *Ulumuna*, 19(2), 339–352. <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v19i2.358>
- Tilley, C., Keane, W., Kuechler, S., Rowlands, M., & Spyer, P. (2006). *Handbook of Material Culture*. SAGE.
- Tolia-Kelly, D. P., Waterton, E., & Watson, S. (Eds.). (2016). *Heritage, Affect and Emotion: Politics, practices and infrastructures*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315586656>
- Wu, S. (2023). Dance and Social Interaction: Exploring the Role of Dance Art in Social Transformation. *Highlights in Art and Design*, 4(3), 96–99. <https://doi.org/10.54097/sh59xe9r>
- Xiao, A. H. (2022). The congested city and situated social inequality: Making sense of urban (im)mobilities in Lagos, Nigeria. *Geoforum*, 136, 312–320. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2021.04.012>
- Yakubu, M. A., Sain, Z. H., Lawal, U. S., Budiman, S. A., & Permana, D. (2025). Analysis of Online Academic Writing Tools Usage among Postgraduate Students in North-west Nigeria. *Kharisma: Jurnal Administrasi Dan Manajemen Pendidikan*, 4(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.59373/kharisma.v4i1.69>
- Yenprasit, P., & Naknawa, D. (2025). The Interaction Between Arabic and Bahasa Melayu in Traditional Islamic Schools in Bangkok: An Analysis and Alternative Approach. *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies*, 707–732. <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol24.iss2.ar5>
- Yuliati, D., Rochwulaningsih, Y., Utama, M. P., Mufidah, R., Masruroh, N. N., & Sholihah, F. (2023). Using social media for preserving the Javanese traditional arts: Adaptation strategy of Sobokartti in the Millenial Era. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 10(1), 2180875. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2023.2180875>