

Local Cultural Transformation in the Development of Law Based on Religious Principles

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Article Info

Article history:

Received: November 03, 2024

Revised: February 23, 2025

Accepted: June 30, 2025

Keywords:

*Transformation, local
culture, legal development,
religion*

ABSTRACT

This research explores implementing local cultural values and religious principles to support forming fair laws relevant to community needs and contribute to sustainable legal development in Indonesia. Using the literature review system method, this research analyzes various literature and data related to local culture, religious principles, and the legal system in Indonesia. The research results show that local cultural values, such as cooperation, deliberation, and respect for community rights, play an essential role in creating laws that are more adaptive and responsive to the social context. In addition, integrating religious principles, such as justice, benefit, and balance, provides a strong moral foundation without ignoring cultural and religious plurality. This transformation supports social justice and builds a sustainable legal system. In conclusion, recognizing and harmonizing artistic and spiritual values in the Indonesian legal system can create inclusive and relevant regulations for a multicultural society and become a central pillar in national legal reform.

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Please cite this article in APA Style as:

Abrari, A., Nailulfari, F., & Alehirish, M. H. M. (2025). Local cultural transformation in the development of law based on religious principles. *Mimbar Agama dan Budaya*, 42(1), (76-88).

[https://doi.org/ 10.15408/mimbar.v42i1.45554](https://doi.org/10.15408/mimbar.v42i1.45554)

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has vibrant cultural and religious diversity (Mudzhar, 2018). Local culture, which reflects the identity of indigenous peoples, has been a social and moral foundation in the daily lives of Indonesian people for centuries. On the other hand, religion also plays a central role in shaping society's values and ethical framework. Thus, the relationship between local culture and religious principles has excellent potential in forming a legal framework that not only reflects the needs of society but also upholds justice, morality, and social harmony. However, amid globalization and modernization, local culture is often marginalized, giving rise to significant challenges in efforts to integrate local culture and religious values into the development of national law.

Local culture has unique characteristics reflecting traditions, customs, and values passed down from generation to generation (Salim, 2019). In many cases, local culture has become a source of customary law that functions as a tool for resolving disputes at the community level. This customary law often aligns with religious values, prioritizing justice, peace, and mutual prosperity. For example, in Balinese traditional society, the value "Tri Hita Karana," which emphasizes the harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and God, is a guide in resolving agrarian conflicts. Likewise, in the traditions of the Acehnese people, Islamic values dominate customary law, as reflected in the application of Islamic law. This phenomenon shows that local culture functions as a social identity and has great potential to support the development of law based on religious principles.

However, transforming local culture into formal law often faces significant challenges. One of the main challenges is the conflict between customary law and national law which tends to be universal (Hooker, 2019). National law often adopts a positivistic approach that prioritizes written rules, while customary law is more contextual and flexible. This disharmony usually gives rise to problems in resolving disputes at the community level, especially when customary law is deemed incompatible with modern values or national interests. If managed well, customary law based on local culture can provide solutions more relevant to the needs of people in certain areas.

On the other hand, religious principles also have an essential role in forming law. Most religions, including Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism, have teachings that emphasize the importance of justice, welfare, and respect for human dignity (Lev, 2020). These values align with the objectives of the law, which seeks to create a just and harmonious social order. In the context of religious Indonesian society, integrating religious principles into the national legal system can increase legal legitimacy in the eyes of society. However, other challenges arise when specific religious values are considered to conflict with Indonesia's cultural and religious plurality. Therefore, an inclusive approach is needed to ensure that integrating religious values into law does not ignore existing diversity.

Globalization also provides challenges and opportunities to transform local culture into formal law. On the one hand, globalization can accelerate the marginalization of local culture due to the dominance of a more modern and universal global culture. However, globalization also opens opportunities to introduce local values internationally. In this case, local culture-based customary law supported by religious principles can be an alternative model in creating a more humane and sustainable legal order (Bowen, 2021). For example, the principles of restorative justice, which are widely used in customary law in various regions of Indonesia, are now being

adopted in modern legal systems in several countries as an alternative to retributive legal approaches.

In Indonesia's legal development context, the transformation of local culture and religious principles is becoming increasingly relevant amidst increasing awareness of the importance of social and cultural sustainability (Feener, 2022). The government has taken several steps to accommodate customary law in the national legal system, such as recognizing customary land and resolving customary disputes. However, implementing this policy often encounters technical and political obstacles, especially when it clashes with specific economic interests or political agendas. Therefore, a more systematic and inclusive approach is needed to ensure that local culture and religious values can be effectively integrated into the national legal system.

It is important to note that the transformation of local culture into formal law requires not only efforts from the government but also active participation from indigenous communities, religious leaders, and academics. Collaboration between these various parties can create a legal model that is relevant locally and has legitimacy at the national level. Apart from that, this approach can also strengthen Indonesia's national identity as a country that respects diversity and upholds the values of justice (Cammack, 2022).

This study mainly focuses on exploring the potential of local culture and religious principles in developing more inclusive and sustainable laws. This study aims to answer essential questions, such as: How can local cultural values support the formation of fair and relevant laws to community needs? How can religious principles be integrated into the legal system without ignoring cultural and religious plurality? And how can transforming local culture and religious tenets contribute to sustainable legal development in Indonesia?

By examining the relationship between local culture, religious principles, and legal development, a legal model can be found that reflects justice and respects cultural and religious diversity in Indonesia. This kind of legal model is relevant not only to the Indonesian context but also to Still, it can also be an inspiration for other countries that face similar challenges in integrating local and universal values into their legal systems.

2. METHODS

Research on the transformation of local culture in the development of law based on religious principles uses a literature review system approach. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to collect, analyze, and synthesize relevant data from previous studies discussing related topics. The literature review aims to provide a comprehensive picture of how local culture and religious values interact in forming and developing the legal system, especially in a diverse society like Indonesia.

The first step in this research is collecting data from the literature. Data is from trusted sources, including indexed national and international journals, academic books, research reports, and government policy documents. Inclusion criteria include literature discussing local culture, religious values, customary law, and applying spiritual principles in legal development. In addition, this research prioritizes literature published within the last ten years to ensure relevance to the current context. Literature searches were conducted through academic platforms such as Google Scholar, Scopus, SpringerLink, and ProQuest, using keywords such as "*local culture*," "*religion-based law*," "customary law," and "legal transformation in Indonesia."

After the literature data is collected, the next step is analysis and categorization. Analysis is done thematically to identify patterns, trends, and relationships between local culture, religious principles, and legal development. Relevant literature is classified based on central themes, such as local cultural values in customary law, the application of the religious tenets in national law, and challenges and opportunities in integrating local culture with formal law. This approach allows researchers to understand how these concepts are interrelated and how local cultural transformation can positively contribute to the development of law based on religious principles.

In addition, the systematic approach in this literature review also involves critical evaluation of the studies analyzed. Each piece of literature is assessed based on its relevance, methodology used, and contribution to understanding the research topic. This process helps ensure that the data used is high-quality and reliable. This evaluation also aims to identify research gaps that can be used to develop further studies.

The final step is the synthesis and interpretation of the results. The data that have been analyzed are then compiled into a systematic narrative, which explains the role of local culture and religious principles in forming inclusive and just laws. This synthesis discusses how local cultural values, such as harmony, cooperation, and restorative justice, can be adapted into a formal legal framework. Apart from that, this research also explores how religious principles, such as justice, welfare, and respect for human dignity, can become a moral and ethical basis in legal development.

Using a systems literature review method, this research provides theoretical understanding. It offers practical insight into how local culture and religious values can be integrated to create a relevant, inclusive, and sustainable legal system. This approach is expected to make a significant contribution to interdisciplinary studies in the fields of culture, religion, and law, and to become a basis for the development of legal policy in Indonesia.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Implementation of Local Cultural Values in Supporting the Formation of Laws that are Fair and Relevant to Community Needs

Implementing local cultural values in the formation of laws is an effort to create a fair, relevant legal system that aligns with community needs. Local culture reflects the wisdom, norms, and habits passed down from generation to generation in a community (Lindsey, 2020). These values are essential because they are born from people's real experiences in managing their lives. In a legal context, integrating local culture can provide a deeply rooted moral and social foundation, making the resulting laws more acceptable and effective in regulating people's lives.

One of the main findings of this research is that local cultural values have great potential to strengthen justice in the law (Buehler, 2022). Local culture often prioritizes values such as cooperation, deliberation, honesty, and restorative justice, which are the basis for creating societal balance. For example, the deliberation tradition that is often found in indigenous communities in Indonesia, such as the Minangkabau custom with the customary density system, prioritizes conflict resolution through dialogue and mutual agreement. This model can be adapted in the formal legal system to strengthen mediation mechanisms and non-litigation dispute resolution, which is more cost-effective and minimizes conflict.

In addition, this research found that local culture also contains norms that support respect for human rights and sustainability. For example, the values of respect for nature in Dayak traditional culture in Kalimantan and the local wisdom of the Baduy tribe in Banten show how local culture integrates environmental dimensions in social arrangements. These values can be adopted in forming ecological laws more responsive to sustainability issues, such as the sustainable management of natural resources and the protection of indigenous peoples' rights to their customary land.

However, although local cultural values have great potential in forming laws, their implementation faces challenges (Salim, 2021). One of the main challenges is the conflict between local cultural values and formal rules that are often universal. Some local cultural values, such as customary practices involving corporal punishment, may conflict with human rights principles in international law. Therefore, implementing local cultural values in forming laws must be carried out selectively, through a harmonization process that considers conformity with national and international legal norms.

This research also shows that the successful implementation of local cultural values in legal formation depends on the active involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities. Their participation is crucial in formulating relevant laws and ensuring that these laws are implemented effectively. In some cases, such as the recognition of customary law in the Village Law in Indonesia, the participation of indigenous communities has positively strengthened legal legitimacy and supported the sustainability of the customary legal system.

Furthermore, this research finds that implementing local cultural values in the formation of laws can increase the relevance of law to the needs of society (Crouch, 2020). Laws based on local values tend to be more easily accepted by the community because they reflect their identity and needs. For example, in the Papuan indigenous community, customary laws regarding the distribution of harvests and management of natural resources have become the basis for regulating social and economic relations in the community. Recognition of customary law in the national legal framework can help create harmony between state law and local law.

On the other hand, transforming local cultural values into a formal legal system also requires an approach sensitive to social dynamics (Bedner, 2022). Some local cultural values may have changed over time due to the influence of modernization, globalization, and other social changes. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the values implemented in the law are still relevant and accepted by society today. This process requires in-depth research to explore the essence of local cultural values that can positively contribute to legal development.

This research also identifies several mechanisms that can be used to implement local cultural values in law formation (Lev, 2021). One of these mechanisms is formally recognizing customary law through national legislation. For example, recognizing customary law communities in Law Number 41 of 1999 concerning Forestry in Indonesia provides a legal basis for indigenous communities to preserve their local wisdom in managing forests. Another mechanism is local culture-based legal education, which aims to increase public awareness about the importance of local cultural values in supporting a just and relevant legal system.

This research also highlights the need for dialogue between local culture and universal principles of justice in law formation. This dialogue is important to ensure that local cultural values implemented in law do not conflict with international norms, such as human rights and

principles of social justice. This dialogue can also enrich the legal system with a more inclusive perspective, reflecting Indonesia's cultural diversity.

Overall, the results of this research show that local cultural values have an important role in supporting the formation of fair and relevant laws for community needs. Implementing these values not only strengthens legal legitimacy but also provides more contextual solutions to legal problems at the local level (Butt, 2022). Thus, local cultural values can be valuable in building an inclusive, just, and sustainable legal system.

As a recommendation, this research suggests that the government, academics, and indigenous communities work together to identify and integrate local cultural values into the legal system. In addition, a transparent and participatory mechanism is needed to ensure that local cultural values implemented in the law reflect the aspirations and needs of the community. With this approach, it is hoped that laws based on local cultural values will not only become a tool for regulating people's lives, but also reflect the nation's cultural identity and pride.

3.2. Integration of Religious Principles in the Legal System Without Ignoring Cultural and Religious Plurality

Integrating religious principles in the legal system is a strategic effort to create a legal order that is not only based on formal justice but also on substantive justice that is based on moral and spiritual values. In a pluralistic society like Indonesia, this process requires an inclusive and sensitive approach to cultural and religious diversity (Fauzia, 2019). This research identifies various dynamics, challenges, and opportunities in integrating spiritual principles into the legal system without ignoring plurality.

3.2.1. Religious Principles as a Moral Foundation of Law

Religious principles, such as justice, honesty, benefit, and balance, have long been the moral basis of people's lives. These values are universal and often found in various religions' teachings. For example, the principle of justice in Islam is reflected in the concept '*adl*', which emphasizes the balance of rights and obligations, whereas in Christian teachings, this principle is reflected in the concepts of love and forgiveness. Likewise, Hinduism and Buddhism have dharma teachings, emphasizing truth, responsibility, and harmony (Ichwan, 2021).

In the legal system, these principles can be translated into legal norms that aim to protect society's interests and prevent abuse of power (Bush, 2022). An example is the application of restorative justice, which prioritizes conflict resolution through mediation and reconciliation. This is in line with the principles of deliberation in Islam and the local wisdom of many cultures in Indonesia.

3.2.2. Cultural and Religious Plurality as Challenges and Opportunities

As a multicultural country, Indonesia faces challenges in integrating religious principles into the legal system. One of the main challenges is the potential for clashes between religious values and between religious principles and state law. For example, some religious values may conflict with the universal human rights principles that form the basis of national and international law (Ramage, 2019). However, this plurality also offers opportunities to enrich the legal system. Cultural and religious diversity can be a source of inspiration for the development of more

inclusive and contextual laws. An example is recognizing customary law, which often contains religious values and local wisdom. This recognition can be seen in Article 18B of the 1945 Constitution, which protects the existence of customary law communities (Barton, 2022).

3.2.3. Model of Integration of Religious Principles in the Legal System

This research finds that integrating religious principles in the legal system requires a holistic and dialogical approach. This approach involves three main steps: harmonization, adaptation, and participation. 1. Harmonization: This process seeks harmony between religious principles and applicable legal norms. Harmonization is carried out by identifying universal values that various religious and cultural groups can accept. 2. Adaptation: Religious principles integrated into law must be adapted to society's social, political, and cultural context (Burlian, 2022). For example, the concept of zakat in Islam can be adapted into a tax system that supports social welfare without ignoring religious plurality. 3. Participation: The integration process requires active involvement from various community groups, including religious leaders, academics, and policy makers. This participation is important to ensure that the laws produced reflect the aspirations and needs of the community.

3.2.4. Case Study: Implementation of Islamic Sharia in Aceh

One example of implementing religious principles in the legal system is the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh (Casram, 2021). This policy is based on the specificity of the Aceh region as a region with a strong Islamic tradition. Islamic law in Aceh covers various aspects of life, such as economics, education, and governance. Although this policy has succeeded in increasing public awareness of Islamic values, its implementation has also faced criticism, especially regarding issues of gender discrimination and human rights violations.

Table 1. Comparative Applications of Religious Principles in National Legal Systems

Religious Principles	Country	Application in the Legal System
Justice (<i>‘adl</i>)	Indonesia	Mediation in resolving family disputes
love (<i>agape</i>)	United States of America	Community-based rehabilitation program for minor offenders
Dharma	India	Protection of the rights of indigenous peoples in the management of natural resources
Ahimsa (non-violence)	Sri Lanka	Conflict resolution through interreligious dialogue

Table 1 shows a comparison of religious principles and their application in the legal systems of several countries. Despite different religious backgrounds, these principles show how spiritual values can shape legal and social policy approaches in different countries. In Indonesia, the principle of justice (*adl*) originating from Islam is implemented in the legal system through mediation to resolve family disputes. This reflects the value of deliberation and social justice in resolving conflicts without relying on rigid legal processes, which align with Indonesian society's family values. From the United States of America, the principle of love (*agape*), which is rooted in Christian values, is used as a community-based rehabilitation program for minor offenders.

This approach emphasizes recovery and social reintegration rather than punishment, aiming to rebuild social relationships and strengthen community solidarity.

Meanwhile, in India, the principle dharma from Hindu teachings is embodied in the protection of indigenous peoples' rights to natural resources. It shows respect for the natural order and moral responsibility towards the environment and traditional communities. From Sri Lanka, the Buddhist tradition's principle of ahimsa (non-violence) is reflected in conflict resolution through interreligious dialogue. This approach aims to avoid violence and build peace through interfaith understanding. Table 1 shows that although religious principles originate from different belief systems, they have similarities in upholding the values of humanity, justice, and peace, and can be adapted into modern legal frameworks to create a more harmonious society.

3.2.5. Dynamics Diagram of Integration of Religious Principles

The following diagram shows the dynamic process of integrating religious principles into the legal system:



Figure 1. *Diagram of the dynamic process of integrating religious principles into the legal system.*

Figure 1 shows that integrating religious principles is not linear but involves complex interactions between various elements, including religious values, social context, and community participation. The results of this research show that the integration of religious principles in the legal system has the potential to create laws that are fairer and more relevant to society's needs. Universal religious values, such as justice, love, and harmony, can be a strong moral foundation in forming laws. However, this process requires an inclusive approach sensitive to cultural and religious plurality. This research implies the need for cross-cultural and religious dialogue to find universal values that can be integrated into the legal system. In addition, it is important to ensure that the laws produced reflect specific religious values and respect human rights and social justice. With this approach, it is hoped that the legal system can become an effective instrument for creating harmony and prosperity in a plural society.

3.3. Transformation of Local Culture and Religious Principles in Contributing to Sustainable Legal Development in Indonesia

Sustainable legal development in Indonesia requires an approach based on local wisdom and religious principles (Wahid & Jamil, 2018). Local cultural transformation, which is rooted in society's traditional values, and religious principles, which are universal and inclusive, can be important elements in creating a legal system that is not only relevant but also fair. This research explores how local culture and religious values can contribute to sustainable legal development.

3.3.1. Local Culture as a Pillar of Legal Development

Local culture in Indonesia is vibrant and diverse, reflecting the plurality of people spread across various regions. This culture contains values that support justice, cooperation, and respect for the rights of individuals and communities. If integrated into the legal system, these values can create a more humane and contextual approach to law (Andi & Qadriani, 2021). For example, value *consensus deliberation*, a characteristic of Indonesian culture, can be adapted into legal dispute resolution mechanisms through mediation and arbitration. This approach not only eases the burden on the courts but also strengthens social relations. Additionally, concepts *custom* to customary law in various regions show that society has traditional legal mechanisms that effectively regulate social, economic, and environmental relations.

3.3.2. Religious Principles in Legal Development

Religious principles such as justice (*'adl*), benefit (*problem*), balance, and compassion can strengthen the legal system's moral foundations. These values are not only found in one religion but are universal so that they can be accepted by a plural society (Baehaqi, 2023). For example, a concept *problem* in Islam, which aims to create goodness for the wider community, can be the basis for drafting laws oriented towards social welfare. The principle of compassion in Christianity can also support a restorative approach in criminal law, which focuses more on rehabilitating offenders rather than retributive punishment.

This transformation of local culture and religious principles is visible in various legal policies in Indonesia, such as the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh, the protection of indigenous peoples' rights in forestry laws, and the recognition of customary law in the national justice system (Setiyawan, 2019).

3.3.3. Challenges and Opportunities

Although the contribution of local culture and religious principles to sustainable legal development is very significant, various challenges must be overcome. One of the main challenges is the potential conflict between traditional or religious values and universal human rights principles (Sutrisno, 2021). For example, certain cultural practices or religious interpretations may be considered to conflict with the principles of gender equality or religious freedom. However, this plurality is also an opportunity to enrich the legal system. With an inclusive and dialogical approach, cultural and religious values can be harmonized with modern legal principles, creating a legal system that is not only relevant but also adaptive to social change.

Table 2. Comparison of Local Cultural Values and Religious Principles

Local Cultural Values	Religious Principles	Implementation in the Legal System
Consensus deliberation	Justice (<i>'adl</i>)	Mediation in dispute resolution
Mutual cooperation	Benefits (<i>problem</i>)	Community-based regulations for village development
Respect for nature	Trust and responsibility	Environmental protection laws
Recognition of customary rights	Balance (<i>scales</i>)	Recognition of indigenous peoples' rights in national law

Table 2 above provides a comparative overview of how religious principles are applied in the legal systems of various countries, highlighting universal values such as justice, compassion, morality, and peace. Even though each country's religious and cultural backgrounds are different, applying these principles shows similarities in emphasizing human values and social welfare. In Indonesia, the principle of *adl* (justice) of Islamic teachings is applied through a mediation mechanism to resolve family disputes. This approach shows how the national legal system adopts religious values to create a just and harmonious solution without going through rigid litigation channels. Mediation is considered capable of maintaining family relationships and encouraging peaceful and dignified conflict resolution.

Meanwhile, in the United States, the Christian tradition's value of agape (love) is reflected in a community rehabilitation program for minor offenders. This principle emphasizes unconditional love and forgiveness, which is manifested in rehabilitation efforts rather than punishment alone. The focus is on returning the perpetrator to social life positively and constructively. In India, the concept of dharma of Hindu philosophy, which refers to moral and ethical obligations, is applied to protect indigenous peoples' rights to natural resources. It reflects an awareness of social justice, local cultural preservation, and ecological balance. Meanwhile, in Sri Lanka, principle ahimsa (non-violence) from Buddhist teachings is used in interreligious dialogue to resolve conflicts, demonstrating a commitment to peace and tolerance.

Table 2 shows that religious values can be effectively integrated into the legal system to create a just, peaceful, and inclusive society. There is harmony between them.

3.3.4. Principles which can be the basis for developing more inclusive and sustainable

Dynamics Diagram of Cultural Transformation and Religious Principles. the following diagram illustrates how local culture and religious principles can be integrated into the legal system:

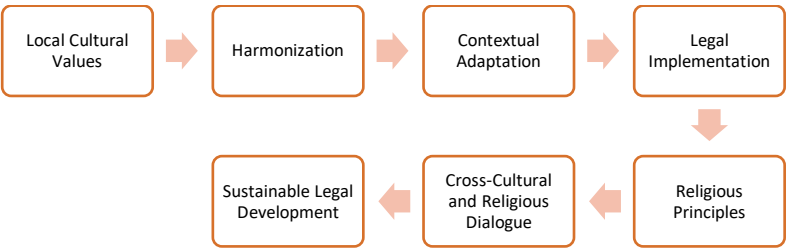


Figure 2. illustrates how local culture and religious principles can be integrated into the legal system

Figure 2 shows: a. Local Cultural Values: Incorporate traditional elements relevant to local communities' needs. b. Religious Principles: Adopting universal religious values to strengthen the moral foundation of the law. c. Contextual Harmonization and Adaptation: Adjustments should be made so that cultural and religious values can be practically applied in law. d. Cross-Cultural and Religious Dialogue: Involving various stakeholders to ensure an inclusive and pluralist legal system. e. Sustainable Legal Development: Produce a legal system that is relevant, fair, and responsive to community needs.

This research confirms that the transformation of local culture and religious principles has great potential to support sustainable legal development in Indonesia (Hidayat, 2023). Values such as deliberation, cooperation, justice, and benefit can be the basis for forming laws that are not only locally relevant but also meet international standards. However, the success of this transformation requires an inclusive, dialogical, and adaptive approach to social dynamics. This research implies the importance of recognizing cultural and religious plurality in developing the national legal system. In addition, policies are needed that support cross-cultural and religious dialogue to harmonize local and universal values. This way, the Indonesian legal system can effectively realize justice, prosperity, and social sustainability in a diverse society.

CONCLUSION

This research emphasizes the importance of implementing local cultural values in forming fair and relevant laws to meet community needs. Local culture in Indonesia, full of values such as cooperation, deliberation, and respect for community rights, has supported a more humane and contextual legal system. These values reflect local wisdom and provide community-based solutions that are more adaptive to social problems. By recognizing the existence of customary law in the national legal system, Indonesia has great potential to create regulations that are inclusive and responsive to community needs. In addition, integrating religious principles in the legal system provides a strong moral foundation without ignoring cultural and religious plurality. Universal principles such as justice, benefit, and balance, found in various religious traditions, can be harmonized with local cultural values to create a more inclusive legal system. Cross-cultural and religious dialogue is the key to ensuring that the resulting regulations are fair and acceptable to a heterogeneous society. This transformation of local culture and religious principles significantly contributes to sustainable legal development in Indonesia. A legal system based on local and religious values is relevant in the national context and can face global challenges. With an inclusive, dialogical, and adaptive approach, this transformation can become the central pillar in realizing social justice, prosperity, and sustainability in a multicultural Indonesian society. Therefore, recognition, protection, and empowerment of cultural and religious values must be a priority in national legal reform efforts.

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