



ISSN Print 2615-5648
ISSN Online 2615-174X

Editorial Office: Faculty of Sharia, Universitas Islam Negeri Profesor Kiai Haji Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto, Indonesia, Jalan Jend. A. Yani No. 40 A Purwokerto Jawa Tengah 531226 Indonesia
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Towards an Integrated Legal Studies Department in Indonesia: Transdisciplinary Framework for Legal Higher Education

Article	Abstract
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INTRODUCTION

Legal pluralism in Indonesia is an inevitable product of the country's long history as a melting pot of world civilizations¹, starting from Islamic law brought by preachers from the Middle East,

¹ Maarten Manse, 'The Plural Legacies of Legal Pluralism: Local Practices and Contestations of Customary Law in Late Colonial Indonesia', *Legal Pluralism and Critical Social Analysis* 56, no. 3 (2024): 328–48, <https://doi.org/10.1080/27706869.2024.2377447>.

customary law that grew and developed in indigenous communities, and colonialism that introduced Dutch civil law.² The presence of the nation-state of Indonesia has logical consequences. It gives rise to national law that accommodates various legal orders, encompassing Islamic, civil, and customary law. In their development, these three legal orders interact and contest each other³, as law and power interact with each other,⁴ where Indonesia becomes an essential laboratory in legal pluralism.⁵

Each legal order has developed legal scholarship in higher education institutions in Indonesia to maintain, preserve, and create legal studies. Starting with Dutch civil law, law schools established the Department of Legal Science within the Faculty of Law. Then, Islamic law, which was initially studied in Islamic boarding schools, later became institutionalized in the Faculty of Sharia at Islamic universities. Similarly, customary law has been developed and taught within Hindu universities.

The differentiation of legal studies in Indonesia is inextricably linked to state policy in the administration of education. The education system is organized under the authority of at least three ministries: the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Within higher education, the Ministry of Higher Education is responsible for the development of general sciences, whereas the Ministry of Religious Affairs administers religious and theological higher education, including Islamic law (*sharī'a*), which is formally classified as part of religious studies. Such a policy inevitably entails both the reconfiguration of boundaries and contestation between the respective domains.

The author received a report from MAR, a graduate of the Faculty of Sharia, State Institute for Islamic Studies Metro, who did not pass the administrative selection for civil servant candidates because his degree was not in law.⁶ Other Faculty of Sharia alumni, UMS, were rejected when applying as new students in the master's program in Notary at Sultan Agung University, Semarang. The reason given was that her bachelor's degree was not in Legal Science.⁷ A similar case occurred with DAJ, another alumna of the same department, when applying to the master's program in Notary at Diponegoro University, Gadjah Mada University, Padjajaran University, and Sebelas Maret University. She had passed the administrative selection stage, the computer-based test, and the interview selection. However, during the interview, the university was unable to accept DAJ after discovering that she had graduated with a bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Sharia rather than a bachelor's degree in Legal Science from the Faculty of Law.⁸

² Saldi Isra and Hilaire Tegnan, 'Legal Syncretism or the Theory of Unity in Diversity as an Alternative to Legal Pluralism in Indonesia', *International Journal of Law and Management* 63, no. 6 (2021): 553–68, world, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJLMA-04-2018-0082>.

³ Daniel S. Lev, 'The Lady and the Banyan Tree: Civil Law Change in Indonesia', in *Legal Evolution and Political Authority in Indonesia: Selected Essays* (Brill Nijhoff, 2000), https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004478701_008.

⁴ Melissa Crouch, 'Negotiating Legal Pluralism in Court: Fatwa and the Crime of Blasphemy in Indonesia', in *Pluralism, Transnationalism and Culture in Asian Law: A Book in Honour of M.B. Hooker*, ed. Gary F. Bell (ISEAS Publishing, 2017), 234, <https://doi.org/10.1355/9789814762724-013>.

⁵ Nadirsyah Hosen, 'Sharia, State and Legal Pluralism in Indonesia: How Law Can You Do?', in *Pluralism, Transnationalism and Culture in Asian Law: A Book in Honour of M.B. Hooker* (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2017), 209, <https://research.monash.edu/en/publications/sharia-state-and-legal-pluralism-in-indonesia-how-ilawi-can-you-d>.

⁶ MAR, 'Interview about the Registration for Civil Servant Candidates', 20 November 2024.

⁷ UMS, 'Interview about the Registration for the Notary Master's Program', 5 June 2023.

⁸ DAJ, 'Interview about the Registration for the Notary Master's Program', 10 January 2023.

Clearly, Diponegoro University states that the requirement for the Master's in Notary program is 'Graduates of Law (S.H) from accredited State or Private Universities with a minimum B accreditation from BAN-PT and not from the degree of Bachelor of Islamic Law (S.HI) or Bachelor of Islamic Studies (S.Ag)'.⁹ However, Diponegoro University still rejected DAJ despite his holding a degree in Law (S.H). This is surprising because, upon examination of the transcript from the undergraduate program in the Faculty of Sharia, there is almost 80% similarity with the curriculum of the Faculty of Law. The undergraduate program at the Faculty of Shariah is essentially a legal science program that incorporates Shariah knowledge, offering all courses in legal science.

Another case involves PPD, a graduate of the Faculty of Sharia who applied for a position as a prosecutor. She successfully passed the document screening, as well as the height and health requirements. However, during the document verification at the Lampung High Prosecutor's Office, she was rejected because her degree was in Shariah, not in Legal Science. PPD complained to officials at the Lampung High Prosecutor's Office. However, she was informed that her application would still be rejected even if it were forwarded to the Attorney General's Office. She also applied to three companies in Jakarta for legal positions, but all of them rejected her because she did not hold a law degree.¹⁰

This dynamic has produced a persistent contestation between graduates of Islamic law (from the Faculty of Shariah) and graduates of Legal Science (from the Faculty of Law). Graduates from programs other than "Legal Science" are often deemed less qualified and are not considered equivalent to graduates of the Legal Science program. Yet, all these programs have the same disciplinary foundation: legal studies. In Indonesia, legal studies are offered across several programs typically grouped into four branches: Legal Science, Islamic Law (sharia), Hindu Law,¹¹ and Customary Law. The status and equivalence of these programs remain contested, as illustrated in the cases of MAR, UMS, DAJ, and PPD. In the instances they experienced, Shariah was defeated in favour of civil law. The fundamental rights of Shariah graduates are not fulfilled, the right to obtain decent employment and the right to be treated equally before the law.

These doctrinal and institutional divisions are visible in practice, particularly in Sharia-based bankruptcy disputes.¹² The legal regimes of Shariah economic law and the Religious Court legal regime assert that Shariah economic dispute cases fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Religious Courts, which operate by applying Islamic law.¹³ By contrast, Shariah bankruptcy cases

⁹ Diponegoro University, 'Syarat Magister – PMB Undip', 2024, <https://pmb.undip.ac.id/pascasarjana/syarat-magister/>.

¹⁰ PPD, 'Interview about the Registration for the Prosecutor.', 1 June 2023.

¹¹ The Hindu legal system has long existed within Hindu communities in Bali and outside Bali. However, most academics have viewed Hindu law as part of customary law due to the close association between the two. It wasn't until the early 21st century that a strong awareness emerged among Hindus to advance Hindu law in higher education by establishing a Hindu Law Study Program. They realized Hindu law is distinct from customary law because it is based on a divine dimension. Therefore, at the beginning of this paper, the authors refer to the concept of the three legal orders based on previous research. Still, in the final discussion, the authors adopt the concept of four branches of legal knowledge. For more Hindu law, see Dewa Ketut Wisnawa, 'Hindu Legal Philosophy in Ngelinggihang Dewa Hyang Tradition: A Case Study in Jero Kuta Customary Village', *Udayana Journal of Law and Culture* 5, no. 1 (2021): 1, <https://doi.org/10.24843/UJLC.2021.v05.i01.p01>.

¹² A.P. Wicaksono et al., 'Norm Inconsistency to Examine the Bankruptcy Case in Sharia Economic Field in the Perspective of Legal Policy of Islamic and Commercial Court Establishment', *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology* 29, no. 3 Special Issue (2020): 1244–50, Scopus.

¹³ Sri Winarsi et al., 'Sharia Banking Dispute Resolution in Indonesia after the Verdict of the Constitutional Court No. 93/Puu-x/2012', *Utopia y Praxis Latinoamericana* 26, no. 2 (2021): 408–16.

are resolved in Commercial Courts within the General Courts system,¹⁴ Of course, this involves using civil law, disregarding Shariah law, which forms the basis of the contract in dispute.¹⁵ This has resulted in the Commercial Courts' failure to deliver substantive justice and legal certainty. The problem is compounded by the fact that the judges (including supervising judges) and court-appointed officers—receivers (*kurator*) and administrators (*pengurus*)—are typically trained in general civil law and often lack adequate grounding in Sharia business law.¹⁶

At first, the legal pluralism present in society initially enriched the community's way of life. However, in its development, legal pluralism allows three legal orders —state/civil law, Islamic law, and customary law— to contest and even defeat one another. In this context, the state supports civil law's dominant power. In the words of Abou al-Fadhl, the state's law, which should be authoritative, shifts towards being authoritarian as it compels other legal systems to submit to it. While Islamic law may be authoritative because it is proclaimed 'in the name of God'¹⁷, civil law in Indonesia takes an authoritative stance 'in the name of the state' and 'in the name of (legal) certainty', as if no other law existed alongside it.

Within higher legal education, legal pluralism has long-term implications, not only on formal legal aspects but also on graduates' employment prospects and for the frictions among existing legal orders: civil law, Islamic law, and customary law. Efforts have been proposed to reconcile these tensions, notably Qodri Azizy's "National Law" project. He argues that the three laws—Dutch-derived civil law, Islamic law, and customary law—should be treated as raw materials for building a unified national law. This national law, in turn, would govern all citizens regardless of backgrounds.¹⁸ However, this idea has yet to materialize in implementing higher legal education, and it also affects on alumni outcomes and society at large.

In some instances, a fragmented understanding within the legal realm produces legal uncertainty and the failure to achieve legal objectives. For example, in the case of *nikah sirri* (informal/unregistered marriage), public opinion is divided—many regard it as valid according to Islamic law yet invalid according to state law.¹⁹ However, from an integrative perspective, this form of marriage fails to satisfy the core aims of marriage law: legal certainty, harmonious family

¹⁴ G. Dewi and A.Y. Sidik, 'Questioning the Authority to Settle Bankruptcy Cases of Sharia Financial Institution in Indonesia: In Religious Court or Commercial Court?', *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering* 7, no. 6 (2019): 1505–11, Scopus.it can be seen from the number of economic cases involving various parties to resolve these cases. Some of the cases which currently troubleed the economic actors are bankruptcy cases. Some bankruptcy cases that have been handled by the commercial are the bankruptcy case of PT Asuransi Syariah Mubarakah (PT ASM)

¹⁵ N. K. Puspita and J. P. Yoesuf, 'Juridical Analysis Of The Absolute Competence Of Religious Courts And Commercial Courts In Adjudicating Bankruptcy And PKPU Based On Sharia Contracts', *Proceeding International Conference on Law, Economy, Social and Sharia (ICLESS)* 1, no. 1 (2022): 1. Proceeding International Conference on Law, Economy, Social and Sharia (ICLESS)

¹⁶ Muhamad Nasrudin et al., 'Contestation between Sharia Business Law and Civil Law in Resolving Sharia Bankruptcy Disputes in Indonesia', *Proceeding of International Conference on Sharia Economic Law (ICoShEL)* 1, no. 1 (2024): 1.

¹⁷ Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Women*, Repr (Oneworld, 2010).

¹⁸ A. Qodri Azizy, *Hukum Nasional: Eklektisisme Hukum Islam Dan Hukum Umum* (Teraju, 2004).

¹⁹ Nawawi, 'Quo Vadis Nikah Sirri Perspektif Hukum Islam', *Al-Qadha: Jurnal Hukum Islam Dan Perundang-Undangan* 7, no. 2 (2020): 117–27; Asripa, 'Nikah Sirri Dalam Perspektif Islam', *Imtiyaz: Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman* 4, no. 1 (2020): 42–61.

life, affection, mercy, benefits, or happiness.²⁰ In the context of national law, *nikah sirri* is not recognized²¹, but there is an avenue for regularization: *itsbat nikah* (confirmation of marriage) in the Religious Court.²² However, this confirmation also represents a divided stance within national law. On the one hand, *nikah sirri* is invalid and has no legal consequences, but on the other hand, it can subsequently be affirmed through *itsbat*.

Building on the discussion above, this article examines how various branches of legal science are taught within higher education institutions in Indonesia. Furthermore, the article explores efforts to integrate and interconnect these various branches of legal sciences into a unified study program capable of accommodating them all. Such an approach would enable students to develop a more comprehensive understanding of Indonesian law. In practice, conflicts between legal systems in the field, as illustrated in the preceding cases, can be avoided.

The integrative-interconnective approach has already been applied to Islamic law (Sharia) in Yogyakarta through the Jogja School of Thought or Sunan Kalijaga School of Thought.²³ This approach enables Shariah to engage in dialogue with, and draw upon, tools from various other disciplines, thereby fostering its development. By contrast, legal science (civil law) has not been as open to this integrative-interconnective approach, as reflected in the cases discussed earlier. Accordingly, this article considers how legal science might advance by adopting the integrative-interconnective framework introduced by Amin Abdullah.²⁴

The proposal to integrate and interconnect four branches of legal studies by proposing the establishment of a Department of Indonesian Legal Studies goes beyond existing research. In Indonesia, legal education has often focused on single branch, leaving unresolved the need for a more comprehensive curriculum. Current curricula remain ineffective and disconnected from the social foundation of society.²⁵ Accordingly, there is an urgent need to strengthen a curriculum by grounding them in the pursuit of social justice.²⁶ This involves reforming conventional teaching methods through critical thinking to achieve justice²⁷ and enhance legal skills by aligning theory and

²⁰ Nurliana Nurliana, 'Hikmatut Tasyri' Marriage Perspective of Islamic Law', *Jurnal Mediasas : Media Ilmu Syari'ah Dan Ahwal Al-Syakhsyiyah* 6, no. 1 (2023): 14, <https://doi.org/10.58824/mediasas.v6i1.578>.

²¹ Sarkanto and Fouad Larhizar, 'Unregistered Marriages in Islamic Law: Ensuring Children's Rights amidst Legal Validity', *Amorti: Jurnal Studi Islam Interdisipliner*, 31 July 2024, 128–38, <https://doi.org/10.59944/amorti.v3i3.345>.

²² Rifqi Kurnia Wazzan et al., 'Itsbat Nikah: Legalizing Marriage Outside the Record in Indonesia', *International Review of Social Sciences Research* 4, no. 2 (2024): 29–45, <https://doi.org/10.53378/353057>. particularly for marriages that occurred after 1974 without an official certificate and were not registered in the compilation of Islamic law (KHI)

²³ Waryani Fajar Riyanto, *Mazhab Sunan Kalijaga (Refleksi Setengah Abad Genealogi Epistemologi Studi Ilmu Hukum Islam Integratif di Fakultas Syari'ah dan Hukum UIN Sunan Kalijaga 1963-2013)* (KKS Syariah Press, 2014).

²⁴ M. Amin Abdullah, *Multidisiplin, Interdisiplin Dan Transdisiplin: Metode Studi Agama Dan Studi Islam Di Era Kontemporer* (IB Pustaka, 2021).

²⁵ Antarin Prasanthi and Daryono, 'The Indonesia Legal Education: Advancing Law Student's Understanding to Real Legal Issues', *The Indonesian Journal of Socio-Legal Studies* 2, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.54828/ijsls.2023v2n2.4>.

²⁶ Otong Rosadi and Awaludin Marwan, 'Transformation of Legal Education in Indonesia Based on Social Justice', *Journal of Politics and Law* 13, no. 1 (2020): 143, <https://doi.org/10.5539/jpl.v13n1p143>.

²⁷ Sepriandison Saragih and Hotmaida Simanjuntak, 'Status of Higher Legal Education and Student Requirements in Realizing a Justice Law', *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research* 4, no. 3 (2023): 1044–51, <https://doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.04.03.31>.

practice with clinical legal education.²⁸ In terms of technology, this entails embracing digital legal education post-COVID-19²⁹ and addressing the emergence of artificial intelligence by preparing curricula, fostering digital literacy, and addressing its ethical implications for legal education.³⁰

On a global scale, the intensification of international interactions requires higher legal education to incorporate comparative perspectives across legal systems.³¹ The influence of U.S. and U.K. legal traditions, for instance, has affected other systems, such as Brazil, Russia, India, and China, creating pressure for reforms in legal higher education.³² Likewise, the legacy of Roman law and the rise of legal positivism have led to the detachment of law from other fields of knowledge³³, as evident in China, where the law lacks a humanistic dimension.³⁴ In India, the bifurcation of legal education into a double-track³⁵ has failed to produce legal professionals who advocate for marginalized communities to access justice.³⁶

Legal positivism has also led French law graduates and legal scholars to align themselves with the status quo.³⁷ This tendency is even more pronounced in Russia, where the state wields significant power and universities have lost much of their autonomy.³⁸ In Ukraine, legal education remains unevenly distributed, producing graduates with limited professional capacity.³⁹ In Poland, legal education has become overly technical.⁴⁰ These examples highlight the need for more comprehensive legal education grounded in each context's social, economic, and historical

²⁸ Saru Arifin et al., 'Adoption and Implementation of Clinical Legal Education Programmes in the Indonesian Legal Education System', *Asian Journal of Legal Education* 8, no. 1 (2021): 52–65, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2322005820961208>; Saru Arifin, 'Clinical Legal Education in the Theory and Practice in the Indonesian Law School', *The Indonesian Journal of International Clinical Legal Education* 1, no. 1 (2019): 11–18, <https://doi.org/10.15294/iccle.v1i01.20626>; Rodiyah Rodiyah, 'Clinical Legal Education in Indonesia Objectives and Advantages', *The Indonesian Journal of International Clinical Legal Education* 1, no. 1 (2019): 1, <https://doi.org/10.15294/iccle.v1i01.20801>.

²⁹ Ni Komang Arie Suwastini et al., 'Online Learning Amidst Covid-19: Its Challenges on Higher Education in Indonesia', *Jurnal Pendidikan Teknologi Dan Kejuruan* 21, no. 2 (2024): 156–67, <https://doi.org/10.23887/jptkuniksha.v21i2.76176>.

³⁰ Henry Arianto, 'Readiness of the Legal Education System in Indonesia in Facing the Era of Artificial Intelligence', *International Journal of Social Health* 3, no. 2 (2024): 155–62, <https://doi.org/10.58860/ijsh.v3i2.163>.

³¹ Muhammad Imran Ali, 'Comparative Legal Research-Building a Legal Attitude for a Transnational World', *Journal of Legal Studies* 26, no. 40 (2020): 66–80, <https://doi.org/10.2478/jles-2020-0012>.

³² O. Vinnichenko and E. Gladun, 'Legal Education in The BRICS Countries in The Context of Globalization: A Comparative Analysis', *BRICS Law Journal* 5, no. 3 (2018): 4–39, <https://doi.org/10.21684/2412-2343-2018-5-3-4-39>.

³³ Sabino Cassese, 'Legal Education Under Fire', *European Review of Private Law* 25, no. Issue 1 (2017): 143–49, <https://doi.org/10.54648/ERPL2017007>.

³⁴ Ruohan Li, 'Rethinking on China's Higher Legal Education Reform', *International Journal of Information and Education Technology* 9, no. 8 (2019): 553–58, <https://doi.org/10.18178/ijiet.2019.9.8.1265>.

³⁵ Hari Hara Sudhan Ramaswamy, 'The Prospect of Legal Education: An India Overview', *Journal of Legal Studies* 25, no. 39 (2020): 31–43, <https://doi.org/10.2478/jles-2020-0002>.

³⁶ Daksha Sharma and Smriti Kumari, 'Role of Legal Education in Advancement of Access to Justice: A Panormic Insight', *Asian Journal of Legal Education* 11, no. 2 (2024): 141–49, <https://doi.org/10.1177/23220058241253403>.

³⁷ Liora Israël and Rachel Vanneville, 'Legal Training and the Reshaping of French Elite: Lessons from an Ethnography of Law Classes in Two French Elite Higher Education Institutions', *Journal of Education and Work* 30, no. 2 (2017): 156–67, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2017.1278905>.

³⁸ Boris N. Topornin, 'Legal Reform and Development of Higher Legal Education in Russia', *Gosudarstvo i Pravo*, no. 2 (2022): 249, <https://doi.org/10.31857/S102694520018872-0>.

³⁹ Nataliia Kostova et al., 'Higher Legal Education in Ukraine in the 21st Century: Current Situation and Development Issues', *Revista Amazonia Investiga* 9, no. 27 (2020): 42–51, <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2020.27.03.5>.

⁴⁰ Adam Czarnota et al., 'The Hidden Curriculum in Legal Education', *Krytyka Prawa* 10, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.7206/kp.2080-1084.193>.

realities, such as through autoethnographic methods.⁴¹ Yet such studies have rarely addressed the challenges of legal education in a plural legal system-- where multiple legal orders coexist within a single country, as in Indonesia. As a result, they have not provided an integrated framework for legal education.

Several issues concerning legal education in Indonesia have long revolved around its orientation: The broader dynamics of law and politics have significantly influenced policies on legal education. During the period of liberal democracy, legal education reflected a liberal orientation. While under a guided democracy, legal education was reshaped by the dominant political framework.⁴² In the New Order era, for example, when Mochtar Kusumaatmadja served as Minister of Justice, legal education was reformed to align more closely with the government's developmental vision, with law regarded as a tool of social engineering.⁴³

At this point, the emerging problem is whether legal education should primarily aim to produce legal scholars in a general sense, or to prepare practitioners in a way that makes it function more like vocational training. Within the civil law tradition, legal scholars tend to emphasize that graduates ought to be educated as jurists. In contrast, stakeholders in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches expect graduates to be readily equipped with practical skills for immediate professional application.⁴⁴

Nevertheless, as curricula have increasingly shifted toward the technical dimensions of law, scholars have criticized legal education for producing graduates who fail to embody a vision of social justice, primarily due to the growing dominance of legal formalism.⁴⁵ Furthermore, legal education in Indonesia has often neglected the reality of legal pluralism within society. As a result, many graduates lack the necessary awareness that multiple legal systems coexist alongside state law—systems which are often marginalized because graduates and practitioners remain largely unaware of their normative significance.⁴⁶ To date, however, legal pluralism has been advanced merely as a perspective, without extending to efforts aimed at integrating legal pluralism into the policy framework of disciplinary structuring within legal education.

Another concern arises from the challenges of lawmaking, the entrenched formalism of the normative legal system, and the rapid development of society. More specifically, legal education in Indonesia has not adequately accommodated socio-legal studies. It remains confined within the framework of legal positivism, thereby failing to bridge the gap between legal dogmatics and the pursuit of social justice. Opportunities for experiential learning within society are also limited, particularly concerning legal pluralism, despite the empirical reality that communities often select among legal systems and forums for dispute resolution, a practice frequently referred to as *forum shopping*. Irianto proposes an interdisciplinary approach with socio-legal studies as the point of

⁴¹ Elaine Gregersen, 'Telling Stories about the Law School: Autoethnography and Legal Education', *The Law Teacher* 56, no. 2 (2022): 241–56, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03069400.2021.1949182>.

⁴² Adriaan Bedner and Jacqueline Vel, 'Legal Education in Indonesia', *The Indonesian Journal of Socio-Legal Studies* 1, no. 1 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.54828/ijsls.2021v1n1.6>.

⁴³ June S. Katz and Ronald S. Katz, 'Law Reform in Post-Sukarno Indonesia', *The International Lawyer* 10, no. 2 (1976): 340–41.

⁴⁴ Bedner and Vel, 'Legal Education in Indonesia'.

⁴⁵ Rosadi and Marwan, 'Transformation of Legal Education in Indonesia Based on Social Justice'.

⁴⁶ I. Nyoman Putu Budiarta, 'The Legal Pluralism in Law Education in Indonesia', *Journal of Advanced Research in Law and Economics (JARLE)* XI, no. 49 (2020): 771–74.

entry, alongside the strengthening of law-and-society studies.⁴⁷ Yet her work has not offered a model for integrating these approaches across different departments within legal studies in Indonesia.

These studies arise from concerns that legal education has not yet provided effective solutions for those seeking justice. Legal positivism remains a persistent challenge in Indonesia, and substantive or social justice has yet to be fully realized, necessitating reforms in legal education. To date, however, no research has proposed a model for integrating and interconnecting the various branches of legal studies within the framework of legal pluralism into a single department in higher education. Such a department—the Department of Indonesian Legal Studies—could offer holistic legal education grounded in a vision of social justice anchored in Indonesia's social, economic, cultural, and historical realities.

RESEARCH METHODS

Beginning with the problem of legal studies being fragmented into multiple sub-disciplines across separate programs, this article adopts a system philosophy akin to that employed by Jasser Auda in reforming *usul al-fiqh* (the philosophy of Islamic law) through *maqasid al-sharia* (the purposes of Islamic law).⁴⁸ System philosophy rejects both modernist and postmodernist views on law, instead emphasizing a holistic, teleological, reconstructive, rational, and cognitive approach.⁴⁹

When law is understood as a system, it is seen as a whole composed of interconnected and mutually influencing components. Law is not merely a collection of isolated regulations but part of a framework that shapes and evolves with Indonesian society. By adopting a systemic approach, the study of interactions among civil law, Islamic law, and customary law enables a more holistic understanding of how to develop a coherent and effective legal system capable of regulating society.

This paper proposes the establishment of an integrative-interconnective Department of Indonesian Legal Studies. To formulate this concept, it adopts features of systemic philosophy, including cognition, holism, openness, intentionality, and hierarchy. To ensure that the outcomes remain aligned with Indonesia's legal culture, the application of this systemic philosophy is framed through Friedman's legal system theory—encompassing legal substance, legal structure, and legal culture⁵⁰—and discussed in relation to the integrative-interconnective approach of M. Amin Abdullah.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Pluralism in Legal Education in Indonesia

Indonesia values societal pluralism, where legal pluralism is one of its consequences. Accordingly, legal pluralism exists and evolves, encompassing civil, Islamic, and customary law.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Sulistyowati Irianto, 'LEGALEDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE OF INDONESIA: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT', *Indonesian Journal of Socio-Legal Studies* 1, no. 1 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.54828/ijsls.2021v1n1.1>.

⁴⁸ Jasser Auda, *Maqasid Al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach* (The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2007); Elva Imeldatur Rohmah and Zainatul Ilmiah, 'Reinterpretation of Maqashid Al-Sharia in Indonesian Legal Products', *ALFIQH Islamic Law Review Journal* 2, no. 3 (2023): 3.

⁴⁹ Ludwig Von Bertalanffy, *General System Theory: Foundation, Development, Application* (George Braziller, 1968), 4.

⁵⁰ Lawrence M. Friedman, *The Legal System: A Social Science Perspective* (Russell Sage Foundation, 1975).

⁵¹ Isra and Tegnan, 'Legal Syncretism or the Theory of Unity in Diversity as an Alternative to Legal Pluralism in Indonesia'.

Legal education institutions play a crucial role in preserving and developing the legal system. In the civil law tradition, the Dutch colonial administration required officials trained in civil law, which led to the establishment of Batavia *Rechtschool*.⁵² By contrast, Islamic law was historically studied in mosques and *surau* (small prayer houses) and intensively and structurally in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools), where its study was considered a religious obligation. Customary law, on the other hand, has been transmitted orally and through practice across generations within communities, without formal educational institutions, due to its flexible and fluid nature that varies across regions.

Over time, civil law has developed a more structured framework for its preservation, teaching, and advancement. Today, civil law disciplines are taught within the Department of Legal Science, supplemented by the Civil Law department in the Faculty of Law. Meanwhile, Islamic law is studied in Islamic higher education institutions under the Faculty of Shariah. Customary law, on the other hand, is examined within a specialised Customary Law program. To date, however, only Hindu higher education institutions have a Customary Law program, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: *List of Legal Studies Departments at Universities in Indonesia*

No	The Fields of Legal Studies	Nomenclature of Bachelor's Degree Departments	Nomenclature of the Hosting Faculty	Hosting Campus
1	Legal Studies	Legal Science Law Business Law	Faculty of Law	Public or Private University Islamic Universities
2	Sharia Law/ Islamic Law	Islamic Family Law (<i>Ahwal Al-Syakhsiyah</i> HKI) Sharia Economy Law (<i>Muamalah</i>) Sharia Business Law (<i>Muamalah</i>) Constitutional Law (<i>Siyasah Syar'iyah</i>) Islamic Criminal Law (<i>Jinayah</i>) Comparative Schools of Jurisprudence	Faculty of Sharia Faculty of Sharia and Law Faculty of Sharia and Islamic Economics	Islamic Universities
3	Hindu Law	Hindu Law Hindu Religious Law	Religious Studies, Arts, and Culture; Dharma Duta, Brahma Widya, Dharma Sastra	Public or private Hindu Universities
4	Customary law	Customary Law		

Source: *Analysed from the primary source.*

⁵² Upik Djalins, 'Paul Scholten and the Founding of the Batavia Rechtshogeschool', in *Aristotelian Protestantism in Legal Philosophy: Rethinking Paul Scholten for the 21st Century*, by Liesbeth Huppess-Cluysenaer (DPSP, 2022), 354–55.

1. Legal Departments

Initially, legal positions in the Dutch East Indies could only be held by educated Dutch nationals who had passed special examinations, as regulated by Stb. 1864 No. 93. With the introduction of the Ethical Policy, opportunities for native Indonesians to pursue education gradually began to open. In December 1905, the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies submitted a proposal to the Minister of Justice, Idenberg, to establish a judicial school for indigenous citizens. This proposal was later brought before Parliament and approved, resulting in the allocation of funds to establish a law school in the Dutch East Indies.⁵³

The teaching and study of legal science formally began in 1909 with the establishment of the *Rechtsschool*⁵⁴, a law school equivalent to high school, opened by Governor-General J.B. van Heutsz through Stb. 93/1909.⁵⁵ In practice, this school was intended to produce clerks, prosecutors, and judges for the *Landraad* (native court). The school was closed in 1924, and after which the *Rechtshoogeschool te Batavia* (Higher School of Law) was established. This school garnered significant interest from students, and by 1927, it had enrolled 137 students.⁵⁶

The *Rechtshoogeschool* was suspended during the Japanese occupation. Following the proclamation of independence, the government took over the campus, which was transformed into the Faculty of Law at the University of Indonesia in 1950.⁵⁷ From there, law faculties gradually expanded across Indonesia. By the 1960s, many public and private universities had established their own faculties of law. In the 2000s, professional legal education programs (*Pendidikan Profesi Hukum*, PPH) were introduced to complement undergraduate legal education and to train future legal practitioners. Today, several universities in Indonesia also offer postgraduate programs in law, including doctoral (Ph.D) degrees.

The Law Science Study Program is part of the Indonesian Association of Law Higher Education Leaders (*Asosiasi Pimpinan Perguruan Tinggi Hukum Indonesia*, APPTHI), which was established on April 27, 2015. This forum subsequently formed the Association of Indonesian Law Science Study Program Providers (*Asosiasi Penyelenggara Program Studi Ilmu Hukum Indonesia*, APPSIHI) and the Indonesian Legal Profession Association (*Asosiasi Profesi Hukum Indonesia*, APHI). APPTHI oversees the development of legal education programs, while APHI facilitates the development of professional certification for legal practitioners. According to APHI records, there are 3,200 law science study departments across all levels of higher education in Indonesia.⁵⁸

In general, the nomenclature used is the Legal Science Department (*Ilmu Hukum*) or the Department of Law. Some universities, such as the Islamic University of Indonesia (UII), also offer a Department of Business Law.⁵⁹ Several Departments of Legal Science provide various

⁵³ Soetandyo Wignjosebroto, *Dari Hukum Kolonial Ke Hukum Nasional: Dinamika Sosial-Politik Dalam Perkembangan Hukum Di Indonesia* (HUMA, Van Vollenhoven Institute Leiden, KITLV-Jakarta, Epistema Institute, 2014), 148–49.

⁵⁴ Dandang Hartanto, *Pengantar Ilmu Hukum* (UMSU Press, 2022), 24.

⁵⁵ Mardjono Reksodiputro, 'Reformasi Dan Reorientasi Pendidikan Tinggi Hukum Di Indonesia', *Tim Peneliti Komisi Hukum Nasional*, 2004.

⁵⁶ Djalins, 'Paul Scholten and the Founding of the Batavia Rechtshogeschool', 355–56; Daniel S. Lev, *Hukum Dan Politik Di Indonesia: Kesenambungan Dan Perubahan*, 5th ed. (LP3ES, 2018), 305–7.

⁵⁷ Lev, *Hukum Dan Politik Di Indonesia: Kesenambungan Dan Perubahan*, 305–7.

⁵⁸ APHI, 'Sejarah Asosiasi Profesi Hukum Indonesia', 2023, <https://aphi.or.id/history.html>.

⁵⁹ UII, 'Sarjana Hukum Bisnis', UII, 2024, <https://www.uui.ac.id/program-pendidikan/sarjana-hukum-bisnis/>.

concentrations or specializations, including criminal law, civil law, constitutional law, administrative law, and international law. Only a few universities offer specializations in Islamic law, such as at UII and Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), or in customary law, also available at UGM.

The scarcity of universities offering concentrations in Islamic law or customary law within law programs impacts graduates, as they lack a comprehensive understanding of Indonesia's plural legal order. Most are familiar only with civil law, even though Islamic law and customary law remain living, applicable in society, and formally recognized by the state. As a result, when these graduates later serve as judges, lawyers, or law enforcement officers handling cases related to customary law or Islamic law in, for instance, Religious Courts, they frequently encounter difficulties and may fail to achieve substantive justice.

2. Islamic Law Departments

Islamic law is one of the legal disciplines taught at both public and private Islamic universities. While legal studies may appear as a specialization or concentration, the field of Islamic law is offered through a range of departments, including Islamic Family Law (*Ahwal Al-Syakhsyah*, AS, HKI), Sharia Economics Law (*Muamalah*, MU, HESy), Constitutional Law (*Siyasah Syar'iyah*, HTN), Islamic Criminal Law (*Jinayah*, JS), Comparative Legal Schools (Perbandingan Mazhab Hukum, PMH), and Islamic Astronomy (*Falak*), as shown in Table 2. At the postgraduate level, the Faculty also offers a Sharia Department. All of these study programs share an identical graduate profile: producing practitioners of Islamic law. Historically, the Faculty had more departments, but some were merged with other faculties. The Department of Tafsir and Hadith was merged with the Faculty of Ushuluddin in 1974, while the Department of Islamic Finance, Islamic Banking, and Islamic Economics departments were integrated into the Faculty of Economics and Islamic Business.

Table 2: *Genealogy of the Islamic Law Departments at the Faculty of Sharia and Law at UIN Sunan Kalijaga*

Year	Faculty of Sharia (and Law)			
1960	Tafsir and Hadith		<i>Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudent)</i>	
	Tafsir	Hadith	Civil and Criminal Law	
1974	Tafsir-Hadits		Religious Court	
	Faculty of Ushuluddin			
1988	PM		Muamalat Jinayah	
1998	PMH		MU	JS AS
2001	KUI			
2009	IH			
2013	Siyasah			
2016	PMH	IH	HESy	FEBI HTN HKI

Source: Mazhab Sunan Kalijaga, *Refleksi Setengah Abad Genealogi Epistemologi Studi Ilmu Hukum Islam Integratif di Fakultas Syariah dan Hukum UIN Sunan Kalijaga 1963-2013*.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Riyanto, *Mazhab Sunan Kalijaga (Refleksi Setengah Abad Genealogi Epistemologi Studi Ilmu Hukum Islam Integratif di Fakultas Syari'ah dan Hukum UIN Sunan Kalijaga 1963-2013)*, 8.

Initially, all study programs in the Islamic law discipline awarded the title *Doktorandus/Doktoranda* (Drs). This was later changed to Bachelor of Religious Studies (S.Ag), then to Bachelor of Islamic Law (SHI). It subsequently evolved into Bachelor of Sharia (S.Sy) and, most recently, was transformed into Bachelor of Law (SH), in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs Number 33 of 2016 in conjunction with 38 of 2017. From a legal-political perspective, this change reflects the effort of the Islamic Law discipline to align itself with civil law. From a scholarly perspective, it demonstrates that Sharia studies are moving closer to, and attempting to integrate with, civil law.⁶¹

Many view this change positively, particularly in the Religious Courts, as it aligns with one of the graduate profiles of Sharia studies.⁶² However, challenges remain, as noted in the introduction and exemplified by cases such as UMS and PPD. In this regard, under Article 9(1)(d) of Law 16 of 2004 regarding Prosecutor,⁶³ Attorney General Basrief Arief stated that the institution was not yet prepared to accept graduates holding a Shariah degree as candidates for the prosecutor's office.⁶⁴ This restriction prompted several Sharia alumni to file a judicial review of the law with the Constitutional Court.⁶⁵ Similarly, the Supreme Court has also not opened the opportunity for Syariah graduates to serve as judges and court clerks in the General Courts. These opportunities are available to Law graduates, who can pursue careers as judges and court clerks in all judicial environments, including the Religious Courts.⁶⁶

Similarly, Article 3(e) of Law No. 2 of 2014 amending Law No. 30 of 2004 on Notary Positions, requires that candidate for notarial profession hold a bachelor's degree in law.⁶⁷ However, the Association of Notary Program Providers (MKn) has narrowly interpreted this provision as referring specifically to the Bachelor of Law in the Faculty of Law. An exception exist, however: a graduate of the Sharia Business Law Department at UIN Malang was admitted to the Master of Notary program at the University of Brawijaya. This cas stands in contrast at other universities, such as Airlangga University.⁶⁸

In university-level legal studies, particularly during the transformation of the State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) into the State Islamic University (UIN), the envisioned vision is integration

⁶¹ Mohamad Nur Yasin, 'Politik Hukum Pemberlakuan Gelar "Sarjana Hukum" untuk Alumni Jurusan Hukum Bisnis Syariah', *Jurisdictie: Jurnal Hukum dan Syariah* 7, no. 2 (2016): 2, <https://doi.org/10.18860/j.v7i2.3856>.

⁶² Arsal Arsal et al., 'Pemberdayaan Profesi Hakim pada Kompetensi Lulusan Fakultas Syariah IAIN Bukittinggi Pasca Perubahan Gelar Akademik', *Jurnal Dedikasia : Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 2, no. 1 (2022): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.30983/dedikasia.v2i1.5540>.

⁶³ Law No. 16 of 2004 Concerning the Attorney General's Office of the Republic of Indonesia, 16 (2004), art. 9, <https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Details/40511/uu-no-16-tahun-2004> (1)d.

⁶⁴ Tri Jata Ayu Pramesti, 'Bolehkah Sarjana Hukum Islam (S.H.I.) Mencalonkan Diri Menjadi Jaksa?', *hukumonline.com*, 13 January 2015, <https://hukumonline.com/klinik/a/bolehkah-sarjana-hukum-islam-shi-mencalonkan-diri-menjadi-jaksa-lt54dae77961d81/>.

⁶⁵ Dinda Shabrina, 'Gagal Seleksi Jadi Jaksa, Dua Alumni UIN Jakarta Gugat UU Kejaksaan Ke Mahkamah Konstitusi', *Tempo.Co*, Desember 2024, <https://www.tempo.co/hukum/gagal-seleksi-jadi-jaksa-dua-alumni-uin-jakarta-gugat-uu-kejaksaan-ke-mahkamah-konstitusi-1179865>.

⁶⁶ Yasin, 'Politik Hukum Pemberlakuan Gelar "Sarjana Hukum" untuk Alumni Jurusan Hukum Bisnis Syariah', 181–82.

⁶⁷ Republic of Indonesia, 'Law Number 2 of 2014 Concerning Amendments to Law Number 30 of 2004 on the Position of Notary', Pub. L. No. 2, 5491 (2014), art. 3, [https://jdih.tanjungpinangkota.go.id/data_file/613/uu%20_%2002%20_%202014%20_%20jdih\(57\).pdf](https://jdih.tanjungpinangkota.go.id/data_file/613/uu%20_%2002%20_%202014%20_%20jdih(57).pdf) (

⁶⁸ Yasin, 'Politik Hukum Pemberlakuan Gelar "Sarjana Hukum" untuk Alumni Jurusan Hukum Bisnis Syariah', 183–84.

and interconnection, especially at UIN Sunan Kalijaga. Yet within the Faculty of Shariah, integration between the branches of civil law and Shariah law has not materialized. Instead of integration, a new department, the Bachelor of Laws, has been introduced, adding to the existing Shariah departments and creating confusion,⁶⁹ because its curriculum is not integrated.⁷⁰ The nomenclature of the Faculty of Shariah was not merged but expanded to become the Faculty of Shariah and Law. In other universities, alternative designations are used, such as the Faculty of Shariah and Legal Studies.

A significant overlap among the various departments within the Faculty of Shariah has proven to be cumbersome. In 2019-2020 academic year, the author was appointed by the Dean of the Faculty of Shariah at IAIN Metro as the secretary of the curriculum formulation committee, which covered the undergraduate programs in Islamic Family Law (HKI/*Ahwal al-Syakhsiyah*), Islamic Economic Law (HESy/*Muamalah*), and Islamic Constitutional Law (HTN/*Siyasah Syar'iyah*). Curriculum regulations under the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (KKNI) require that program-specific courses contain at least of 60% distinctive content. Meeting this requirement has proven difficult, as nearly 70% of the courses in these three programs are essentially identical. In other words, the differences among these three programs amount to no more than 30%.

The most fundamental issue is that the graduate profiles of these three programs are essentially identical: practitioners of Islamic law, such as judges, lawyers, and legal consultants.⁷¹ The only distinction is functional: graduates of Islamic Family Law may serve as marriage registrars⁷², graduates of Islamic Economic Law may work in Islamic financial institutions⁷³, and graduates of Constitutional Law may work as legal drafters for the Election Commission (KPU).⁷⁴

However, all three programs are equipped with the same core courses that prepare graduates for these professional fields. In addition, within the Faculty of Shariah itself, the sudden popularity of the Bachelor of Laws among new students has led to a decline in interest in other programs, particularly Islamic Criminal Law (*Jinayah*) and Comparative Legal Schools. Some study programs have even been temporarily suspended.

3. Hindu Law Departments

Hindu law is relatively new academic department. It is seldom discussed in scholarly literature, and few studies have been devoted to this field. Some authors classify it as part of customary law. However, including Hindu law in customary law seems inappropriate because of its different nature. Customary law is grounded in secular community practices and is transmitted across generations,

⁶⁹ Riyanto, *Mazhab Sunan Kalijaga (Refleksi Setengah Abad Genealogi Epistemologi Studi Ilmu Hukum Islam Integratif di Fakultas Syari'ah dan Hukum UIN Sunan Kalijaga 1963-2013)*.

⁷⁰ Department of Law Bachelor Degree, 'Kurikulum Program Studi S1 Ilmu Hukum UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta', 2024, <https://ilmuhukum.uin-suka.ac.id/id/page/kurikulum>.

⁷¹ Ministry of Religious Affairs of Republic Indonesia, *Standar Kompetensi Lulusan (SKL) Dan Capaian Pembelajaran Lulusan (CPL)*, in *Pendis Press* (2021), 48–60, <https://pendispress.kemenag.go.id/index.php/ppress/catalog/book/6>.

⁷² Ministry of Religious Affairs of Republic Indonesia, *Standar Kompetensi Lulusan (SKL) Dan Capaian Pembelajaran Lulusan (CPL)*, 85.

⁷³ Ministry of Religious Affairs of Republic Indonesia, *Standar Kompetensi Lulusan (SKL) Dan Capaian Pembelajaran Lulusan (CPL)*, 41.

⁷⁴ Ministry of Religious Affairs of Republic Indonesia, *Standar Kompetensi Lulusan (SKL) Dan Capaian Pembelajaran Lulusan (CPL)*, 63.

whereas Hindu law derives from religious teachings with a divine dimension.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, the character of Hindu law in Bali is closely intertwined with customary law, making it difficult to separate the two, where Hindu law provides the guiding framework for Balinese customary law.⁷⁶

The principles and laws of Bali regulate the mechanisms of family formation as well as the rights and obligations of family members.⁷⁷ Similarly, in Balinese traditional villages, *awig-awig*—village regulations—, play a central role in maintaining order and resolving disputes through the *Sabha Kertha*. The enforcement of Hindu law in Bali is also carried out, among other things, by *Pecalang*. This legal system, therefore, has the potential to be further developed to contribute to the advancement of national law.⁷⁸

As an academic department, Hindu Law is a specialized field focusing on laws related to the Hindu religion. The program is designed to produce graduates with a deep understanding of the principles of Hindu legal principles and the ability to apply them in relevant social and cultural contexts. However, the existing curriculum still includes general core law courses as its foundation. In Indonesia, several universities and educational institutions offer Hindu Law study programs. One of them is the Hindu University of Indonesia (UNHI), which has established a Department of Hindu Law. This department provides comprehensive knowledge of laws related to the Hindu, covering aspects of Hindu philosophy, rituals, and regulations governing religious life.⁷⁹

The State Hindu University I Gusti Sugriwa (UHNS) also offers a Department of Hindu Law. This department aims to produce graduates who can become competent Hindu legal experts and contribute to advancing the understanding and application of Hindu law in society.⁸⁰ Similar department also exist at the State Institute for Hindu Studies (IAHN) in Tampung Penyang⁸¹ and IAHN Gde Pudja Mataram⁸² and the Mpu Kuturan Singaraja Hindu Theological College.⁸³

The Hindu Law Study Program is designed to produce graduates who can serve as Hindu legal experts, legal consultants in the context of Hinduism, academics, researchers, or professionals in institutions related to enforcement of Hindu law. Graduates of this program are expected to make positif contribution to the development and sustainability of Hindu law in Indonesian society. Within this study program, students explore various aspects of Hindu law, including core teachings, moral and ethical principles, worship procedures, Hindu family law, Hindu inheritance law, and

⁷⁵ Dewa Krisna Prasada et al., 'The Position of Legal Customary Rules in the Divorce System of the Hindu Community in Bali', *SOCIETAS* 12, no. 2 (2024): 104–24.

⁷⁶ Wisnawa, 'Hindu Legal Philosophy in Ngelinggihang Dewa Hyang Tradition'.

⁷⁷ I. Gusti Ayu Jatiana Manik Wedanti et al., 'Inheritance in Balinese Customary Law: Dynamics and Its Linkage With Hindu Law', *Jurnal Indonesia Sosial Teknologi* 5, no. 01 (2024): 52–67, <https://doi.org/10.59141/jist.v5i1.860>.

⁷⁸ Ni Luh Gede Hadriani, 'Transformasi Hukum Hindu dalam Pembangunan Hukum Nasional di Tengah Dinamika Kehidupan Sosial Budaya', *Maha Widya Bhuwana: Jurnal Pendidikan, Agama dan Budaya* 2, no. 2 (2020): 29–30, <https://doi.org/10.55115/bhuwana.v2i2.381>.

⁷⁹ Indonesia Hindu University, 'Prodi Hukum Hindu', 2024, <https://site.unhi.ac.id/id/study-programs/hukum-agama-hindu>.

⁸⁰ I Gusti Sugriwa State Hindu University (UHN), 'Membangankan, Prodi Hukum-Hindu UHN Sugriwa Raih Predikat Unggul Akreditasi BAN PT', 2024, <https://uhnsugriwa.ac.id/berita-ihdn/membangankan-prodi-hukum-hindu-uhnsugriwa-raih-predikat-unggul-akreditasi-ban-pt/5/>.

⁸¹ IAHN Tampung Penyang, 'Program Studi Hukum Agama Hindu', *IAHN Tampung Penyang*, 2024, <https://iahttp.ac.id/fakultas/fakultas-dharma-sastra/hukum-agama-hindu/>.

⁸² IAHN Gde Pudja Mataram, 'Hukum Adat | IAHN Gde Pudja Mataram', 2024, <https://iahn-gdepudja.ac.id/id/prodi/profile/HUKUM-ADAT>.

⁸³ STAHN Mpu Kuturan Singaraja, *Hukum Hindu (S-1) – STAHN Mpu Kuturan Singaraja*, 2024, <https://stahnmpukuturan.ac.id/akreditasi>.

other legal aspects relevant to Hinduism. Students also receive training in research methods in Hindu law and engage in discussions and analyses of legal cases related to Hinduism.

4. Customary Law Departments

During the colonial era, customary law held a significant position and was recognized as a living law. Various terms were used to describe it, such as tradition, custom, customary law, and popular law. Generally, however, customary law is understood as an uncodified set of rules governing the life of Indigenous communities. It typically encompasses the social order and life cycle of individuals within the community.⁸⁴ Studying customary law requires an interdisciplinary approach involving cultural sciences or humanities, including anthropology, history, linguistics, psychology, archaeology, literature, and the arts.

One of the most prominent figures associated with customary law in Indonesia is Van Vollenhoven, who played a crucial role in advancing the recognition of customary law in the archipelago against the backdrop of the Dutch colonial rule.⁸⁵ However, during the New Order era, both Islamic law and customary law—as forms of popular law—were overshadowed by the dominance of civil law traditions, which had been institutionalized as the official state law with a strong, centralizing character.⁸⁶ As a result, the development of customary law regressed during this period. Legal pluralism, however, regained strength in the post-Reformation era when the power of the state began to weaken.

The emergence of academic programs in customary law reflects the weakening of state power in the face of strengthening legal pluralism. Customary law is sometimes discussed in juxtaposition with local wisdom. Such programs in customary law have been established in religious higher education institutions, including IAHN Gde Pudja Mataram⁸⁷; Universitas Hindu Indonesia⁸⁸; and the Markandeya Bali Institute of Technology and Education.⁸⁹

Integration-Interconnection of Indonesian Legal Studies Departments as Transdisciplinary

5. Substantive Cognition of Indonesian Legal Studies Departments

In the realm of substance and the question of being, thinkers are generally divided into two camps: realists and nominalists. Realists argue that entities exist independently of the subject, observable in external reality. Nominalists, by contrast, maintain that entities exist only in the perspective and imagination of the observing subject.⁹⁰ In legal thought, the realist perspective—most prominently

⁸⁴ Manse, 'The Plural Legacies of Legal Pluralism'.

⁸⁵ Moritz Koenig, 'The Indisch Tijdschrift van Het Recht, 1915–1947: A Critical Reassessment of Dutch Colonial Legal Sources', *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde / Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia* (Leiden, The Netherlands) 180, no. 1 (2024): 62–94, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-bja10059>.

⁸⁶ Ratno Lukito, *Legal Pluralism in Indonesia: Bridging the Unbridgeable* (Routledge, 2012), 86–87.

⁸⁷ IAHN Gde Pudja Mataram, 'Hukum Adat | IAHN Gde Pudja Mataram'.

⁸⁸ Indonesia Hindu University, 'Program Studi Hukum Adat', 2024, <https://site.unhi.ac.id/id/study-programs/hukum-adat>.

⁸⁹ Markandeya Institute for Technology and Education Bali, 'Program Studi Hukum Adat', 2024, <https://markandeyabali.ac.id/hukum-adat/>.

⁹⁰ Vladislav Kudba, 'Realism in Scholasticism: Invention of the Concept', *Ideas and Ideals* 16, nos. 2–1 (2024): 48–65, <https://doi.org/10.17212/2075-0862-2024-16.2.1-48-65>.

advanced by Hans Kelsen with his Pure Theory of Law—has exerted considerable influence. Kelsen's theory is concerned with the development of positive law rather than legal policy. It seeks to describe law in a “pure” sense, abstracted from external factors such as psychology, sociology, ethics, and political theory. Within this framework, the relationship between subject and object is distinctly distant: law exists outside the subject, since not every action carries legal significance.⁹¹

Kelsen's perspective emphasizes the normativity of legal positivism, in which law is regarded as rational, logical, and causal. Within this framework, justice is understood in a formal and procedural sense. Legal discourse is sharply separated from morality. Spiritual dimensions such as religion, ethics, and morality are rigidly excluded from the domain of law. However, this form of positivism raises problems, as the law often fails to deliver substantive justice. A notable example is the Pollycarpus cassation in the murder of Munir, where the defendant was acquitted on grounds of alleged document forgery.⁹²

Similarly, the incident at Kanjuruhan Stadium on October 1, 2022, resulted in 135 deaths and hundreds of serious injuries due to overcrowding and asphyxiation after the police fired tear gas into the spectator stands. The suspect in this case is Ahmad Hadi Lukita, Director of PT LIB, was released by the Attorney General because the detention period had expired and the case file was deemed incomplete.⁹³ Meanwhile, the defendants Wahyu S. Wahyu (Head of the Operational Section of Malang Police) and Bambang Sidik Achmadi (Head of the Samapta Unit of Malang Police) were acquitted because they only ordered the shooting toward the field, and the wind carried the tear gas to the spectator stands.⁹⁴

These judicial decisions are closely tied to a normativity-legal positivist approach, which emphasizes cause-and-effect reasoning while disregarding substantive justice. Naturally, the public found this unacceptable, notably since independent investigations by *Narasi*, *Antara*, and *The Washington Post* revealed evidence that tear gas was directed towards the spectator stands. Furthermore, the use of tear gas directly contravenes FIFA regulations. In addition, the finding of the Joint Independent Fact-Finding Team (TGIPF) were released only partially.

Normativism and positivism remain highly influential within the civil law regime. This is evident in the stance of Attorney General Basrief Arief, who rejects Sharia graduates from becoming prosecutors⁹⁵; in the Supreme Court's refusal to accept Sharia graduates as judges and clerks in the General Courts⁹⁶; and in the narrow interpretation by the Association of Notary Program Study Organizers (MKn) of Article 3 point (e) of Law Number 2 of 2014.⁹⁷ These instances provide

⁹¹ Hans Kelsen, *Pure Theory of Law* (University of California Press, 1967), 1–3.

⁹² Abdul Halim, 'Teori-teori Hukum Aliran Positivisme dan Perkembangan Kritik-kritiknya', *Asy-Syir'ah: Jurnal Ilmu Syari'ah dan Hukum* 42, no. 2 (2008): 2, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajish.2008.42.2.%p>.

⁹³ Laily Rahmawati, 'Kejagung Jelaskan Status Bebas Akhmad Hadian Lukita', *Antara News*, 23 December 2022, <https://www.antaraneews.com/berita/3320058/kejagung-jelaskan-status-bebas-akhmad-hadian-lukita>.

⁹⁴ Kompas Cyber Media, 'Polisi Terdakwa Tragedi Kanjuruhan Divonis Bebas karena Gas Air Mata Tertutup Angin Halaman all', *KOMPAS.com*, 17 March 2023, <https://surabaya.kompas.com/read/2023/03/17/231110378/polisi-terdakwa-tragedi-kanjuruhan-divonis-bebas-karena-gas-air-mata>.

⁹⁵ Law No. 16 of 2004 Concerning the Attorney General's Office of the Republic of Indonesia, vol. 16; Pramesti, 'Bolehkah Sarjana Hukum Islam (S.H.I.) Mencalonkan Diri Menjadi Jaksa?'

⁹⁶ Yasin, 'Politik Hukum Pemberlakuan Gelar “Sarjana Hukum” untuk Alumni Jurusan Hukum Bisnis Syariah', 181–82.

⁹⁷ Yasin, 'Politik Hukum Pemberlakuan Gelar “Sarjana Hukum” untuk Alumni Jurusan Hukum Bisnis Syariah', 183–84.

concrete evidence of the enduring strength of normativity and positivism in Indonesian law. The focus remains on formal rather than material truth; and on procedural rather than substantive justice.

The dominance of normativism-positivism can only be reduced by addressing its roots: legal education. Once legal scholars are enlightened, they can serve as law enforcement officials with a progressive vision and a commitment to substantive justice. Accordingly, the reform of legal education becomes imperative.

a. From Normative Legal Studies to Historical Legal Studies

As observed in many countries such as China, legal positivism has distanced the law from a humanistic vision⁹⁸, while in France it has tended to reinforce the status quo.⁹⁹ Accordingly, in legal higher education, the dominance of normativism-positivism in legal science must be reconsidered as it encourages the study and research of law in isolation from the sociological realities in which law operates. Ethics, morality, religion, and culture receive insufficient attention in the curriculum of the law faculties. Yet Indonesian law lives and evolves within a distinct environment: the Indonesian society. Therefore, legal education in Indonesia must be reformed with due regard to the plurality of legal orders that coexist in the country.

As a matter of historical fact, legal pluralism in Indonesia must be afforded space within legal education. Legal pluralism in Indonesia is an undeniable reality, shaped by nation's long history as a melting pot of world civilizations.¹⁰⁰ This encompasses Islamic law, introduced by preachers from the Middle East; customary law, which grew and developed in indigenous communities; and Dutch colonial civil law.¹⁰¹ The emergence of the Indonesian nation-state has brought logical consequences: national law was established to accommodate multiple legal orders, including Islamic law, civil law, and customary law.¹⁰²

At present, four branches of legal studies and their alumni compete in the field, as illustrated by cases that have raised academic concerns as discussed earlier. This situation arises because legal education is structured into separate compartments that rarely interact and even compete against each other, thereby disregarding one another. Accordingly, the compartmentalization of legal education must be dismantled. These branches of knowledge should be consolidated into a single study program: the Indonesian Legal Studies Department. When integrated into a larger entity, the historical reality of legal pluralism becomes crucial as a foundation for developing a new academic program. The identity of each branch is not lost; rather, it enriches the new study program.

b. Dialogue-Integration between the Subjective, Objective, and Intersubjective Aspects of Indonesian Legal Studies

In the field of religious studies, Amin Abdullah introduces a contemporary *dirasat Islamiyah* (Islamic studies) that engages in dialogue and integrates the subjective (religion), objective (science), and intersubjective (philosophy) dimensions of knowledge and religious studies.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ Li, 'Rethinking on China's Higher Legal Education Reform'.

⁹⁹ Israël and Vanneuville, 'Legal Training and the Reshaping of French Elite'.

¹⁰⁰ Lukito, *Legal Pluralism in Indonesia*, 5.

¹⁰¹ Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (Basic Books, 1983).

¹⁰² Lev, 'The Lady and the Banyan Tree: Civil Law Change in Indonesia'.

¹⁰³ Abdullah, *Multidisiplin, Interdisiplin Dan Transdisiplin: Metode Studi Agama Dan Studi Islam Di Era Kontemporer*, 115–16.

In this context, the Indonesian Legal Studies Department proposes a dialogical integration of these three aspects: the subjective (legal norms), the objective (historical reality), and the intersubjective (substantive justice), as reflected in the coexistence of the four legal traditions.

The subjective aspect refers to legal norms, whose truth is regarded as inherently absolute—whether Islamic, civil, other religious, or customary. The objective element pertains to the historical realities in which Indonesian Legal Studies live, grow, and develop. The intersubjective aspect concerns substantive justice, which is pursued and intended (*maqsūd*) within Indonesian Legal Studies. Together, these three aspects engage in dialogue and find integration within Indonesian Legal Studies.

c. Intersubjective Testability of Indonesian Legal Studies

Considering legal pluralism as the foundation for legal education is essential, because in practice, societal issues are often resolved not through state-enforced civil law. Customary criminal law, upheld by indigenous communities, may prove more effective in maintaining order and delivering justice than state criminal law. During the Covid-19 pandemic, it became evidence that specific government regulations prohibiting congregational worship were not observed by segments of the muslim community, who adhered more closely to classical *fiqh* rules (Islamic jurisprudence). Therefore, Islamic legal institutions such as MUI (Indonesian Ulama Council), Nahdlatul Ulama, or Muhammadiyah proved more effective in shaping societal behavior through their fatwas than government directives.¹⁰⁴

This reflects significant disparities between written law (law in the books) and the law practiced in society (law in action). Accordingly, the truth and effectiveness of law must take into account the multiple dimensions of legal pluralism. In the same vein, legal education must accommodate and integrate local legal conditions and contexts into broader legal learning.¹⁰⁵ Likewise, every piece of legislation contains considerations that serve as the *raison d'être* of that legal product. Yet civil legal institutions, operating within a normative framework, lack the instruments to assess whether this *raison d'être* has been achieved. They require instruments from other fields of knowledge, whether from the social sciences, the humanities, or scientific disciplines. Thus, it becomes clear that employing diverse instruments across disciplines and actors is essential to ensure that the primary goal of Indonesian Legal Studies—substantive justice—is achieved.

d. Holistic Study of Indonesian Legal Studies

To broaden the perspective of the Indonesian Legal Studies, it is advisable to adopt the nomenclature 'Program Studi Ilmu Hukum Indonesia' (Department of Indonesian Legal Studies). This department examines the laws that live and evolve within the cultural context of

¹⁰⁴ Fathorrahman et al., 'The Role of Religious Fatwas in Indonesia: An Analysis of Self-Government and Biopolitics During the Pandemic', *PETITA: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Hukum Dan Syariah* 9, no. 1 (2024): 80–97, <https://doi.org/10.22373/petita.v9i1.257>; M. Sofwan Jauhari and Abdul Ghoni, 'The Level of People's Obedience to MUI Fatwas (COVID-19, Bank Interest, and Interfaith Marriage)', *AHKAM: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 20, no. 2 (2020): 2, <https://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/ahkam/article/view/18685>.”plainCitation”.”Fathorrahman et al., 'The Role of Religious Fatwas in Indonesia: An Analysis of Self-Government and Biopolitics During the Pandemic', *PETITA: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Hukum Dan Syariah* 9, no. 1 (2024)

¹⁰⁵ Jacqueline Vel et al., *Inovasi Pendidikan Hukum di Indonesia; Teori, Petunjuk dan Praktik* (Fakultas Hukum Universitas Gadjah Mada., 2022), 44–50.

Indonesian society. It regards law, along with the plurality of legal knowledge in society, as a unified system integral to its field of study. Drawing on Skjottner's terminology, every system possesses unique holistic characteristics and features that are not apparent in its individual parts.¹⁰⁶ Likewise, Indonesian Legal Studies adopts a holistic, comprehensive approach that transcends the divisions between civil, Islamic, other religious laws, and customary law.

The four branches of legal knowledge are integrated and embedded comprehensively in the study program's curriculum. The fundamental principles of these various branches are examined as a unified and integral whole, like a single breath. All students, without exception, are required to study the basic principles of these four legal traditions as core subjects. Consequently, students and future alumni will acquire a comprehensive understanding of the law.

e. **Open and Semipermeable**

Legal positivism and normativism render the law sterile, distancing it from society's factual problems and from engagement with other academic disciplines.¹⁰⁷ This problem requires a deliberate solution. In the teaching and research of Indonesian law, an interdisciplinary-transdisciplinary approach should be adopted to situate the law within a broader context. Such an approach entails collaboration between legal scholars and experts from other disciplines to analyse complex legal issues and to provide diverse perspectives. Within system theory, such openness is essential. In other words, a living system can receive input from multiple dimensions and processes it to achieve specific goals and purposes.¹⁰⁸

Therefore, socio-legal studies—one of the hybrid approaches that links legal science with related disciplines from a societal perspective—are crucial for understanding how law operates in society.¹⁰⁹ As suggested by Irianto (2021), this approach can serve as an entry point in the study of Indonesian legal studies.¹¹⁰ In addition, a scientific approaches are necessary, for example in examining victimology within criminal law or determining the halal status of cosmetic products. Equal important are cultural and humanistic approaches, particularly in discussions of customary law as a social institution, including the rights of indigenous communities. Likewise, the autoethnographic method can provide a more comprehensive landscape of Indonesian law, particularly in its social, economic, and historical dimensions.¹¹¹

Similarly, the approach of Sharia studies is crucial for addressing legal issues within the Muslim community, particularly given that Muslims constitute the majority population in Indonesia. For instance, legal uncertainty emerged in the resolution of Sharia bankruptcy disputes in the Commercial Court where both judges and disputants overlooked of Sharia economic law.¹¹² In such cases, judges, receivers, supervisory judges, lawyers, and administrators

¹⁰⁶ Jan Christiaan Smuts, *Holism and Evolution* (Gestalt Journal Press, 2013).

¹⁰⁷ Cassese, 'Legal Education Under Fire'.

¹⁰⁸ Bertalanffy, *General System Theory: Foundation, Development, Application*, 131–32.

¹⁰⁹ Sulistyowati Irianto, ed., *Kajian Sosio-Legal*, Edisi pertama, Seri Unsur-Unsur Penyusun Bangunan Negara Hukum (Pustaka Larasan bekerja sama dengan Universitas Indonesia, Universitas Leiden, Universitas Groningen, 2012).

¹¹⁰ Irianto, 'LEGAL EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE OF INDONESIA'.

¹¹¹ Gregersen, 'Telling Stories about the Law School'.

¹¹² Wicaksono et al., 'Norm Inconsistency to Examine the Bankruptcy Case in Sharia Economic Field in the Perspective of Legal Policy of Islamic and Commercial Court Establishment'.

must be familiar with and understand the principles of Sharia economic law to ensure that no party is disadvantaged and substantive justice is achieved. Likewise, in cases of unregistered marriages (*nikah siri*), Islamic law should engage with a civil law approach, highlighting the importance of administrative procedures and legal certainty regarding marital status.

Therefore, openness and semi-permeability constitute core characteristics of Indonesian Legal Studies. Through this openness, Indonesian Legal Studies is able to engage with various disciplines to enrich its scholarship. Likewise, its semi-permeable nature shapes Indonesian law as a system that, while rooted in diverse legal traditions, enables these traditions to mutually reinforce one another rather than remain isolated within rigid disciplinary boundaries. Thus, the fundamental character of Indonesian Legal Studies is not that of a single discipline, but of a transdisciplinary field—flexible, open, and semi-permeable.

6. Purposiveness of the Indonesian Legal Studies

The primary purpose of the Indonesian Legal Studies Departments is to provide a platform for implementing the three pillars (*tridharma*) of higher education—education, research, and community service—within the field of law, in ways that are relevant to Indonesia’s conditions as both the locus of study and the place where law lives and evolves, grounded in a holistic, comprehensive, complete, and inclusive worldview. In this way, the department will serve as a driving force for law reform. More specifically, it seeks to produce graduates who possess a holistic and comprehensive worldview of Indonesian law grounded in scientific knowledge. Such graduates should be capable of serving as law enforcement officials who can effectively formulate and uphold the law to realize social order, authoritative legal certainty, public welfare, and substantive justice. In this manner, the long-standing concern that legal education lacks a clear orientation toward empowerment for social justice¹¹³ is addressed.

7. Structural Hierarchy of The Indonesian Legal Studies

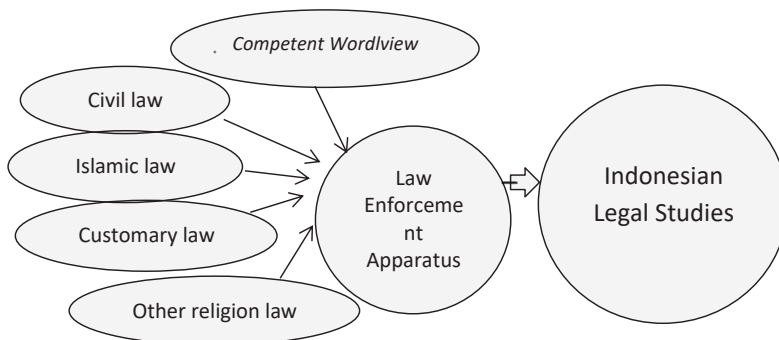
According to Skyttner’s perspective, complex phenomena in the universe are organized and regulated within a complex hierarchical system. Each level of this hierarchy is governed by integrated subsystems that together constitute a larger system.¹¹⁴ This hierarchy plays a crucial role in defining the position and function of each subsystem, enabling effective performance and the achievement of the system’s overall objectives.¹¹⁵ When illustrated within a framework inspired by Jasser Auda’s work on reforming the philosophy of Islamic law (*ushul fiqh*) using the purpose of shariah (*maqasid al-shariah*), the flow of Indonesian legal studies can be represented in the following diagram, shown in Figure 1.

¹¹³ Rosadi and Marwan, ‘Transformation of Legal Education in Indonesia Based on Social Justice’.

¹¹⁴ Lars Skyttner, *General Systems Theory: Problems, Perspectives, Practice*, 2nd ed. edition (World Scientific Publishing Company, 2006).

¹¹⁵ Bertalanffy, *General System Theory: Foundation, Development, Application*.

Figure 1: The Formation Flow of Indonesian Legal Studies.



Source: Analysed from the primary source.

Furthermore, according to M. Amin Abdullah’s perspective, integration-interconnection is achieved by ensuring that each course incorporates fundamental values related to various disciplines.¹¹⁶ Accordingly, as shown in Table 3, to obtain a comprehensive understanding, all students are required to take core courses covering the Principles and Foundations of Civil Law, the Principles and Foundations of Islamic Law, and the Principles and Foundations of Customary Law and Other Religious Laws relevant to the university’s surrounding environment. These fundamental values will then permeate—through a semipermeable process—across the entire course sequence until completion.

Table 3: The General Structure of Indonesian Legal Studies Curriculum

Core Competencies	Indonesian Legal Studies		
Core Subject Area	Principles and Fundamentals of Civil Law	Principles and Fundamentals of Islamic Law	Principles and Fundamentals of Customary and Other Religious Law
Analysis Course	Methodology of Indonesian Interdisciplinary Legal Research Indonesian Socio-legal Approach		
Concentration Subject Areas	Areas of Law Criminal Law Civil Law Constitutional Law State Administrative Law Family Law Business Law Comparative Law International Law		

Source: Analysed from the primary source.

After completing the core courses, students proceed to analysis courses. In these courses, they learn to conduct legal analysis through an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach to

¹¹⁶ Abdullah, *Multidisiplin, Interdisiplin Dan Transdisiplin: Metode Studi Agama Dan Studi Islam Di Era Kontemporer*, 119–20.

Indonesian law. This analysis draws on multiple relevant disciplines, including civil law, Islamic law and Sharia, cultural and humanities studies, customary law, and other religious traditions. Subsequently, students take Concentration Cluster Courses aligned with their academic interests. These clusters are not closed or compartmentalized spaces. Rather, they function as open spaces for dialogue. The concentration merely facilitates more profound exploration of students while encouraging engagement with other relevant concentrations.

The principles and fundamentals of the four branches of law are likewise incorporated into each concentration. Thus, when students select the Criminal Law concentration, they simultaneously study the principles of criminal law as reflected in civil law, Islamic law, and customary law. The same principle applies to all other concentrations. In this way, students can pursue their specific areas of interest while still attaining a comprehensive understanding of Indonesian Law. Accordingly, graduates are expected to acquire a holistic and comprehensive understanding, enabling them to serve as law enforcement officials capable of ensuring legal certainty and upholding both specific and general form of substantive justice for the common good. In this manner, the long-standing concern that the Law curriculum lacks societal relevance¹¹⁷ will be effectively addressed.

If a student selects a concentration in family law, they study its principles not only in civil law, but also in Islamic law, other religious legal traditions, and customary law. For instance, in studying inheritance law, students examine inheritance simultaneously within civil law, Islamic law, and customary law. The tensions and interactions among these three legal orders often constitute a significant source of conflict when not effectively regulated or harmonized.¹¹⁸ In this way, when these students later serve as legal practitioners handling inheritance cases, they will be able to resolve disputes effectively and provide solutions that are substantively just and broadly acceptable to all parties involved.

When a law student selects a concentration in constitutional law, the curriculum should extend beyond the civil legal tradition to include perspectives from Islamic law and customary normative orders. Although customary law does not constitute a constitutional system in the strict, codified sense, customary communities maintain normative frameworks that regulate their societies as self-governing entities.¹¹⁹ Within the paradigm of legal pluralism, recognizing these frameworks is essential, as they reflect the coexistence and interaction of multiple legal orders within the Indonesian constitutional landscape. Such recognition enriches constitutional studies by highlighting the dynamic interplay among state law, religious law, and customary norms, thereby fostering a more comprehensive and contextually grounded understanding of constitutional law.

When a student selects a concentration in business law, they study not only business law within the civil legal tradition but also Islamic business law, including various *akad* (contracts), as well as customary business law. Consequently, when these students later practice as legal professionals,

¹¹⁷ Prasanthi and Daryono, 'The Indonesia Legal Education'.

¹¹⁸ Utama Wardi et al., 'Comparative Analysis of Islamic Family Law and Customary Law in the Settlement of Inheritance Disputes in Indonesia', *Hakamain: Journal of Sharia and Law Studies* 3, no. 1 (2024): 13–25, <https://doi.org/10.57255/hakamain.v3i1.330>; Rr Dewi Anggraeni, *Islamic Law and Customary Law in Contemporary Legal Pluralism in Indonesia: Tension and Constraints*, 23, no. 1 (2023).

¹¹⁹ Frans Reumi and Tom Alfa Samuel Reumy, 'The Legal Status of Customary Villages within the Framework of Special Autonomy in Papua A Perspective on Legal Politics', *Ipsa Jure* 1, no. 7 (2024): 49–65, <https://doi.org/10.62872/czd2p497>; Agung Wicaksono et al., 'Living Side by Side with Nature: Evidence of Self-Governance in Three Local Communities in Indonesia', *Heliyon* 8, no. 12 (2022): e12248, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e12248>.

they will be better equipped to handle cases involving both Islamic and conventional contracts with wisdom and proportionality. This is particularly important since, in many instances, disputes remain unresolved when practitioners lack an understanding of the diverse traditions of business law—as in cases of Islamic bankruptcy.¹²⁰

Therefore, the Department of Indonesian Legal Studies should be positioned as a transdisciplinary field—one that, in its teaching, employs socio-legal approaches along with their instruments, and in its research, draws upon interdisciplinary and even transdisciplinary methods. Of course, this requires lecturers who possess not only the requisite knowledge but also the willingness to remain open and to engage with areas of law beyond the specific legal tradition in which they were initially trained.

8. The Culture of the Indonesian Legal Studies Department

The academic culture of ‘Indonesian Legal Studies’, characterized by integrative-interconnective principles, reflects the values and norms embraced by academics, students, and teaching staff within legal education. This culture seeks to foster an inclusive, collaborative learning environment oriented towards the holistic development of legal knowledge and problem-solving. The following are key characteristics of the academic culture in integrative-interconnective legal education:

First, collaboration and mutual support constitute foundational aspects of this academic culture. The pursuit of holistic understanding requires recognizing the inherent limitations of each individual. Accordingly, collaboration emerges as a key cultural element. Within this context, the academic community engages in collaboration and mutual support across teaching, learning, research, and knowledge development in various legal sub-disciplines and concentrations. Members of the community value individual contributions and actively pursue interdisciplinary collaboration to attain a more comprehensive understanding.

Second, openness and inclusivity are essential. Collaboration can thrive only within an environment that genuinely embraces openness and inclusivity. This culture emphasizes receptiveness to diverse views, thoughts, approaches, backgrounds, and experiences. The academic community is encouraged to engage with different perspectives, embrace diversity, and cultivate an inclusive space for dialogue. This entails respecting cultural, religious, gender, and social diversity within the context of Indonesian law. Likewise, openness to new developments, such as digital technology¹²¹ and artificial intelligence¹²², should be embraced and leveraged to foster digital literacy, which is crucial for advancing the field of law.

Third, an interdisciplinary approach is indispensable. Law cannot be examined solely through normative legal studies. To address increasingly complex issues, the academic community should engage in integrative-interconnected legal research grounded in an interdisciplinary approach. Through this lens, law is understood as a complex phenomenon intrinsically linked to diverse aspects of life, including social, economic, political, and cultural dimensions. Accordingly, an

¹²⁰ Nasrudin et al., ‘Contestation between Sharia Business Law and Civil Law in Resolving Sharia Bankruptcy Disputes in Indonesia’.

¹²¹ Suwastini et al., ‘ONLINE LEARNING AMIDST COVID-19’.

¹²² Arianto, ‘Readiness of the Legal Education System in Indonesia in Facing the Era of Artificial Intelligence’.

interdisciplinary approach is applied in both research and teaching, drawing upon contributions from multiple disciplines.¹²³

Fourth, a critical and innovative mindset is fostered. Openness encourages the academic community to think critically and innovatively in understanding and addressing legal issues. Law is perceived as an instrument that can be improved and developed to respond to social changes and contemporary challenges. Within this culture, new ideas and innovative approaches are welcomed and promoted. Accordingly, conventional forms of learning must give way to education that fosters critical thinking as a means of achieving justice.¹²⁴ Likewise, clinical legal education can be effectively implemented to bridge the persistent gap between theory and practice.¹²⁵

Fifth, a culture of lifelong learning is cultivated. The four preceding points encourage the academic community to embrace lifelong learning. They continuously develop their knowledge and skills throughout their professional careers. They recognize the importance of remaining up to date with developments in law and related disciplines, while adapting to social and technological changes. In their professional careers, they are bound by the sixth cultural element: professional ethics. As legal practitioners, members of the academic community in integrative-interconnective legal education and later its alumni uphold high professional ethics, respecting academic integrity, honesty, and intellectual responsibility.

Strategic Legal Policy Directions For A Transdisciplinary Legal Education

In addition to theoretical and historical challenges, one of the most pressing issues to be addressed in Indonesian legal education is that of legal-political governance. As previously noted, legal education in Indonesia falls under the authority of two ministries: the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This fragmented structure necessitates the adoption of integrative policies capable of bridging the two institutions. Without decisive policy reform to overcome these institutional divides, the vision of Indonesian Legal Studies as a genuinely transdisciplinary project will remain aspirational rather than transformative.

A central step would be the establishment of a joint governance body—anchored in a legal framework such as a Presidential Regulation or even a National Law on Legal Education—tasked with developing a National Curriculum for Legal Education that places Indonesian law at its core. Such a curriculum should adopt a framework of legal pluralism that encompasses civil law, Islamic law, and customary law, while also integrating insights from the social sciences. It should include compulsory courses such as socio-legal studies, comparative legal traditions, and transdisciplinary research methodologies.

Alongside curricular reform, the institution should also design faculty capacity-building programs, including scholarships and short courses that enable law lecturers to pursue advanced studies in related fields such as legal anthropology, the sociology of law, and modern legal philosophy. Exchange programs among faculties of general law, Islamic law, and customary law

¹²³ Abdullah, *Multidisiplin, Interdisiplin Dan Transdisiplin: Metode Studi Agama Dan Studi Islam Di Era Kontemporer*.

¹²⁴ Saragih and Simanjuntak, 'Status of Higher Legal Education and Student Requirements in Realizing a Justice Law'.

¹²⁵ Arifin et al., 'Adoption and Implementation of Clinical Legal Education Programmes in the Indonesian Legal Education System'; Arifin, 'Clinical Legal Education in the Theory and Practice in the Indonesian Law School'; Rodyah, 'Clinical Legal Education in Indonesia Objectives and Advantages'.

should likewise be established to foster greater familiarity with diverse legal traditions. In addition, dedicated funding should be allocated to support transdisciplinary research and publication, particularly projects that examine the interactions between customary law, Islamic law, and civil law.

Equally important is strengthening the role of legal institutions that employ law graduates—such as the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Court, the Attorney General’s Office, the Ministry of Justice, and professional legal associations—as bodies of convergence. Legal policy should be directed toward encouraging the judiciary to recognize and give greater space for customary law and Islamic law in their decisions, thereby aligning jurisprudence with the broader trajectory of legal education reform. Professional associations of advocates, judges, curators, mediators, auditors, and notaries should also be encouraged to accommodate graduates from diverse legal backgrounds, while simultaneously fostering the development of a legal scholarship that is open and genuinely transdisciplinary in practice.

CONCLUSION

The establishment of the Indonesian Legal Studies Department is essential for creating a comprehensive framework in which all legal disciplines converge. Its primary aim is to shift legal studies from a purely normative approach toward a more historical and transdisciplinary perspective, one that considers the social, religious, and cultural factors shaping Indonesian law. The department provides students with a holistic understanding of Indonesian law through a curriculum that integrates civil, Islamic, and customary law. Students engage first in general courses addressing the plural nature of law, followed by concentration courses aligned with their academic interests, ultimately preparing them to become legal practitioners who uphold substantive justice, legal certainty, and the common good. To enhance the program’s effectiveness, stakeholders—including university leaders, policymakers, and legal practitioners—should collaborate to ensure that the curriculum remains dynamic and responsive to societal needs. Legal policy should also be directed toward integrating the governance of legal education, which has long been divided under two ministries, while enhancing faculty capacity and providing incentives for interconnection across diverse legal traditions within the framework of the *Tridharma*. Furthermore, it must promote consensus among stakeholders employing law graduates—including the judiciary, legislature, executive bodies, and professional legal associations. At the same time, Indonesian Legal Studies must remain forward-looking by engaging with emerging fields such as *digital law*, *cyber law*, and artificial intelligence, ensuring that it not only honors Indonesia’s plural legal heritage but also responds effectively to contemporary complex legal challenges.

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