

The Role of Islamic Religious Education in Shaping Legal Awareness among Muslim Communities:

An Analysis from the Perspectives of Islamic Law and Indonesian Positive Law

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Abstract: This study explores the strategic role of Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI) in shaping legal awareness among Muslim communities in Indonesia, a nation where Islamic legal norms coexist with a comprehensive system of positive law. Legal awareness is a fundamental element in sustaining social order, strengthening obedience to law, and promoting harmony between religious obligations and national legal frameworks. Adopting a qualitative, literature-based research design, this study employs a normative legal approach supported by secondary data drawn from classical and contemporary Islamic legal sources, statutory regulations, and relevant academic literature. The analysis yields three significant findings. First, a noticeable gap remains between the normative ideals embedded in PAI curricula and the actual legal behavior exhibited within Muslim communities. Second, the internalization of legal principles is often constrained by cultural patterns, social habits, and structural limitations that dilute the pedagogical impact of PAI. Third, the effectiveness of PAI in fostering legal consciousness can be strengthened through integrated juridical, educational, and socio-cultural strategies that align Islamic values with the objectives of Indonesian positive law. Overall, this study highlights the transformative potential of PAI as a bridging instrument that harmonizes Islamic legal ethics with state law, thereby contributing to a more legally aware and socially responsible Muslim society.

Keywords: Islamic Law, Islamic Religious Education, Legal Awareness, Muslim Community.

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1. Introduction

Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI) has historically played a central role in shaping the moral, spiritual, and social development of Muslim communities in Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population in the world (Sukmono & Arliman, 2022). Integrated into both formal schooling systems and informal community-based learning, PAI ensures that Islamic values influence a wide spectrum of social life, from personal conduct to public ethics, civic responsibilities, and the development of legal consciousness (Prasetyo, 2021). This pervasive presence of

Islamic education reflects the recognition of religion as a crucial element in nurturing ethical behavior and social cohesion within the Indonesian context. Despite the widespread implementation of PAI, recent observations and empirical studies indicate that legal awareness among Muslim communities remains inconsistent, particularly in aligning Islamic legal norms with Indonesian positive law (Akbar, 2020; Widodo, 2022). Such discrepancies are manifested in everyday behaviors where individuals may understand religious prescriptions theoretically but fail to translate them into practical adherence to formal legal requirements (Soekanto, 2019). These social phenomena suggest that while PAI provides normative foundations, there remains a substantial gap in its capacity to foster practical legal consciousness that guides behavior in accordance with both religious and state law.

Legal awareness is a complex, multidimensional concept that encompasses cognitive knowledge of legal norms, attitudes toward compliance, ethical reasoning, and actual behavioral adherence (Yunus, 2020). For Muslim communities in Indonesia, this dual responsibility—toward both state law and Islamic ethical norms—renders legal awareness especially significant. Islamic teachings emphasize justice (al-'adl), public welfare (al-maslahah), obedience to legitimate authority (ta'at uli al-amr), and the protection of individual and collective rights (Rahman, 2021). Concurrently, Indonesian positive law promotes legal certainty, equity, and societal welfare through codified regulations and institutional enforcement (Mahfud, 2020). Bridging these two frameworks presents both an opportunity and a challenge: the opportunity lies in harmonizing religious ethical imperatives with formal legal structures, while the challenge stems from the gap between normative knowledge and its practical application within social and institutional contexts (Azizah, 2021). In this sense, strengthening legal awareness is not only a civil duty but also a moral and religious obligation, highlighting the critical role of education in nurturing both ethical and legal consciousness.

Extensive literature has examined the role of PAI in fostering legal and ethical awareness, revealing both its potential and limitations. Studies indicate that PAI instruction often emphasizes cognitive learning and doctrinal comprehension over the development of behavior-oriented legal consciousness (Prasojo & Kurniasih, 2020; Fauzan, 2021). Traditional teaching methods, which focus on memorization and theoretical explanation, frequently fail to contextualize Islamic teachings within contemporary social, legal, and civic challenges (Hidayat, 2022). Moreover, socio-cultural factors—such as reliance on informal dispute-resolution practices, the influence of local authority figures, and community norms permissive of minor legal violations—further hinder the internalization of legal values (Suharto, 2019; Susanto, 2022). Comparative studies highlight that although Islamic law and Indonesian positive

law share overlapping principles—including justice, protection of property, accountability, and promotion of public welfare—students often lack clarity regarding the compatibility and practical integration of these systems (Lubis, 2021; Abdullah, 2022). These gaps underscore the need for educational approaches that combine doctrinal knowledge with critical thinking, contextual application, and social reinforcement to develop substantial legal consciousness.

In response to these gaps, this study seeks to examine the role of Islamic Religious Education in shaping legal awareness among Muslim communities in Indonesia through the dual perspectives of Islamic law and Indonesian positive law. Specifically, the research investigates how PAI can function as a bridge between normative Islamic principles and formal legal frameworks, identifying the structural, pedagogical, and socio-cultural factors that either facilitate or impede this process. The study also explores potential strategies to enhance the effectiveness of PAI in fostering legal literacy and ethical compliance, including integrative curricula, participatory pedagogical methods, and community engagement initiatives (Hakim, 2022; Zuhdi, 2020). By addressing these dimensions, the research aims to provide a theoretically grounded and practically relevant model for cultivating legal awareness that is both morally informed and socially accountable.

This study hypothesizes that the effective integration of Islamic ethical principles with contextualized legal instruction can significantly enhance legal awareness among Muslim communities. It assumes that legal consciousness develops most effectively when educational content, teaching strategies, and social environments are harmonized to reinforce both religious obligations and state law compliance. In this framework, PAI is not merely a vehicle for transmitting religious knowledge but functions as a transformative instrument capable of promoting civic responsibility, ethical behavior, and sustained engagement with legal norms. By fostering this integrated legal consciousness, PAI has the potential to contribute to a more orderly, just, and morally grounded society in which Muslim communities understand and embrace their responsibilities under both Islamic law and the national legal system.

2. Method

This study examines the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in shaping legal awareness among Muslim communities in Indonesia through a normative legal research design complemented by qualitative literature analysis. Focusing on the intersection of Islamic legal teachings, educational concepts, and Indonesian positive law, the research analyzes secondary data from statutory regulations, classical and contemporary Islamic legal sources, and peer-reviewed scholarly works. Data were collected through systematic document study and analyzed using qualitative content

analysis, comparative-normative evaluation, and a deductive-inductive approach. By examining how ethical, moral, and legal values are transmitted through PAI, the study aims to construct an integrated understanding of PAI as a mediating framework that reinforces legal consciousness within a socio-legal context grounded in both religious norms and state law.

3. Result & Discussion

3.1. Mapping the Challenges in Developing Legal Awareness through Islamic Religious Education

The findings of this study reveal that one of the most persistent challenges in fostering legal awareness among Muslim communities in Indonesia is the substantial gap between the normative ideals emphasized in Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI) and actual social and legal practices observed in daily life. This discrepancy manifests across multiple dimensions—epistemological, pedagogical, and socio-cultural—creating a complex landscape that impedes the internalization of legal consciousness.

1. The Normative-Practical Disconnect in Legal Understanding

While PAI systematically promotes core Islamic ethical values—such as justice ('*adl*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), moral responsibility (*mas'uliyah*), and public welfare (*maslahah*)—the degree to which these principles are internalized by students and translated into community behavior remains limited (Sukmono & Arliman, 2022). This disconnect can be understood through the lens of Islamic legal philosophy, where the distinction between *al-ahkam al-wad'iyyah* (positive legal rulings) and *al-ahkam al-taklifiyyah* (normative obligations) often becomes blurred in educational transmission. The theoretical emphasis on ideal ethical constructs frequently fails to bridge the conceptual gap between Islamic legal theory (*usul al-fiqh*) and practical legal reasoning in contemporary contexts.

Empirical observations indicate that many community members perceive law primarily as a coercive instrument or punitive mechanism rather than as a moral framework designed to advance justice and collective well-being (Prasetyo, 2021). This perception reflects a shallow understanding of both Islamic jurisprudence and the philosophical underpinnings of Indonesian positive law. In Islamic legal theory, law (*shari'ah*) encompasses not merely prohibitions and punishments but represents a comprehensive system of values aimed at realizing human welfare (*maqāṣid al-shari'ah*). Similarly, Indonesia's national legal philosophy, rooted in *Pancasila*, emphasizes justice, civilized humanity, and social welfare. The failure to internalize these foundational principles results in weak foundations for substantive legal

awareness, reducing law to a set of external constraints rather than internalized ethical commitments.

2. Variations in Legal Culture and Regional Disparities

The discrepancy between normative teachings and social practice is further compounded by the condition of legal culture in various Indonesian regions. Legal culture, defined as the collective beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors toward law, is unevenly developed across communities (Yunus, 2020; Soekanto, 2019). In areas with fragile legal culture, both Islamic and state legal norms are interpreted inconsistently or selectively, depending on social convenience, customary expectations, or hierarchical authority.

This creates a pattern of compliance that is largely situational; individuals may adhere to rules only when observed by authorities or under threat of sanctions, rather than from intrinsic ethical or moral motivation. From an Islamic legal perspective, this contradicts the concept of *taqwa* (God-consciousness), which emphasizes consistent ethical behavior regardless of external supervision. Theologically, Islamic law posits that true legal consciousness stems from awareness of divine omnipresence (*muraqabat Allah*), not merely fear of earthly punishment. Similarly, positive law theory recognizes that sustainable legal compliance requires internalization of legal norms as legitimate and morally binding, not merely externally imposed.

Regional disparities in legal culture significantly affect how PAI content is received and implemented. In regions with strong traditional Islamic institutions, such as pesantren networks, PAI may enjoy greater cultural authority but may also face challenges in integrating national legal concepts that conflict with local interpretations. Conversely, in urban centers with greater exposure to pluralistic legal environments, PAI faces the challenge of maintaining religious authenticity while engaging with diverse legal frameworks. These variations necessitate a differentiated approach to legal education that acknowledges local legal cultures while promoting universal principles of justice and rule of law.

3. The Dichotomy Between Religious and Civic Legal Literacy

Legal literacy remains another major challenge. Empirical studies show that while many Muslims possess strong religious knowledge in the areas of worship (*ibadah*) and ritual, their understanding of how Islamic teachings relate to civic duties and national law is limited (Akbar, 2020; Widodo, 2022). This creates a compartmentalized consciousness where religious obligations and civic responsibilities are perceived as separate domains rather than integrated ethical commitments.

This dichotomy leads to situational compliance, where adherence to legal norms fluctuates according to perceived personal gain, social pressure, or customary habits. Consequently, legal awareness is often formal rather than substantive, lacking the depth of ethical internalization necessary to guide consistent behavior. The Islamic legal concept of *'ibadah* (worship) encompasses all acts performed in obedience to God, including civic duties performed with righteous intention (*niyyah*). However, this holistic understanding is seldom emphasized in PAI curricula, resulting in a narrowed conception of religious obligation that excludes many dimensions of legal citizenship.

4. Structural Limitations within PAI Curricula and Institutional Frameworks

Structural limitations within PAI curricula exacerbate the problem. Although PAI emphasizes character formation and moral virtues, it often fails to integrate these values with civic education or legal literacy (Azizah, 2021; Mahfud, 2020). The separation between religious and civic learning creates fragmented knowledge, making it difficult for students to understand how Islamic ethics align with the responsibilities of citizenship under national law.

This fragmentation is institutionalized through curriculum design, textbook organization, and assessment methods that treat religious and civic education as distinct subjects with minimal intersection. The Indonesian national curriculum (*Kurikulum 2013* and its revisions) promotes integrated thematic learning, but implementation at the classroom level often maintains traditional disciplinary boundaries. This structural separation leads to a perception that religious norms and state law operate in distinct spheres, reducing the capacity of PAI to function as a bridging institution that harmonizes normative religious principles with civic duties.

Furthermore, PAI textbooks and teaching materials frequently present Islamic law as a historical or theoretical subject rather than a living system with contemporary applications. Discussions of *mu'amalat* (social transactions) often focus on classical commercial contracts without addressing modern legal institutions such as corporate law, intellectual property rights, or environmental regulations. This historical orientation creates a disconnect between Islamic legal heritage and current legal realities, limiting PAI's relevance for developing practical legal awareness.

5. The Dominance of Informal Dispute-Resolution Mechanisms

Additionally, informal dispute-resolution mechanisms, such as *musyawarah* (community deliberation), *adat*-based agreements, and local mediation practices, dominate in many Muslim-majority communities (Suharto, 2019). While these mechanisms foster social cohesion and consensus, they can also diverge from formal legal standards, especially when participants lack sufficient legal

knowledge. The prevalence of informal justice practices demonstrates both a strength and a weakness: it highlights communal solidarity but may inadvertently weaken the authority of formal legal institutions when legal literacy is low.

From an Islamic legal perspective, informal mediation aligns with the Prophetic tradition of resolving disputes through reconciliation (*sulh*). However, Islamic jurisprudence also establishes clear boundaries for informal resolution, particularly in matters involving fundamental rights (*huquq al-'ibad*) that cannot be arbitrarily compromised. The challenge lies in educating communities about which matters are appropriate for informal resolution and which require formal legal intervention. This underscores the incomplete realization of PAI's potential as a medium to connect Islamic norms with state law (Lubis, 2021; Abdullah, 2022).

6. Socio-Economic Factors Influencing Legal Consciousness

Socio-economic factors further complicate the development of legal awareness through PAI. Communities facing economic hardship often prioritize immediate material needs over abstract legal principles, viewing law as a luxury rather than a necessity. This pragmatic orientation can undermine the ethical foundations emphasized in PAI, particularly when community members perceive formal legal processes as inaccessible, expensive, or biased toward privileged groups.

Islamic legal theory addresses this concern through principles of legal facilitation (*taysir*) and removal of hardship (*raf' al-haraj*), but these concepts are seldom connected to discussions of legal empowerment in PAI curricula. Similarly, Indonesian positive law includes provisions for legal aid and simplified procedures, but awareness of these mechanisms remains limited among disadvantaged communities. PAI has the potential to bridge this knowledge gap by framing legal awareness as both a religious obligation and a practical tool for social justice, but this requires contextualizing legal education within broader socio-economic realities.

7. Generational Gaps in Legal Understanding and Technological Disruption

Generational differences in legal understanding present another challenge. Older generations often rely on traditional authority structures and customary practices, while younger generations increasingly engage with legal concepts through digital media and global discourses. This generational divide affects how PAI content is received and interpreted, with implications for intergenerational transmission of legal values.

The digital revolution has transformed legal consciousness by providing unprecedented access to legal information while simultaneously enabling the spread of

misinformation. Social media platforms circulate simplified or distorted interpretations of both Islamic and national law, creating parallel sources of legal knowledge that compete with formal education. PAI institutions struggle to adapt to this changing landscape, often maintaining traditional pedagogies that are less effective in digital environments. This technological disruption requires reimagining how legal awareness can be cultivated through religious education in the information age.

Collectively, these challenges indicate that the development of legal awareness through PAI is constrained by gaps in curricular design, pedagogical practice, socio-legal culture, and community attitudes. Without addressing these structural and social barriers, PAI alone cannot ensure substantive legal consciousness among students or the broader Muslim community. The following section examines the factors contributing to these limitations in greater depth, analyzing both internal educational dynamics and external socio-cultural influences.

3.2. Factors Contributing to the Limited Effectiveness of PAI in Shaping Legal Awareness

The analysis indicates that PAI's limited effectiveness results from both internal educational factors and external socio-cultural influences, as well as epistemic constraints in textual interpretation. These factors operate interactively, creating a complex ecosystem that shapes how legal consciousness develops (or fails to develop) through religious education.

1. Internal Pedagogical and Institutional Factors

1.1 Doctrinal Emphasis Over Experiential Learning

Pedagogically, PAI instruction largely prioritizes doctrinal comprehension over experiential and critical learning (Prasojo & Kurniasih, 2020). Courses often emphasize memorization of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and moral codes, detached from contemporary social and legal contexts. This approach reflects what educational theorists describe as "banking education"—the depositing of information into passive recipients rather than engaging learners in active meaning-making (Freire, 1970). Students may learn normative concepts but lack the ability to apply them in real-life scenarios or connect them with national law.

Such approaches restrict the cultivation of practical ethical reasoning, which is essential for translating knowledge into responsible legal behavior. Islamic legal education historically emphasized case-based learning (*masa'il*) and dialectical reasoning (*jadal*), but contemporary PAI has largely abandoned these methods in favor of standardized content delivery. The result is what Abdul Hakim (2022) terms "juridical formalism

without ethical substance"—knowledge of legal rules without understanding their underlying purposes (*maqāṣid*).

1.2 Teacher Competence and Professional Development

Teacher competence further affects the internal quality of PAI. Many educators are well-versed in classical Islamic texts but lack expertise in civic education, legal literacy, and pedagogical methods that integrate ethics with practical legal reasoning (Fauzan, 2021). This disciplinary narrowness is reinforced by teacher certification programs that emphasize religious content knowledge over interdisciplinary pedagogical skills.

As a result, students perceive Islamic law as static or symbolic rather than as a dynamic framework guiding social and civic responsibility. Teachers often present *fiqh* rulings as fixed determinations rather than as reasoned positions within particular historical and social contexts. This essentialization prevents students from understanding Islamic law as a living tradition capable of engaging with contemporary legal issues, including those arising within Indonesia's constitutional framework.

1.3 Curricular Fragmentation and Knowledge Silos

Curricular gaps also contribute to fragmentation. Key topics—such as human rights, constitutional ethics, civic duties, and the alignment between *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* and national law—are frequently absent or superficially addressed (Mahfud, 2020; Nasir, 2021). This omission reflects a broader pattern of what Muhammad Abed al-Jabri (1999) critiqued as the dissociation between religious and rational epistemologies in Muslim educational systems.

Without coherent integration, PAI cannot provide a comprehensive foundation for legal awareness, and students' understanding of civic responsibilities remains fragmented and abstract. The curriculum often presents Islamic law and national law as parallel systems with minimal interaction, missing opportunities to explore their complementary dimensions. For example, discussions of Islamic contract law rarely reference Indonesia's Civil Code (*Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Perdata*), while lessons on constitutional rights seldom engage with Islamic concepts of human dignity (*karamah insaniyyah*).

2. External Socio-Cultural and Structural Factors

2.1 Patron-Client Networks and Legal Dependency

Externally, social norms and structures significantly influence legal consciousness. Persistent patron-client networks encourage reliance on local elites for legal advice and conflict resolution, undermining independent comprehension and responsibility

(Susanto, 2022). This dependency culture contradicts Islamic principles of personal responsibility (*mas'uliyyah fardiyah*) and intellectual independence (*ijtihad*), while also conflicting with modern citizenship ideals of legal autonomy.

Informal authority held by religious and cultural leaders often supersedes formal law, with community members following local interpretations even when they contradict statutory requirements (Anwar, 2020). This can limit the development of autonomous ethical reasoning in line with state law. The sociological concept of "legal pluralism" helps explain this phenomenon, as individuals navigate multiple normative systems with varying degrees of authority. However, without critical awareness of these pluralities, community members may uncritically accept local interpretations that privilege certain interests over justice and equity.

2.2 Policy Gaps and Institutional Disconnect

Policy gaps exacerbate the issue. National education standards emphasize character building but often omit explicit legal literacy objectives. The Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 37 of 2018 concerning Core Competencies and Basic Competencies includes legal awareness implicitly under citizenship education but provides minimal guidance for integration with religious education. Without institutional reinforcement, schools have limited capacity to integrate legal awareness into PAI, leaving students with theoretical knowledge but little practical understanding (Rahman, 2021).

Moreover, inter-ministerial coordination between the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Culture remains weak, resulting in parallel educational tracks with minimal integration. This institutional separation mirrors the epistemological separation discussed earlier, creating structural barriers to holistic legal education. Policy reforms that promote collaborative curriculum development and teacher training across ministries could address this fragmentation, but such initiatives face bureaucratic inertia and competing institutional priorities.

3. Epistemic and Textual Limitations

3.1 Decontextualized Fiqh Education

Another factor involves limitations in educational texts. Classical *fiqh* works are frequently taught without contextualization, preventing students from understanding their applicability to contemporary governance and legal systems (Zuhdi, 2020; Hakim, 2022). This decontextualization reflects what Wael Hallaq (2009) identifies as the "textualization" of Islamic law—the treatment of historical legal texts as authoritative in themselves rather than as products of specific historical circumstances.

This approach creates several problems for legal awareness development. First, it presents Islamic law as historically fixed rather than dynamically adaptable to changing social conditions. Second, it obscures the methodological tools (*usul al-fiqh*) through which classical jurists derived rulings from foundational sources, depriving students of critical reasoning skills. Third, it reinforces artificial boundaries between "religious" and "worldly" matters, contrary to the holistic vision of Islam that integrates all aspects of life.

3.2 Limited Inter-Institutional Coordination

Moreover, limited coordination among schools, families, and communities reduces reinforcement of legal norms outside the classroom. When social environments fail to mirror the principles taught in PAI, students may revert to community norms inconsistent with law and ethics. This reflects what sociologists term the "compartmentalization" of religious values—their confinement to specific domains (like worship) without permeating broader social practices.

Effective legal socialization requires consistent messaging across multiple social spheres: educational institutions, family environments, religious communities, and media landscapes. The absence of coordinated efforts creates what Albert Bandura's social learning theory would identify as contradictory modeling, where different authority figures demonstrate conflicting approaches to legal norms. This inconsistency undermines the internalization process, leading to situational rather than principled compliance.

3.3 Epistemological Tensions Between Religious and Secular Knowledge

Underlying these practical limitations is a deeper epistemological tension between religious and secular frameworks of knowledge. Modern legal systems operate within secular rational paradigms, while Islamic legal thought traditionally operates within a theological paradigm where divine revelation provides ultimate normative authority. PAI often fails to address this epistemological divide, either presenting Islamic and national law as entirely compatible (overlooking genuine tensions) or as fundamentally opposed (discouraging constructive engagement).

Recent scholarship in Islamic legal theory offers resources for bridging this divide through concepts like "constitutional *fiqh*" (*fiqh dusturi*) and "civic *sharī'ah*" that reinterpret Islamic legal principles within constitutional democratic frameworks (Abdullahi An-Na'im, 2008). However, these developments have not significantly penetrated PAI curricula, which remain largely traditional in their epistemological orientation.

These internal and external constraints demonstrate that enhancing PAI's impact requires comprehensive interventions targeting pedagogy, curriculum, teacher competence, policy, and community engagement. The following section explores potential solutions through juridical reforms, social interventions, and pedagogical innovations

3.3. Juridical and Social Solutions for Strengthening PAI's Role in Developing Legal Awareness

The analysis indicates that PAI's limited effectiveness results from both internal educational factors and external socio-cultural influences, as well as epistemic constraints in textual

To address the identified challenges, the study highlights multi-level solutions encompassing juridical reforms, social interventions, and pedagogical innovation. These proposals integrate insights from Islamic legal theory, educational psychology, sociology of law, and comparative legal studies, offering a comprehensive framework for transforming PAI into an effective mechanism for legal consciousness development.

1. Juridical Solutions and Policy Interventions

1.1 Curriculum Integration and Legal Literacy Modules

Integration of Islamic ethical principles into national educational policy is essential. Curriculum guidelines should include legal literacy modules covering constitutional rights, civic duties, and the ethical foundation of law in Islamic thought (Azizah, 2021; Mahfud, 2020). These modules should adopt a comparative approach, examining how Islamic legal concepts intersect with Indonesian positive law across various domains: family law, commercial law, criminal law, constitutional law, and human rights.

Specifically, the curriculum could include units on:

- The philosophy of law in Islamic thought and Pancasila
- Comparative analysis of legal concepts: *maslahah* (public welfare) and public interest in administrative law
- Islamic principles of justice ('*adl*) and the Indonesian constitutional guarantee of justice
- The relationship between *qanun* (Islamic regulations) and *undang-undang* (statutory law)
- Legal procedures in Islamic jurisprudence (*murafa'at*) and Indonesian procedural law

This integrated curriculum should be developed through collaboration between Islamic studies specialists, legal scholars, educational experts, and practicing attorneys to ensure both religious authenticity and legal accuracy.

1.2 Teacher Training and Professional Development

Teacher training must emphasize not only religious knowledge but also legal principles, contemporary socio-legal issues, and participatory pedagogy. Pre-service teacher education programs should include courses on:

- Islamic legal theory (*usul al-fiqh*) with emphasis on contemporary applications
- Indonesian constitutional law and legal system
- Comparative religion and law in plural societies
- Pedagogical methods for ethical and legal education

In-service training should provide continuous professional development through workshops, seminars, and online courses addressing emerging legal issues. Special attention should be given to developing teachers' capacity for facilitating difficult conversations about legal conflicts between religious and state norms, using case studies and ethical dilemma discussions.

1.3 Assessment Reform and Competency Evaluation

Policy instruments should incentivize curriculum designs that promote practical legal reasoning. Assessment frameworks should evaluate students' ability to apply Islamic ethics to legal contexts, rather than merely their cognitive knowledge (Rahman, 2021).

Performance assessments could include:

- Case analysis exercises requiring application of both Islamic and national legal principles
- Mock mediation or courtroom simulations
- Community legal awareness projects
- Ethical reasoning essays on contemporary legal dilemmas

These assessments should measure not only knowledge recall but also higher-order thinking skills: analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and ethical judgment. Such reforms align with global shifts toward competency-based education while remaining grounded in Islamic educational values that prioritize practical wisdom (*hikmah*) over mere information.

1.4 Doctrinal Clarification and Theological Framing

Furthermore, doctrinal clarity is necessary to teach that compliance with positive law complements religious duties, enhancing both moral and civic responsibility. Islamic theological resources provide strong foundations for this position. The classical

principle "*la ta'ata li-makhlugin fi ma'siyat al-khaliq*" (no obedience to creatures in disobedience to the Creator) establishes limits to obedience to human authorities. However, the complementary principle "*ta'at al-uli al-amr*" (obedience to those in authority) in Qur'an 4:59, when properly interpreted, supports compliance with legitimate state law.

Contemporary Islamic scholarship has developed nuanced positions on citizenship in non-Muslim or pluralistic states, emphasizing the contractual basis of citizenship ('*aqd al-muwatanah*) and the Islamic obligation to fulfill covenants (*ahkam al-'uqud*). PAI curricula should incorporate these developments, presenting legal awareness not as a secular imposition but as a religious obligation deriving from Islamic principles of covenant-keeping, social responsibility, and the pursuit of justice.

2. Social Solutions and Community-Based Interventions

2.1 Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration and Social Ecosystems

Community involvement is crucial. Schools, families, mosques, and civic organizations should collaborate to reinforce legal awareness across social settings. Programs may include public seminars, mosque-based study circles, and civic engagement initiatives where students apply legal knowledge in community projects (Anwar, 2020; Siregar, 2021). These initiatives should adopt an ecosystem approach, recognizing that legal consciousness develops through repeated interactions across multiple social spheres.

Specifically, communities could establish:

- Legal literacy circles (*halaqah qanuniyyah*) in mosques and Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*)
- Parent education programs on legal socialization in family contexts
- Community legal clinics where students assist under supervision
- Interfaith legal dialogues exploring different religious perspectives on legal issues
- Public legal education campaigns during religious occasions like Ramadan

2.2 Religious Leadership and Normative Framing

Religious leaders play a pivotal role; when they frame legal obedience as both an Islamic and civic obligation, community perceptions of law shift from coercion to ethical responsibility. Training programs for religious leaders (*imam, kiai, ustaz*) should include modules on:

- Islamic foundations of constitutional citizenship
- The role of religious leaders in promoting rule of law
- Strategies for addressing legal misconceptions in sermons and teachings

- Conflict resolution skills that integrate religious and legal approaches

Religious leaders should be equipped to address sensitive issues where religious and legal norms may appear to conflict, such as inheritance law, interfaith marriage, or religious freedom limitations. By providing theologically sound frameworks for engaging with these issues, religious leaders can help communities navigate legal pluralism without abandoning religious commitment.

2.3 Media Engagement and Digital Literacy

Given the increasing influence of digital media on legal consciousness, social interventions should include media literacy components. PAI programs could teach critical evaluation of legal information circulating online, distinguishing between authoritative sources and misinformation. Collaborative projects with media organizations could produce educational content that presents legal issues through Islamic ethical frameworks, using formats accessible to diverse audiences (short videos, podcasts, social media campaigns).

Digital platforms could also host virtual legal consultation services where religious scholars and legal experts provide integrated perspectives on community concerns. Such initiatives would model the complementary relationship between religious and legal expertise while addressing practical needs.

3. Pedagogical Innovations and Integrative Learning Strategies

3.1 Experiential and Case-Based Learning

Innovative teaching methods can enhance learning outcomes. Case-based learning, simulations of legal deliberation, project-based civic engagement, and integrative analysis of *fiqh* and state law allow students to apply knowledge actively (Hidayat, 2022). These methods align with Islamic educational traditions that valued practical application ('*amal*) and experiential learning, as exemplified in the historical *masjid-madrasah* complex where worship, study, and community service were integrated.

Specific pedagogical approaches could include:

- Moot court simulations based on cases involving both Islamic and national legal principles
- Legal ethnography projects where students document and analyze legal practices in their communities
- Comparative text analysis of Islamic legal sources and Indonesian legislation on specific topics
- Service-learning projects addressing legal needs in local communities

- Ethical dilemma discussions requiring integration of multiple normative frameworks

3.2 Critical Pedagogy and Ethical Reasoning Development

Experiential learning develops both cognitive understanding and ethical dispositions, making legal principles personally meaningful. Beyond skill development, however, PAI should foster what legal scholar William Sullivan (1995) calls "civic professionalism"—the integration of technical competence with ethical commitment and civic responsibility. This requires moving beyond procedural legal knowledge to cultivate what Islamic educational philosophy terms *adab*—the comprehensive etiquette encompassing knowledge, behavior, and character.

Critical pedagogical approaches can help students deconstruct power dynamics in legal systems, analyze how laws affect different social groups, and envision more just alternatives. This critical dimension is essential for developing what Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2002) calls "subaltern legal consciousness"—awareness of how marginalized groups experience and resist legal domination. Islamic educational traditions offer resources for this critical engagement through concepts like *hisbah* (public accountability), *nasihah* (sincere counsel to authorities), and *al-amr bi-l-ma'ruf wa-n-nahi 'an al-munkar* (enjoining good and forbidding wrong).

4. Integration of Islamic Legal Ethics and Positive Law

4.1 Conceptual Integration and Normative Harmonization

By systematically aligning Islamic ethical imperatives—such as justice, public welfare, and obedience to legitimate authority—with national legal norms, PAI can cultivate a balanced legal identity. Such integration bridges religious and civic identities, creating students who are both ethically grounded and legally conscious (Suharto, 2019; Hidayat, 2022). This requires careful conceptual work identifying points of convergence while honestly acknowledging points of tension.

Areas of natural alignment include:

- Justice and equity: Islamic *'adl* and constitutional guarantees of equal protection
- Public welfare: Islamic *maslahah* and the state's responsibility for people's welfare (*kesejahteraan rakyat*)
- Human dignity: Islamic *karamah insaniyyah* and human rights protections
- Contractual fidelity: Islamic emphasis on fulfilling covenants and contract law principles
- Procedural fairness: Islamic rules of evidence and due process rights

Areas requiring nuanced engagement include:

- Legal pluralism: Navigating multiple normative systems in personal and social life
- Religious freedom: Balancing religious expression with public order and others' rights
- Gender equality: Interpreting Islamic legal heritage in light of contemporary equality norms
- Minority rights: Islamic majority responsibility toward religious minorities in a Muslim-majority state

4.2 Institutional Models and Best Practices

Successful integration requires institutional models that can be adapted to diverse educational contexts. Potential models include:

- Dual-degree programs combining Islamic studies and law
- Integrated curriculum development teams with cross-disciplinary expertise
- Professional learning communities for teachers across religious and civic education
- University-school partnerships supporting curriculum innovation and teacher development
- Pilot programs in diverse regions with different socio-legal cultures

International best practices from other Muslim-majority countries facing similar challenges could inform these models. Malaysia's integrated Islamic and civil law curriculum, Morocco's religious education reforms emphasizing citizenship values, and Indonesia's own experiments with "*multicultural pesantren*" offer valuable lessons for effective integration.

Ultimately, this approach fosters a legal culture that is sustainable, socially coherent, and consistent with both spiritual and civic values. The transformation requires patience and persistence, as legal consciousness develops gradually through sustained educational and social reinforcement. However, the potential rewards—communities that harmonize religious commitment with responsible citizenship—justify the considerable effort required.

The analysis indicates that PAI faces complex, multidimensional challenges in fostering legal awareness. These challenges arise from internal pedagogical limitations, external socio-cultural constraints, and epistemic gaps in educational content. The normative-practical disconnect, regional variations in legal culture, dichotomy between religious and civic literacy, structural curricular limitations, dominance of informal dispute-resolution mechanisms, socio-economic factors, and generational gaps collectively

create a formidable barrier to legal consciousness development through religious education.

Nevertheless, the convergence of juridical reforms, social interventions, and innovative pedagogy offers a coherent pathway to strengthen PAI's role. Juridical solutions require curriculum integration, teacher training enhancement, assessment reform, and doctrinal clarification that frames legal compliance as religious obligation. Social solutions emphasize multi-stakeholder collaboration, religious leadership engagement, and media literacy to create reinforcing environments for legal consciousness. Pedagogical innovations center on experiential learning, critical pedagogy, and ethical reasoning development that connects knowledge with practice.

By integrating Islamic ethics with national legal principles and promoting experiential learning and community engagement, PAI can transform into a robust mechanism for cultivating legal consciousness. This integrated approach holds promise for producing Muslim communities in Indonesia that are not only religiously devout but also legally aware, ethically responsible, and civically engaged. Such communities would embody the Islamic ideal of *ummatan wasatan* (a balanced community) that contributes positively to national development while maintaining distinctive religious identity.

The success of this transformation depends on coordinated efforts across educational institutions, religious organizations, government agencies, and civil society. It requires reimagining PAI not as merely transmitting religious knowledge but as forming ethical citizens capable of navigating complex legal landscapes with wisdom and integrity. In Indonesia's ongoing democratic consolidation and legal development, such religious education could make vital contributions to a legal culture that respects both divine values and human dignity, creating what might be termed a "*sharī‘ah*-informed rule of law" that honors Indonesia's dual heritage as the world's largest Muslim-majority nation and a constitutional democracy committed to *Pancasila* values.

4. Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a significant role in shaping legal awareness among Muslim communities in Indonesia by fostering the internalization of ethical and moral values aligned with the principles of national law. Through its focus on justice, responsibility, and obedience to legitimate authority, PAI provides a normative framework that can strengthen civic virtues and promote a sense of legal duty. However, the study also highlights persistent challenges, such as limited legal literacy, insufficient integration of legal content in the PAI curriculum, and reliance on informal dispute-resolution practices, which collectively constrain the full realization of PAI's potential in cultivating substantive legal consciousness.

This research contributes to academic discourse by presenting an integrative perspective that links Islamic law, Indonesian positive law, and educational theory in understanding how legal awareness develops within a Muslim socio-cultural context. By emphasizing the interplay of juridical principles, pedagogical strategies, and community engagement, the study offers a holistic model for enhancing legal culture through religious education. This approach not only confirms the importance of PAI in shaping ethical and legal reasoning but also highlights the need for coordinated interventions to bridge normative ideals and practical implementation, extending prior analyses on civic education and moral development.

Despite these insights, the study has inherent limitations. Its reliance on secondary sources and normative analysis restricts the ability to capture the practical experiences of teachers and students or the variability of PAI implementation across diverse educational settings. Future research should incorporate empirical methods such as interviews, surveys, or classroom observations to validate the conceptual findings and explore the effectiveness of specific pedagogical innovations or policy reforms. Such studies would further clarify how PAI can be optimized to foster legal awareness effectively, ensuring that ethical education translates into meaningful civic and legal engagement.

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