

Between Religious Authority and State Law: Legal Pluralism in Indonesian Islamic Family Law

Ikrimatul Hasanah ^{a*}, Bilqees Faiz^b

^a Institut KH Yazid Kairmullah, Indonesia

^b PhD Scholar, Department of Hadith and seerah, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan

* ikrimahhasanah964@gmail.com,

Abstract

The interaction between religious authority and state law represents a central issue in the development of Islamic family law in contemporary Muslim societies. In Indonesia, the regulation of marriage reflects a plural legal environment in which Islamic jurisprudence, state legislation, and social practices coexist and influence one another. This study aims to examine how legal pluralism shapes the governance of Islamic family law in Indonesia, particularly in relation to the interaction between religious authority and state regulation in the practice of marriage. The research employs a qualitative approach using a socio-legal method that combines the analysis of statutory regulations with an examination of social and religious practices related to marriage. Primary legal sources include Law No. 1 of 1974 on Marriage and the Compilation of Islamic Law, while secondary sources consist of scholarly literature discussing Islamic family law and legal pluralism in Indonesia. The findings indicate that although the Indonesian state has established a structured legal framework requiring marriage registration and regulating polygamy through judicial procedures, religious authority continues to influence community perceptions of marital legitimacy. Practices such as *nikah siri* demonstrate how religious validation may be prioritized even when a marriage lacks formal legal recognition. This situation illustrates the operation of legal pluralism in Indonesian Islamic family law, where religious norms, statutory law, and social practices interact in shaping the regulation of family relations. The study concludes that understanding Islamic family law in Indonesia requires a socio-legal perspective that recognizes the dynamic interaction between

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religious authority and state law in regulating marriage within a pluralistic legal system.

Introduction

The regulation of family relations has long been one of the most significant domains in which Islamic law interacts with modern state legal systems. Among the various areas of Islamic law, family law occupies a particularly important position because it governs fundamental aspects of social life, including marriage, divorce, inheritance, and parental responsibility. In many Muslim-majority societies, family law represents one of the last legal fields in which religious norms continue to play a central role within state legal frameworks. As a result, Islamic family law often becomes a site where religious authority, social practices, and state regulation intersect in complex and sometimes contested ways (Hallaq 2004).

Indonesia provides an especially interesting context for examining these interactions. As the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia operates within a legal system characterized by the coexistence of multiple normative orders (Ardi and Shuhufi 2024). The Indonesian legal system incorporates elements of civil law inherited from the colonial period, religious law applied in specific domains such as family law, and local customary practices that continue to shape social behavior. Scholars often describe this condition as legal pluralism, a situation in which different legal systems operate simultaneously within the same social field (Kusnandar and Rahma 2023). Within this plural legal environment, Islamic family law occupies a distinctive position because it functions both as a religious normative system and as part of the formal state legal structure.

The institutionalization of Islamic family law in Indonesia can be seen most clearly in the enactment of Law No. 1 of 1974 on Marriage and the Compilation of Islamic Law (Kompilasi Hukum Islam), which serve as the primary legal frameworks regulating marriage and family relations among Muslims (Hasanah and Niskaromah 2025). These legal instruments represent the state's effort to integrate Islamic legal principles into a national legal framework while ensuring legal certainty and administrative order (Fannani et al. 2024). Marriage, for example, is recognized as valid when conducted according to religious law but must also be officially registered with state authorities in order to receive full legal recognition. Through such regulations, the Indonesian state attempts to reconcile religious legitimacy with modern legal administration (Hamayotsu 2015).

Despite these legal frameworks, the practical implementation of Islamic family law in Indonesia often reveals tensions between religious authority and state law. One

of the most frequently discussed examples of this tension appears in the practice of unregistered marriage, commonly referred to as *nikah siri* (Aji 2021). In many cases, such marriages fulfill the religious requirements established in Islamic jurisprudence, including the presence of a guardian, witnesses, and a valid marriage contract. However, because the marriage is not formally recorded by state authorities, it lacks legal recognition within the administrative system. This situation creates a dual structure of legitimacy in which a marriage may be regarded as religiously valid but legally undocumented (Bowen 2004).

The persistence of practices such as *nikah siri* illustrates the broader dynamics of legal pluralism within Indonesian society. Individuals navigating marital decisions may rely on religious authority, community norms, or personal interpretations of Islamic teachings rather than strictly following state legal procedures (Awang 2024). In this context, the authority of religious leaders and local social practices often continues to shape how Islamic family law is understood and applied in everyday life. The coexistence of these different normative frameworks raises important questions about how legal authority is negotiated and how competing interpretations of law influence social behavior (Akhtar 2013).

The tension between religious authority and state law becomes even more visible in issues related to polygamy, which remains legally permissible in Indonesia under specific conditions. While Islamic jurisprudence recognizes the possibility of polygamous marriage, Indonesian marriage law places significant procedural restrictions on the practice (Halim 2024). A husband who wishes to marry more than one wife must obtain permission from a religious court and must demonstrate legitimate reasons, financial capability, and the consent of the existing wife. These requirements reflect the state's attempt to regulate polygamy within a legal framework designed to ensure fairness and protect the rights of women and children (Nurlaelawati 2013).

Nevertheless, the existence of these legal regulations does not necessarily eliminate alternative marital practices within society. In some cases, individuals may choose to conduct polygamous marriages outside the formal legal system through unregistered religious ceremonies (Ardi and Shuhufi 2024). Such practices reveal the continuing influence of religious legitimacy and social norms in shaping family relations. They also highlight the limits of state legal authority in regulating personal and religious matters, particularly in societies where religious institutions retain strong moral influence.

The interaction between religious authority and state law in Indonesian Islamic family law therefore reflects a broader process of negotiation between different

sources of legitimacy (Faiz and Koca 2024). On the one hand, the state seeks to regulate family relations through statutory legislation and administrative procedures. On the other hand, religious authority continues to provide normative guidance that shapes how individuals understand marriage and family obligations. This interaction does not necessarily produce a single unified legal system but rather creates a plural legal environment in which multiple forms of legal authority coexist and influence each other.

From a theoretical perspective, the concept of legal pluralism provides an important analytical framework for understanding these dynamics. Legal pluralism challenges the assumption that law operates as a single unified system controlled entirely by the state. Instead, it recognizes that different normative orders, including religious law, customary law, and social practices, may operate simultaneously within the same society (Merry 1988). In the context of Islamic family law in Indonesia, legal pluralism helps explain why state regulations may coexist with alternative practices grounded in religious or community-based authority.

Examining the interaction between religious authority and state law is particularly important in contemporary discussions of Islamic family law because it highlights the evolving nature of legal legitimacy in modern Muslim societies. Rather than viewing Islamic law and state law as mutually exclusive systems, many scholars emphasize the importance of analyzing how these systems interact, overlap, and sometimes compete in shaping social practices. Understanding these interactions can provide deeper insight into how Islamic family law continues to evolve within modern legal frameworks.

This study therefore seeks to examine the dynamics of legal pluralism in Indonesian Islamic family law, focusing on the relationship between religious authority and state regulation in the governance of marriage. By analyzing how these two sources of legal authority interact within the Indonesian context, this research aims to contribute to broader discussions about the role of Islamic law in contemporary legal systems. More specifically, the study explores how legal norms established by the state coexist with religious interpretations and social practices in shaping the regulation of marriage and family relations in Indonesia.

Through this analysis, the research seeks to demonstrate that the regulation of Islamic family law in Indonesia cannot be understood solely through the examination of statutory law. Instead, it requires a broader perspective that takes into account the complex interactions between legal institutions, religious authority, and social practices. By situating Indonesian Islamic family law within the framework of legal

pluralism, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how different forms of legal authority continue to shape family law in contemporary Muslim societies.

Method

This study employs a qualitative research design using a socio-legal approach to analyze the interaction between religious authority and state law within the framework of Indonesian Islamic family law. A qualitative approach is particularly appropriate for this research because the study seeks to explore legal norms, institutional regulations, and social practices rather than to measure statistical variables (Aşkun and Erkoyuncu 2023). In the context of legal studies, qualitative research allows for an in-depth examination of legal texts, scholarly interpretations, and social dynamics that influence the implementation of law in society (Creswell 2013). Through this approach, the research aims to understand how different sources of legal authority operate and interact in the regulation of family law in Indonesia.

The socio-legal approach is adopted because the issue examined in this research lies at the intersection of legal doctrine and social practice. Islamic family law in Indonesia does not function solely as a formal legal system administered by the state. It also operates as a normative framework influenced by religious interpretation, cultural traditions, and community practices. A socio-legal perspective therefore enables the researcher to analyze both the legal rules governing marriage and the social realities in which these rules are interpreted and applied (Menski 2018). This approach recognizes that law is not only contained in statutes and court decisions but is also shaped by social behavior and competing forms of authority.

The research focuses on examining the relationship between religious authority and state law in the governance of marriage within Indonesian Islamic family law. In this context, religious authority refers to the normative influence of Islamic jurisprudence, religious scholars, and community interpretations of Islamic teachings related to marriage and family relations. State law refers to the formal legal regulations enacted by the Indonesian government, particularly those governing marriage and family matters (Kurniawan and Herlina 2022). By analyzing the interaction between these two sources of authority, the study seeks to identify how legal pluralism operates in the regulation of family law in Indonesia.

The data used in this study consist primarily of documentary sources, which are analyzed through qualitative legal analysis. These data sources can be divided into three main categories. The first category includes primary legal materials, which form the normative foundation of the research. These materials consist of Indonesian

statutory regulations governing marriage and family relations, including Law No. 1 of 1974 on Marriage and the Compilation of Islamic Law (*Kompilasi Hukum Islam*) (Muizzuddin 2025). These legal documents are analyzed to identify the formal legal framework through which the Indonesian state regulates marriage, polygamy, and related family law issues.

The second category of data includes secondary academic sources, such as scholarly books, journal articles, and previous research discussing Islamic family law, legal pluralism, and marriage regulation in Indonesia. These sources provide theoretical perspectives and contextual background that support the analysis of legal pluralism in Indonesian family law (Z. Ali 2021). Academic literature is particularly important in explaining how Islamic jurisprudence, state law, and social practices interact in shaping legal norms related to marriage and family relations.

The third category consists of supporting documentary materials, including policy reports, legal commentaries, and relevant academic discussions related to the practice of Islamic family law in Indonesia (Ahmad et al. 2024). These materials help provide additional context for understanding the broader legal and social environment in which marriage regulation operates.

The analysis of data in this research is conducted through qualitative legal interpretation and thematic analysis. The first stage of analysis involves examining statutory regulations and legal texts to identify the formal legal structure governing Islamic family law in Indonesia. This stage focuses on understanding the regulatory principles embedded in national legislation and how these principles define the role of state institutions in managing family relations.

The second stage of analysis examines the interaction between statutory regulations and religious authority within the broader framework of legal pluralism. This stage involves identifying key themes related to the coexistence of multiple normative systems, including state law, religious interpretation, and social practice. By comparing these different sources of authority, the study aims to highlight how legal pluralism shapes the implementation of Islamic family law in contemporary Indonesian society.

To enhance the reliability of the analysis, the research employs source triangulation, which involves comparing information from multiple sources of legal and academic materials. By analyzing statutory regulations alongside scholarly interpretations and socio-legal studies, the research aims to produce a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between religious authority and state law in Indonesian Islamic family law (Hartley and Sturm 1997).

Through this methodological framework, the study seeks to provide a systematic examination of legal pluralism in the governance of Islamic family law in Indonesia. The socio-legal approach allows the research to move beyond purely doctrinal analysis and to explore how law operates in practice within a society characterized by multiple sources of legal authority. In doing so, the research contributes to broader discussions concerning the role of Islamic law in modern legal systems and the continuing negotiation between religious legitimacy and state legal authority in Muslim societies.

Results and Discussion

Religious Authority in the Practice of Islamic Family Law in Indonesia

Religious authority continues to occupy a central position in shaping the understanding and practice of Islamic family law in Indonesia. Although the Indonesian state has established a formal legal framework regulating marriage and family relations, the interpretation and implementation of these regulations are often influenced by religious norms, community practices, and the authority of Islamic scholars (Ab Latif et al. 2025; Nurlaelawati 2013). This situation reflects the broader reality that Islamic family law in Indonesia operates within a plural legal environment where religious authority and state law coexist and interact in complex ways.

In Islamic legal tradition, marriage is regarded as a contractual relationship that establishes lawful relations between a man and a woman while creating a system of rights and responsibilities within the family (Azani 2021). Classical jurists emphasized that marriage requires several essential elements in order to be considered valid. These elements include the consent of both parties, the presence of a guardian for the bride, the presence of witnesses, and the pronouncement of a valid marriage contract (Ardi and Shuhufi 2024; Büchler and Schlatter 2013). When these requirements are fulfilled, the marriage is generally regarded as legitimate within Islamic jurisprudence. This doctrinal understanding of marriage continues to shape how many Muslim communities interpret the validity of marital relationships in contemporary society.

In Indonesia, religious authority in matters of marriage is often exercised through religious scholars, local clerics, and community leaders who provide guidance based on Islamic teachings. These figures are frequently consulted by members of the community when questions arise regarding the permissibility of marriage arrangements, divorce procedures, or family responsibilities (Abisatya and Prasetyo 2024; I. Z. Ali, Magufuli, and El Souwaim 2024). Their interpretations are often seen as authoritative because they are grounded in Islamic legal tradition and

religious scholarship. As a result, religious leaders play a significant role in shaping how Islamic family law is understood and practiced at the community level.

The influence of religious authority can be observed in the way many Indonesian Muslims approach the concept of marital legitimacy. For a significant portion of society, the religious validity of a marriage remains the primary consideration in determining whether the marriage is legitimate (Adhim and Afif 2021). If the essential elements of Islamic marriage are fulfilled, many individuals consider the marriage to be valid even if it has not been formally registered with state authorities. This perspective highlights the continuing importance of religious norms in guiding social behavior related to marriage and family life (I. Z. Ali, Magufuli, and Souwaim 2024).

One of the clearest examples of the influence of religious authority in marital practices is the persistence of *nikah siri*, or unregistered marriage. A *nikah siri* is typically conducted according to Islamic religious procedures but is not officially recorded by the state (Afrianti et al. 2022). In such cases, the marriage ceremony is usually performed by a religious figure in the presence of witnesses and community members (Ayawaila 2019). Because the essential elements of Islamic marriage are fulfilled, many participants regard the marriage as religiously valid. This practice illustrates how religious authority can shape perceptions of marital legitimacy even when the marriage does not comply with formal state regulations.

The continued existence of *nikah siri* demonstrates that religious legitimacy often holds strong social significance in Indonesian society. For many individuals, the approval of religious authorities may carry greater weight than administrative recognition by state institutions (I. Z. Ali, Magufuli, and Souwaim 2024). This does not necessarily indicate rejection of state law, but rather reflects the coexistence of multiple normative systems that guide social behavior. Individuals may simultaneously acknowledge the importance of state regulations while still prioritizing religious validation when making decisions related to marriage (Alfitri et al. 2024).

In addition to influencing perceptions of marital legitimacy, religious authority also plays a role in shaping community attitudes toward issues such as polygamy, divorce, and marital obligations (Herlina et al. 2024). Islamic teachings regarding family life are frequently communicated through sermons, religious education, and informal guidance provided by religious scholars. Through these channels, religious leaders help interpret Islamic legal principles for contemporary social contexts (Büchler and Schlatter 2013). Their interpretations can influence how individuals understand the conditions under which polygamy is permissible, the responsibilities of spouses, and the moral expectations associated with family life.

The authority of religious scholars in family matters is further strengthened by the broader cultural role of Islam within Indonesian society. Religious identity often forms an important part of social life, and religious leaders are frequently viewed as trusted sources of moral guidance (Nurlaelawati 2013). This social trust enhances the influence of religious authority in shaping community practices related to marriage and family relations. In many cases, individuals may consult religious leaders before making decisions regarding marriage arrangements or resolving family disputes.

At the same time, religious authority in Indonesia does not operate as a single unified institution. Different scholars and religious organizations may offer varying interpretations of Islamic teachings related to marriage and family law (Hasanah and Niskaromah 2025). Some religious leaders strongly emphasize the importance of complying with state regulations, including the requirement of marriage registration. Others may place greater emphasis on the religious validity of marriage as defined by Islamic jurisprudence (Berber and Blanc 2024). These differing perspectives illustrate the diversity of religious interpretation that exists within Indonesian Muslim communities.

The presence of diverse interpretations contributes to the dynamic character of Islamic family law in Indonesia. Rather than functioning as a fixed set of rules, Islamic family law is continuously interpreted and applied within changing social contexts (Addzaky et al. 2025). Religious scholars often play a key role in this interpretive process by providing guidance that adapts traditional legal principles to contemporary circumstances (Afan and Al-Am 2025). Through this process, religious authority remains a living and evolving source of normative guidance within society.

The relationship between religious authority and community practice also illustrates how law operates beyond formal legal institutions. In many cases, the implementation of Islamic family law occurs not only through courts and state regulations but also through everyday social interactions and religious guidance (Kurniawan and Herlina 2022). Marriage ceremonies, family consultations, and community discussions all contribute to shaping how legal norms are understood and practiced in daily life.

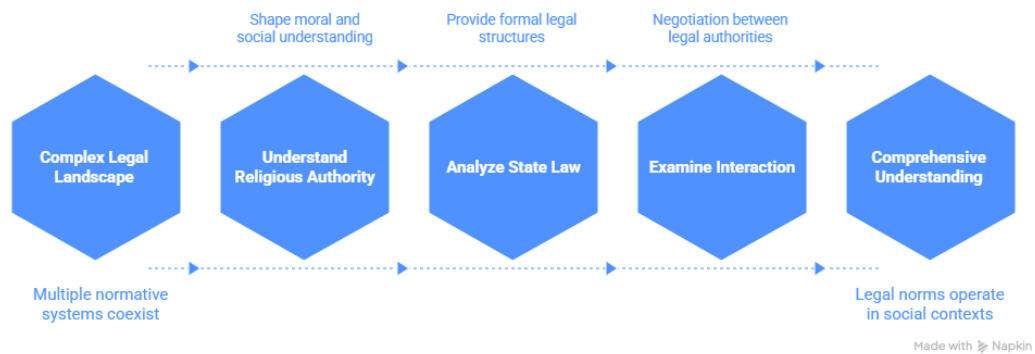
From a socio-legal perspective, this interaction between religious authority and social practice demonstrates that the regulation of family life cannot be understood solely through the analysis of statutory law. Legal norms are interpreted and negotiated within a broader social environment that includes religious beliefs, cultural traditions, and community expectations (Tsaqilan 2025). Religious authority therefore functions as an important mechanism through which legal and moral norms are transmitted and interpreted within society.

In the Indonesian context, the influence of religious authority also reflects the broader principle of legal pluralism. Legal pluralism recognizes that multiple normative systems may coexist within a single society and that individuals often navigate these systems simultaneously (Adhim and Afif 2021). In matters of marriage and family relations, Indonesian Muslims may draw upon Islamic jurisprudence, community customs, and state regulations when making decisions about marital arrangements (Alamsyah et al. 2025). The interaction among these different sources of authority creates a complex legal landscape in which multiple forms of legitimacy coexist.

Understanding the role of religious authority in Islamic family law is therefore essential for analyzing how marriage is regulated in Indonesia. While state law provides formal legal structures and administrative procedures, religious authority continues to shape the moral and social understanding of family life (Kurniawan and Herlina 2022). The persistence of practices such as *nikah siri* demonstrates that religious legitimacy remains a powerful factor influencing marital practices within Indonesian society.

In this context, the relationship between religious authority and state law should not be viewed solely as a conflict between two competing systems. Instead, it reflects an ongoing process of negotiation in which different forms of legal authority interact and influence each other (I. Z. Ali, Magufuli, and El Souwaim 2024). Religious norms may shape how individuals interpret state regulations, while state law may influence how religious teachings are applied within contemporary legal frameworks. The continued interaction between religious authority and state law highlights the importance of examining Islamic family law through a socio-legal perspective. Such an approach allows researchers to move beyond purely doctrinal analysis and to explore how legal norms operate within real social contexts (Halim 2024). By considering the influence of religious authority alongside formal legal institutions, it becomes possible to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how Islamic family law functions in contemporary Indonesian society.

Figure 1 Navigating Legal Pluralism in Islamic Family Law



Ultimately, the practice of Islamic family law in Indonesia reflects the coexistence of multiple forms of legal authority that shape how marriage and family relations are governed. Religious authority continues to influence social perceptions of marital legitimacy, while state law provides the administrative framework necessary for legal recognition and protection. The interaction between these two sources of authority forms an essential part of the broader legal landscape within which Islamic family law continues to evolve in Indonesia.

State Law and the Dynamics of Legal Pluralism in Indonesian Islamic Family Law

Alongside the continuing influence of religious authority, the Indonesian state plays a decisive role in shaping the regulation of marriage and family relations through formal legal institutions and statutory regulations (Halim 2024). The development of national legislation governing family matters represents an important effort by the state to create a unified legal framework capable of regulating marital relations in a modern legal system. Through this framework, the state seeks to ensure legal certainty, protect the rights of family members, and establish clear procedures for the administration of marriage and divorce (Abisatya and Prasetyo 2024).

The most significant legal instrument governing marriage in Indonesia is Law No. 1 of 1974 on Marriage, which introduced a comprehensive regulatory structure for family relations across the country (Aminah and Muala 2023). This law marked an important milestone in the modernization of Indonesian family law by establishing uniform legal standards while still acknowledging the importance of religious principles (Ahmadi 2019). One of the fundamental features of the Marriage Law is the recognition that marriage must be conducted according to the religious law of the parties involved. At the same time, the law requires that marriages be officially registered with state authorities in order to receive formal legal recognition.

The requirement of marriage registration serves several important legal functions. First, it provides administrative documentation that confirms the existence

of a marital relationship. Such documentation is essential for resolving disputes related to inheritance, divorce, child custody, and property ownership. Second, registration allows the state to monitor marital relations and enforce legal protections for spouses and children. Without official registration, it becomes difficult for courts and administrative institutions to verify marital status or enforce family rights (Hasanah and Niskaromah 2025).

The Indonesian state has also introduced legal regulations designed to limit the potential misuse of polygamy. Although Islamic jurisprudence recognizes the permissibility of polygamous marriage under certain conditions, Indonesian marriage law places procedural restrictions on its practice (Saputra and Permata 2022). A husband who wishes to marry more than one wife must obtain permission from a religious court and must fulfill several legal requirements. These include providing legitimate reasons for the additional marriage, demonstrating financial capability to support multiple households, and obtaining the consent of the existing wife. Through these provisions, the state attempts to regulate polygamy in a way that protects family welfare while remaining consistent with Islamic legal principles (Alfitri et al. 2024).

The role of religious courts in administering these regulations further illustrates the interaction between state law and Islamic legal traditions. Religious courts function as formal legal institutions that apply Islamic family law within the framework of the national legal system (Akhtar 2013). Judges in these courts evaluate requests for polygamous marriage, review divorce cases, and resolve disputes related to family matters. In doing so, they operate within a legal structure that combines statutory law with Islamic legal principles (Abisatya and Prasetyo 2024).

Despite the presence of these legal mechanisms, the implementation of state law in matters of family relations often encounters practical challenges. One of the most persistent challenges is the continued existence of unregistered marriages (Halim 2024). As previously discussed, marriages that are conducted according to religious procedures but not officially recorded by the state remain relatively common in certain communities. These marriages exist outside the administrative system established by the Marriage Law and therefore lack formal legal recognition.

The persistence of such practices demonstrates that the authority of state law does not always operate in isolation from other normative systems. Instead, individuals often navigate between different sources of authority when making decisions related to marriage and family life (Pangestu and Muharman 2023). In many cases, religious legitimacy and community recognition may be regarded as sufficient validation of a marriage, even if the marriage has not been formally registered. This situation illustrates how legal pluralism operates in practice within Indonesian society.

Legal pluralism refers to the coexistence of multiple legal or normative systems within a single social environment. In the Indonesian context, these systems include

state law, Islamic jurisprudence, and local customary practices (Setiawan 2023). Each of these normative frameworks may influence how individuals understand and regulate their family relationships. Rather than functioning as mutually exclusive systems, they often interact with one another in complex ways.

The interaction between state law and religious norms can produce both cooperation and tension. In many situations, religious institutions encourage compliance with state regulations, including the requirement of marriage registration (I. Z. Ali, Magufuli, and Souwaim 2024). Religious leaders may advise couples to register their marriages in order to ensure legal protection and avoid future disputes. In such cases, religious authority and state law function in a complementary manner (Alamsyah et al. 2025).

However, tensions may arise when religious interpretations differ from state legal requirements or when individuals prioritize religious validation over administrative procedures. For example, some individuals may choose to conduct a marriage privately through a religious ceremony without registering it with the state. Although this practice may be regarded as religiously legitimate, it creates legal complications when disputes arise or when legal documentation is required.

The consequences of this legal divergence can be significant. Unregistered marriages may create difficulties in establishing legal rights related to inheritance, divorce settlements, and the legal status of children (Hashim et al. 2017). In many cases, women and children are particularly vulnerable when marriages lack official documentation. Without legal recognition, spouses may encounter obstacles when seeking protection through formal legal institutions. These challenges highlight the limits of state authority in regulating intimate aspects of social life. Marriage is not only a legal institution but also a social and religious practice deeply embedded in cultural traditions (Hasani et al. 2024). As a result, legal regulations alone may not be sufficient to fully shape marital behavior. Social beliefs, religious interpretations, and community practices often continue to influence how marriage is conducted and recognized within society.

At the same time, the existence of legal pluralism does not necessarily imply that state law is ineffective. In many cases, individuals recognize the practical benefits of legal registration, particularly when dealing with matters such as property rights, inheritance, or child documentation. Over time, the administrative advantages of legal recognition may encourage greater compliance with state regulations (Aminah and Muala 2023). The Indonesian experience therefore illustrates how modern legal systems must navigate the complex relationship between formal legislation and social practice. State law provides institutional structures designed to regulate family relations, while religious and social norms continue to shape how these regulations are interpreted and applied in everyday life (Aminah and Muala 2023).

Understanding this interaction is essential for analyzing the development of Islamic family law in contemporary Indonesia.

From a broader socio-legal perspective, the interaction between religious authority and state law reflects the evolving nature of legal governance in plural societies. Rather than operating as a single unified system, law in Indonesia emerges from the ongoing negotiation between different sources of normative authority (Tsaqilan 2025). These sources include formal state institutions, religious traditions, and social practices that influence how individuals understand their legal obligations.

In the context of Islamic family law, this negotiation is particularly visible because family relations lie at the intersection of religious morality and legal regulation (Kurniawan and Herlina 2022). The state seeks to ensure legal certainty and protect individual rights, while religious institutions continue to provide ethical guidance regarding marriage and family responsibilities. The coexistence of these two forms of authority creates a dynamic legal environment in which multiple interpretations of legitimacy coexist.

Ultimately, the regulation of Islamic family law in Indonesia reflects a process of continuous adaptation in which religious principles and state law interact within a plural legal framework. Rather than replacing religious authority, state law functions as an institutional mechanism that seeks to harmonize religious norms with the requirements of modern legal administration. At the same time, the continued influence of religious interpretation ensures that Islamic family law remains deeply connected to the social and cultural values of Indonesian Muslim communities. Understanding this complex interaction between state regulation and religious authority provides valuable insight into how Islamic family law continues to evolve within contemporary Indonesia. It demonstrates that the governance of family relations cannot be understood solely through statutory regulations but must also consider the broader social and religious context in which those regulations operate.

Conclusion

This study has examined the interaction between religious authority and state law in the governance of Islamic family law in Indonesia through the lens of legal pluralism. The analysis demonstrates that Islamic family law in Indonesia operates within a complex legal environment where multiple sources of authority coexist and influence the regulation of marriage and family relations. Rather than functioning as a single unified legal system, the regulation of family life reflects an ongoing negotiation between religious norms, state legislation, and social practices.

The findings show that religious authority continues to play a significant role in shaping community perceptions of marital legitimacy. Islamic teachings and interpretations provided by religious scholars remain influential in guiding how

individuals understand the validity of marriage, the responsibilities of spouses, and the moral dimensions of family life. Practices such as *nikah siri* illustrate how religious legitimacy may be prioritized by some members of society even when such practices fall outside the formal administrative framework established by the state.

At the same time, the Indonesian state has developed a structured legal framework designed to regulate marriage and protect family rights. Through legislation such as Law No. 1 of 1974 on Marriage and the Compilation of Islamic Law, the state seeks to ensure legal certainty by requiring marriage registration and by imposing procedural safeguards in matters such as polygamy. These regulations demonstrate the state's effort to harmonize Islamic legal principles with modern legal administration and the protection of women and children within the family.

The coexistence of these two sources of authority reflects the broader phenomenon of legal pluralism in Indonesian society. Religious norms, statutory law, and social practices interact continuously in shaping how Islamic family law is implemented in everyday life. In some situations, these systems complement one another, while in others they may produce tensions when different forms of legitimacy compete for recognition.

Understanding Islamic family law in Indonesia therefore requires a socio-legal perspective that considers both formal legal institutions and the social realities in which law operates. The persistence of alternative marital practices such as unregistered marriage demonstrates that legal regulation alone cannot fully determine social behavior. Religious beliefs, community traditions, and cultural values continue to influence how individuals interpret and apply legal norms related to marriage and family relations.

Ultimately, the interaction between religious authority and state law illustrates the dynamic nature of Islamic family law in contemporary Indonesia. Rather than representing two opposing systems, these forms of authority function within a plural legal landscape in which legal norms are constantly interpreted, negotiated, and adapted. Recognizing this complexity is essential for developing a more comprehensive understanding of how Islamic family law continues to evolve in modern Muslim societies.

Future research may further explore how legal pluralism shapes other aspects of Islamic family law, including divorce, inheritance, and child custody. Such studies would contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between religious traditions, state legal institutions, and social practices in regulating family life within pluralistic legal systems.

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