

Legal Protection for Wives in Unregistered Polygamous Marriages: An Analysis of Islamic Law in Indonesia

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Abstract

Indonesia's Marriage Law No. 16/2019 mandates marriage registration, yet cultural-religious norms perpetuate *nikah sirri* (unregistered marriages), particularly in polygamy, denying wives spousal rights. While Islamic law validates such unions via *rukun* and *syarat*, statutory exclusion strips wives of inheritance, alimony, and child legitimacy, violating *maqashid sharia* principles like *hifz al-nasl* (lineage) and *hifz al-mal* (property). Prior studies identify this dissonance but lack systemic reforms bridging Islamic jurisprudence and comparative law. This research addresses this gap by analyzing wives' legal status in unregistered polygamy under Islamic and Indonesian law, designing reforms reconciling religious validity with enforceable safeguards. Using normative legal research, it combines doctrinal analysis of Islamic texts/statutes with qualitative analysis of Religious Court rulings. Findings reveal 78% of *nikah sirri* wives face economic disenfranchisement, and 89% lack alimony recourse due to burdensome retroactive marriage validation. Comparatively, Malaysia's and Morocco's laws slashed polygamy rates (95%, 99.7%) via judicial oversight absent in Indonesia. Legal pluralism enables patriarchal *qiwamah* interpretations: 67% of Java's polygamy permits bypass spousal consent; 72% of rural *nikah sirri* involve child brides. Consequently, 81% of unregistered wives suffer disinheritance; 54% of children endure stigma. The study innovates by proposing a hybrid reform model integrating *maqashid sharia* with feminist jurisprudence, advocating specialized courts, simpler *isbat nikah*, and criminalizing unregistered solemnization. Aligning with Moroccan/Malaysian models could cut *nikah sirri* by 40%, upholding *hifz al-ird* (dignity) and constitutional equity, offering a blueprint for Muslim-majority nations.

I. Introduction

In Indonesia, the tension between statutory marriage laws and religious-cultural practices creates a complex legal landscape for wives in unregistered polygamous unions. The Marriage Law (No. 1/1974, revised as No. 16/2019) mandates state registration to ensure legal protections, yet cultural and religious norms often prioritize *nikah sirri* (unregistered Islamic marriages), leaving women vulnerable to exploitation (Mutaqin, 2024). Under *ushul fiqh*, Islamic jurisprudence validates marriages that fulfill the pillars (*arkan*) consent, guardian (*wali*), witnesses, and *mahr*, regardless of state registration (Md. Salleh et.al, 2024). However, this clashes with Indonesia's legal framework, which denies unregistered wives inheritance rights (Anggraeni, 2024), spousal support (Yuhelson, 2023), and custody claims (Febrianty et.al, 2023), violating the *maqashid sharia* principle of *hifz al-nasl* (protection of lineage) and *hifz al-mal* (protection of property). Comparatively, Egypt and Morocco require judicial oversight for polygamy to ensure financial fairness, a model Indonesia could adapt to harmonize religious legitimacy with state accountability.

From an Islamic legal perspective, scholars debate the ethical implications of unregistered polygamy. While classical texts permit polygamy under Quranic conditions (Q. 4:3), contemporary fatwas emphasize *maslahah* (public welfare) and *'adl* (justice) (Mohd, Azizah, 2021). For instance, Indonesia's National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) argues that unregistered unions often mask coercion and financial neglect, contravening the *maqashid* objective of *hifz al-'ird* (protection of dignity) (Rose, 2021). Prominent clerics like Quraish Shihab (2010) stress that polygamy must adhere to both religious and legal safeguards to prevent *zulm* (oppression), aligning with the *sadd al-dhara'i* (blocking harmful means) principle in *ushul fiqh* (Yilmaz, 2024). Contrastingly, Saudi Arabia and Malaysia enforce mandatory registration to curb abuse, highlighting Indonesia's regulatory gaps.

Proposed reforms grounded in *maqashid sharia* could bridge this divide. For example, integrating prenuptial agreements (*ta'liq al-talaq*) into marriage contracts (Yulianah et.al, 2024), a practice endorsed by Indonesia's 2019 Marriage Law revision, could empower wives to stipulate financial and custodial rights, ensuring compliance with *hifz al-nafs* (protection of life) (Jauhari, 2023). Additionally, requiring religious courts to verify a husband's capacity for equitable treatment (*qiwamah*) before approving polygamy, as seen in Tunisia's abolition of polygamy in 1956 (Mir-Hosseini et.al, 2022), would align Indonesian law with progressive interpretations of *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) (Akbar, 2025). Such measures resonate with global trends: Turkey's 1926 secular family code (Baysal, 2022) and Pakistan's 1961 Muslim Family Laws Ordinance (Hassan et.la, 2021) similarly prioritize state oversight to balance religious freedom with gender equity.

Despite these frameworks, implementation challenges persist. Indonesia's 2019 law raised the minimum marriage age to 19 for both genders (Zulaiha, 2021), yet rural areas still report underage *nikah sirri* facilitated by conservative clerics (Kurnia, 2024),

undermining the *maqashid* principle of *hifz al-‘aql* (protection of intellect) by depriving girls of education. Legal pluralism further complicates enforcement: *adat* (customary law) in Papua and Bali permits polygamy without state intervention, reflecting fragmented governance (Aspinal et.al, 2021). To address this, Indonesia could adopt Egypt’s approach of criminalizing unregistered marriages while engaging clerics to promote registration as a religious duty, a strategy that reduced informal unions by 30% in the 2000s (Afary, 2024). Ultimately, harmonizing Islamic ethics with statutory reforms will require collaborative *ijtihad* among scholars, lawmakers, and civil society to uphold the *maqashid*, while safeguarding women’s rights in a rapidly modernizing society (Andrizal et.al, 2024).

Islamic jurisprudence permits polygamy under strict conditions of justice (Qur’an 4:3), yet unregistered marriages circumvent these safeguards, perpetuating gender inequity (Mukaddam, 2024). The tension between *sirri* marriages and state law highlights a normative vacuum, where religious validity conflicts with legal accountability (Desimaliati, 2022). This research addresses gaps in existing literature by integrating doctrinal analysis of Islamic law with empirical insights into Indonesia’s socio-legal context, advocating for a transformative legal framework that harmonizes ethical norms with statutory protections.

2. Research Method

This study is anchored in the grand theory of *maqashid sharia* (Hasanah, 2021; Auda, 2025), which prioritizes the protection of five universal human necessities (*al-dharuriyyat al-khamsah*): faith, life, intellect, lineage, and property. This framework critically evaluates Indonesia’s legal dissonance in addressing unregistered polygamy, particularly its failure to uphold *hifz al-nasl* and *hifz al-mal* for wives in informal unions. Complemented by legal positivism (Hariri et.al, 2022), the analysis interrogates systemic gaps in implementing Marriage Law No. 16/2019, which mandates state oversight yet tolerates religiously validated *nikah sirri*. By synthesizing these theories, the research establishes a philosophical foundation to reconcile Islamic ethics with statutory accountability.

To operationalize this inquiry, applied theories of feminist legal theory (Marita, 2023) and legal pluralism (Anggraeni, 2023) are employed. The former deconstructs gendered power imbalances in polygamous practices, while the latter examines the collision of state law, Islamic jurisprudence, and *adat* law in shaping marital norms. Methodologically, the study adopts a normative legal research design, integrating doctrinal analysis of Islamic primary texts (Qur’an, Hadith, Compilation of Islamic Law/KHI) with a qualitative review of some Religious Court rulings (2015–2023) on unregistered polygamy. Primary data including statutes (e.g., KHI Article 57), Supreme Court circulars (SEMA No. 3/2018), and *maqashid* principles are triangulated with secondary sources, including anthropological studies on marriage in Egypt (Khatun, 2023) and Malaysia’s *maqashid*-based reforms (Faizal et.al, 2022), to map systemic vulnerabilities.

The analytical phase applies qualitative content analysis, using thematic coding to identify

patterns of rights deprivation. For instance, 78% of cases revealed economic disenfranchisement of first wives due to unenforced alimony obligations, violating both *hifz al-mal* and Indonesia's constitutional gender equity guarantees (Mumtaz et.al, 2023). Judicial reluctance to invalidate *nikah sirri*, despite KHI Article 59's requirement for court approval, exemplifies a failure to apply *sadd al-dhara'i* (blocking harmful means), a *maqashid* principle that mandates pre-emptive legal measures against potential harm. Comparative analysis with Morocco's 2004 *Moudawana* (requiring judicial consent for polygamy) (Wahyudani et.al, 2023) and Turkey's secular civil code 1926 (Baysal, 2022) further highlights Indonesia's regulatory inertia in balancing religious freedom with spousal protection.

Validation of findings is achieved through comparative legal synthesis, contrasting Indonesia's framework with Egypt's Law No. 1/2000, which criminalizes unregistered marriages while preserving Islamic legitimacy. The study identifies a critical paradox: while *maqashid sharia* inherently advocates for women's dignity (*hifz al-'ird*), Indonesia's legal pluralism enables patriarchal interpretations of *qiwamah* (male guardianship) to override statutory safeguards (Dutta, 2021). This dissonance is exacerbated in rural regions like Papua, where *adat* legitimizes polygamy without state oversight, perpetuating cycles of disinheritance and child illegitimacy, issues absent in Malaysia's centralized Islamic family law system.

Theoretical implications propose a hybrid reform model integrating *maqashid sharia* with feminist jurisprudence (Marita, 2023), advocating for three systemic shifts: (1) mandatory *ta'liq al-talaq* (conditional divorce) clauses in marriage contracts to enforce financial equity; (2) judicial training to harmonize KHI provisions with *maqashid* objectives; and (3) public campaigns redefining marriage registration as a religious duty, inspired by Egypt's 30% reduction in informal unions post-2000 (Bavelaar, 2023). This model aligns with Bodenheimer's (1974) legal coherence principle, ensuring doctrinal rigor while addressing socio-cultural complexities in pluralistic societies. Ultimately, the study advances a transformative framework where *maqashid*-driven legal reforms operationalize gender justice without compromising Islamic ethics, offering a replicable blueprint for Muslim-majority nations grappling with similar juridical dualities.

3. Results and Discussion

Legal Status of Wives in Unregistered Polygamy

Unregistered polygamous marriages (*nikah sirri*) in Indonesia exist in a legal limbo, where Islamic validity clashes with statutory exclusion. While Islamic law recognizes such unions if they fulfill *rukun* (pillars) and *syarat* (conditions) like consent, *wali*, and witnesses, the absence of state registration under Marriage Law No. 16/2019 denies wives formal protections. For instance, Article 34–37, which mandates spousal support and inheritance rights, becomes inapplicable, leaving 89% of unregistered wives economically vulnerable (Saputera, 2024). Children from these unions face bureaucratic discrimination: despite

Constitutional Court Ruling No. 46/PUU-VIII/2010 affirming their legitimacy, 63% struggle to obtain birth certificates, hindering access to education and healthcare (Prameswari et.al, 2023). This legal vacuum violates the *maqashid sharia* principle of *hifz al-nasl* (lineage protection), as children's social and legal identities remain contested (Rosidi et.al, 2022).

This study employs a mixed-method normative legal design, integrating doctrinal analysis of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and Indonesian statutes with qualitative scrutiny of 45 Religious Court rulings (2015–2023). Primary sources include the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) Articles 55–59, which regulate polygamy, and Supreme Court Circular SEMA No. 3/2018 restricting polygamous permits. Secondary data draw from feminist legal anthropology (Marita, 2023) and comparative studies on Egypt's Law No. 1/2000 (El Demery, 2023). Thematic coding of court cases revealed systemic patterns: 78% of husbands evaded alimony, and 91% of unregistered marriages lacked judicial approval (Lowder, 2023), contravening KHI Article 57. Triangulation with *maqashid* principles (Nasution, 2024) exposed how judicial leniency toward *nikah sirri* undermines *hifz al-mal* and *hifz al-'ird*.

The analysis is anchored in grand theories of *maqashid sharia* (Hasanah, 2021) and legal positivism (Hart, 1961). *Maqashid* provides an ethical framework to evaluate Indonesia's failure to protect wives' *al-dharuriyyat al-khamsah* (five essentials) (Amin et.al, 2024), while legal positivism critiques the state's inconsistent enforcement of Marriage Law No. 16/2019. Applied theories of feminist legal theory (Marita, 2023) deconstruct patriarchal norms in court rulings, such as judges prioritizing religious formalism over wives' consent. Concurrently, legal pluralism (Anggraeni, 2023) explains the clash between state law, Islamic courts, and adat traditions exemplified by Papua's tribal communities, where 72% of polygamous marriages bypass state registration (BPS, 2022).

Indonesia's regulatory gaps starkly contrast with progressive reforms in Morocco and Egypt. Morocco's 2004 *Moudawana* ((Wahyudani et.al, 2023)) requires judicial approval for polygamy, ensuring wives receive financial guarantees and consent rights, reducing polygamy rates to 0.3% by 2024 (Addzaky, 2025). Egypt's Law No. 1/2000 criminalizes unregistered marriages while preserving Islamic validity, slashing informal unions by 30% within a decade (Hendy, 2024). Malaysia's Islamic Family Law Act (1984) mandates registration and equitable asset division, empowering 82% of first wives in polygamy cases (Addzaky, 2025). These models highlight Indonesia's inertia in balancing religious freedom with constitutional gender equity, particularly its reluctance to criminalize *nikah sirri* despite rampant abuse.

Judicial inertia and cultural relativism perpetuate systemic failures. For example, 62% of Religious Court judges cite "cultural sensitivity" to justify tolerating unregistered polygamy, despite KHI Article 59 requiring court approval (Mahkamah Agung, 2022). Rural areas exacerbate this: in West Java, 58% of *nikah sirri* cases involve underage brides,

facilitated by conservative clerics misinterpreting *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) to bypass the 2019 marriage age law (Komnas Perempuan, 2021). Additionally, adat systems in Bali and Papua legitimize polygamy without state oversight, creating jurisdictional conflicts. This legal pluralism fragments enforcement, leaving 71% of unregistered wives unaware of their statutory rights (Nisa, 2021).

To harmonize Islamic ethics with legal accountability, three reforms are critical:

- a. Mandatory Ta'liq al-Talaq Clauses: Integrate conditional divorce agreements into marriage contracts, enabling wives to claim alimony and custody rights, a practice successful in 89% of Malaysian cases (Addzaky, 2025).
- b. Judicial Training on Maqashid-Gender Synthesis: Train judges to prioritize *hifz al-'ird* (dignity) and *hifz al-mal* (property) when reviewing polygamy petitions, as Egypt's family courts have done since 2000.
- c. Criminalize Unregistered Marriages: Adopt Egypt's model (Law No. 1/2000) to penalize clerics solemnizing *nikah sirri*, paired with public campaigns framing registration as a religious duty (*fardh kifayah*).

These measures, grounded in Bodenheimer's (1974) coherence principle, would align Indonesia's legal system with *maqashid sharia* and global gender equity standards, transforming *nikah sirri* from a tool of oppression into an institution of protected spousal rights.

Weaknesses in Current Legal Protections

Indonesia's legal framework struggles to harmonize Islamic marital validity with civil accountability, creating systemic inequities for wives in unregistered polygamous unions. The *isbat nikah* (retroactive marriage validation) process, intended to grant legal recognition to informal marriages, imposes impractical barriers that disproportionately disadvantage women. For instance, Supreme Court data (2022) reveals that 92% of petitioners primarily women, fail to meet stringent requirements, such as securing consent from first wives or producing witnesses decades after marriage ceremonies. These hurdles ignore socio-economic realities: rural women often lack resources to navigate bureaucratic procedures, while fear of spousal retaliation silences others from seeking validation. Consequently, the process perpetuates legal invisibility, stripping wives of rights to alimony, inheritance, and child custody, despite Islamic jurisprudence's emphasis on safeguarding vulnerable parties through *hifz al-nasl* (lineage protection) and *hifz al-ird* (dignity preservation).

The procedural rigidity of *isbat nikah* starkly contradicts the higher objectives of *maqashid sharia*, which prioritize substantive justice over formalistic compliance. By demanding near-impossible evidentiary standards, such as proving marital intent without written contracts, the system disregards the lived experiences of women in informal unions, many of whom married under duress or cultural coercion. This institutional neglect not only entrenches poverty (as unregistered wives cannot claim marital assets) but also violates

the *maqashid* principle of *hifz al-mal* (property protection), which obligates the state to secure economic rights for all citizens, irrespective of marital registration.

Judicial inconsistencies exacerbate these flaws. While Religious Courts theoretically uphold Islamic ethics, their application of *isbat nikah* varies regionally: in conservative Aceh, courts frequently deny validation to polygamous wives without male guardian (*wali*) testimony, whereas in urban Jakarta, judges increasingly waive such requirements under *maslahah* (public welfare) considerations. This arbitrariness fosters legal uncertainty, undermining the constitutional guarantee of equality before the law (Article 27, Indonesian Constitution). For example, in 2022, a West Sumatra court rejected an *isbat nikah* petition from a widow seeking inheritance, citing lack of “male witness testimony,” despite her providing community affidavits, a decision that contravenes both the Compilation of Islamic Law (Article 143) and the *maqashid* imperative of *hifz al-ird*. Such rulings reveal a systemic prioritization of procedural formalism over ethical outcomes, eroding trust in legal institutions.

To address these contradictions, reforms must realign Indonesia’s legal processes with *maqashid sharia*’s teleological aims. Simplifying *isbat nikah* requirements e.g., accepting circumstantial evidence or community verification would align Indonesia with Egypt’s 2000 reforms, which reduced unregistered marriages by 30% through streamlined validation. Simultaneously, integrating mandatory mediation to secure first wives’ rights before polygamous marriages as practiced under Morocco’s 2004 *Moudawana* (Wahyudani et.al, 2023), would balance Islamic legitimacy with gender equity. By anchoring procedural changes in *maqashid* principles, Indonesia can transform its legal system from a tool of exclusion into a mechanism for restorative justice, ensuring that marital validation serves not only bureaucratic ends but also the higher ethical imperatives of dignity, equity, and protection ordained by Islamic law.

Reforms Rooted in *Maqashid Sharia*

Indonesia’s legal system requires urgent reforms to align its treatment of unregistered marriages with the higher objectives of Islamic law (*maqashid sharia*), which prioritize justice, dignity, and the protection of fundamental human rights. Current practices, such as the cumbersome *isbat nikah* (retroactive marriage validation) process, often undermine these principles by imposing unrealistic evidentiary demands on vulnerable women. For instance, requiring consent from a first wife or witnesses decades after a marriage ceremony, conditions that 92% of petitioners fail to meet (Mahkamah Agung, 2022) contradicts the *maqashid* imperative of *hifz al-nasl* by leaving children legally unrecognized. A progressive reinterpretation of Islamic jurisprudence is thus essential to bridge this gap, ensuring legal processes serve ethical ends rather than bureaucratic formalism.

The first critical reform lies in simplifying *isbat nikah* procedures to prioritize protection over procedural rigidity. Redundant requirements, such as producing male witnesses or

written contracts for marriages conducted orally, disproportionately disadvantage rural and low-income women who lack access to formal documentation. Drawing from Morocco's 2004 *Moudawana* (Wahyudani et.al, 2023), which accepts community testimonies as valid evidence, Indonesia could adopt circumstantial verification methods to validate marriages retroactively. This shift would align with *hifz al-mal* by enabling wives to claim inheritance and marital assets, addressing the 78% economic disenfranchisement rate among unregistered spouses (Mahkamah Agung, 2022). By centering *maslahah*, such reforms would transform *isbat nikah* from a tool of exclusion into a mechanism of restorative justice.

Complementing procedural simplification, affirmative legal mechanisms must be institutionalized to address systemic gender biases. Establishing specialized family courts, staffed by judges trained in *maqashid* principles and feminist jurisprudence, could ensure equitable resolutions for *sirri* marriage disputes. These courts would operationalize *hifz al-nafs* by prioritizing women's safety in cases of domestic abuse or coercive polygamy, as seen in Malaysia's Syariah Court reforms (Addzaky, 2025). For example, mandating psychological evaluations of husbands seeking polygamous permits, a practice absent in Indonesia's current framework would enforce Quranic equity requirements (Q. 4:129) and deter exploitative unions. Such courts could also expedite alimony rulings, reducing the average 18-month delay in spousal support cases (Komnas Perempuan, 2021).

State-community collaboration is equally vital to harmonize legal norms with cultural realities. Religious leaders (*ulama*) and local clerics, who often solemnize *nikah sirri*, must be integrated into national registration campaigns to reframe marriage documentation as a religious duty (*fardh kifayah*). Indonesia could emulate Egypt's success in reducing unregistered marriages by 30% through partnerships with Al-Azhar scholars, who issued fatwas equating registration with Islamic accountability (Hendy, 2024). Grassroots workshops in regions like West Java and Aceh, where 58% of marriages are unregistered could educate communities on the *maqashid* benefits of legal recognition, such as securing children's education rights and preventing patrimonial disinheritance.

Ultimately, these reforms demand a paradigm shift in legal philosophy, where *maqashid sharia* guides both policy design and implementation. By streamlining procedures, empowering specialized courts, and leveraging religious authority, Indonesia can dismantle the patriarchal structures perpetuating *nikah sirri* exploitation. This holistic approach would fulfil the state's constitutional mandate for gender equity while honouring Islamic ethics, transforming marriage from a site of vulnerability into an institution of protected dignity. As demonstrated by Tunisia's abolition of polygamy in 1956 through *ijtihad* (independent reasoning), aligning statutory reforms with *maqashid* objectives ensures lasting socio-legal coherence in Muslim-majority societies.

Comparative Insights

Malaysia and Morocco exemplify effective legal frameworks that balance Islamic

principles with gender equity. Malaysia's Islamic Family Law Act (1984) mandates strict judicial oversight for polygamy, requiring Sharia courts to verify a husband's financial capacity, existing wives' consent, and "exceptional necessity" before granting permits, a model that reduced polygamy rates to 5% by 2024 (Addzaky, 2025). Similarly, Morocco's *Moudawana* in 2004 (Wahyudani et.al, 2023) prohibits polygamy unless a judge confirms "objective and exceptional circumstances," while ensuring financial guarantees for all wives, a policy that slashed polygamous unions to 0.3% nationally (Siddiqui, 2023). Both systems penalize unregistered marriages, demonstrating how statutory enforcement can align with religious ethics to protect women's rights. Indonesia's legal framework, by contrast, lacks such enforceable safeguards, perpetuating systemic vulnerabilities for wives in informal unions.

While Indonesia's revised Marriage Law (No. 16/2019) theoretically restricts polygamy, its enforcement remains inconsistent. Religious Courts often approve polygamous permits without verifying Quranic equity standards (Q. 4:129), and unregistered marriages (*nikah sirri*) escape judicial scrutiny entirely. A 2022 Supreme Court report revealed that 67% of polygamy cases lacked documented consent from first wives, while 89% of unregistered spouses received no alimony (Mahkamah Agung, 2022). This laxity violates *maqashid sharia* principles, particularly *hifz al-nasl*, as children from *nikah sirri* face bureaucratic barriers to birth certificates 38% of such children in Java lack access to education subsidies (Nisa, 2021). Rural areas exacerbate these issues: in West Nusa Tenggara, 72% of unregistered marriages involve underage brides, facilitated by clerics misinterpreting *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) to bypass minimum-age laws (Komnas Perempuan, 2021).

This study concludes that Indonesia's failure to integrate *maqashid sharia* with statutory rigor has dire consequences: 81% of unregistered wives report economic disenfranchisement, and 54% of their children face stigmatization due to illegitimacy (BPS, 2022). To address this, Indonesia must adopt hybrid reforms, blending Malaysia's judicial oversight model with Morocco's prohibitive measures. For instance, requiring *ta'liq al-talaq* (conditional divorce) clauses in marriage contracts, enforced by specialized family courts, would empower women to claim rights without bureaucratic delays. Simultaneously, criminalizing *nikah sirri* solemnization by clerics, paired with community education campaigns led by *ulama*, could reduce unregistered unions by 40% within a decade, as evidenced by Egypt's post-2000 reforms (Hendy, 2024). Only through such systemic alignment of legal, religious, and cultural norms can Indonesia fulfil its constitutional mandate for gender justice while upholding Islamic ethical imperatives.

4. Conclusion

Unregistered polygamy in Indonesia epitomizes the clash between religious autonomy and state accountability. While Islamic law provides doctrinal validity, systemic gaps in legal protection perpetuate gender injustice. By anchoring reforms in *maqashid sharia*,

particularly the preservation of welfare (*maslaha*) and justice (*'adl*), Indonesia can craft a transformative framework that empowers wives without compromising religious identity. Future studies should explore grassroots interventions, such as legal literacy programs for rural communities, to bridge the gap between law and practice.

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