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Negotiating Legal Pluralism: Customary Nobat Marriage and Islamic Law in Bayan, North Lombok

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the *nobat* (a Bayan customary marriage institution) marriage tradition practiced by the Sasak indigenous community in Andalan Village, Bayan (North Lombok), as a concrete site where customary norms, Islamic jurisprudence, and state regulation are continuously aligned to produce marital legitimacy. Using a qualitative socio-legal design, fieldwork in 2025 combined semi-structured interviews with five key actors (village authorities, a customary–religious leader, and recently married couples), direct observation of ritual stages, and review of relevant statutory and regional regulations. The findings show that *nobat* operates as a customary legal institution: it institutionalizes deliberation, deploys *sajikrama* (customary fine/compensation) as a restorative economic sanction, allows negotiated arrangements of guardianship when needed, and links communal validation to religious contracting and administrative registration in a sequential order. Rather than reflecting simple harmony between culture and religion, *nobat* illustrates dialogical legal pluralism in which authority and legality are co-produced through communal negotiation across overlapping normative orders. The study contributes to multicultural legal studies by demonstrating how indigenous institutions remain active agents in governing diversity and constructing justice within Indonesia's layered legal landscape.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is widely characterized as a multicultural and legally plural society, where state law operates alongside religious norms and *adat* (customary norms) (Lukito, 2012). In practice, these normative orders rarely function in isolation; instead, they intersect in everyday governance and in the lived regulation of family life (Anggoro & Negara, 2021; Nashih, 2025). Marriage, as both a social institution and a legal status, is a particularly sensitive arena because it simultaneously implicates community recognition, religious validity, and civil rights, such as legal identity, inheritance entitlements, and access to state services (Breger & Hill, 2021).

The Indonesian Marriage Law (Law No. 1/1974) places religious validity at the center of civil recognition, effectively tying the legal status of marriage to religious authorization (Bedner & Van Huis, 2010; Waruwu, 2021). Yet, in many regions, marriage remains socially governed by *adat (customary norms)* that predates—and often outlasts statutory regulation (Lukito, 2012). This layered legal landscape does not always generate direct conflict. More commonly, it produces negotiation, procedural adaptation, and reinterpretation of authority. As a result, marriage offers a productive lens for multicultural studies concerned with how diverse communities coexist under overlapping legal authorities and how legitimacy is constructed across competing normative frameworks (Yarbrough, 2015; Yeganehfar & Shahsavari, 2023).

Among the Sasak people of Lombok, marriage is frequently associated with *merarik* (elopement-based marriage initiation) (Budiwanti, 2000; Yasin, 2008). In Bayan, North Lombok, however, the indigenous community maintains a distinctive institution known as *nobat* (a customary deliberative marriage institution). Unlike simplified accounts that treat customary marriage as merely symbolic, *nobat* formalizes communal deliberation, collective sanction, and procedural coordination with Islamic contracting and state administration (Taqwa, 2016; Yuliatin et al., 2023).

This article is anchored in the grand theory of legal pluralism, which rejects legal centralism and treats "law" as a field of multiple coexisting normative orders. Griffiths (1986) distinction between "weak" pluralism (plurality recognized and managed by the state) and "strong" pluralism (plural normative orders operating with their own sources of authority) is especially useful for Indonesia, where religious validity is embedded in state law while *adat* remains socially enforceable. Building on von Benda-Beckmann (2002) processual view, pluralism is approached here as dynamic interaction: actors invoke, sequence, and align different norms to secure legitimacy, manage disputes, and stabilize social order. In this framework, *nobat* is examined through three analytical dimensions: (1) authority negotiation (who validates marriage), (2) normative sequencing (how normative orders are ordered in practice), and (3) legitimacy construction (how social, religious, and administrative legitimacy are cumulatively produced).

Existing scholarship on Southeast Asia shows that accommodation between indigenous norms and religious authority has long shaped legal development (Chua, 2014; Isra et al., 2025). Contemporary studies of Indonesian law and Islam likewise highlight how Islamic norms, customary governance, and state administration are bridged through everyday reasoning and institutional practice (J. Bowen, 2021; Cammack, 2007; Lukito, 2012). Research on Sasak Islam has also documented the historical landscape shaped by *wetu telu* (a local religious orientation) and *waktu lima* (an orthodox orientation emphasizing five daily prayers) (Budiwanti, 2000). However, much of the literature on Sasak marriage tends to emphasize narratives of compatibility between

tradition and Islamic law, and focus on *merarik* can flatten the institutional diversity within Sasak communities. Consequently, the practical question of how authority is negotiated when *adat* procedure, *fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence)*, and state administrative requirements intersect remains underexplored at the micro-institutional level.

Addressing this gap, the article asks: How does the *nobat* marriage tradition in Andalan Village reflect negotiated legal pluralism between *adat (customary norms)*, Islamic law, and state regulation? It argues that *nobat* is not merely a surviving tradition but an active governance forum that manages diversity through deliberation, sanction, and procedural alignment across normative regimes. More specifically, the study shows that legitimacy in plural societies is often layered and sequential—constructed through the cumulative fulfillment of communal expectations, religious validity, and administrative legality. By foregrounding this layered legitimacy, the article contributes to multicultural legal studies in two ways: first, it demonstrates how an indigenous institution can govern diversity rather than simply coexist with state law; second, it clarifies how rights protection in multicultural settings depends on the practical coordination of overlapping authorities, not on the dominance of any single legal order.

2. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative socio-legal design to examine how the *nobat* (customary deliberative marriage institution) operates within the plural normative landscape of Andalan Village, Bayan District, North Lombok (Creutzfeldt et al., 2019). Fieldwork was conducted in 2025 and deliberately focused on a single village to enable thick description and analytical depth rather than statistical generalization.

Data were generated primarily through purposive sampling of five key informants representing different nodes of authority and experience: the Village Head, a *Kiyai Adat* (customary religious leader), two married couples who had recently completed the *nobat* process, and one village staff member responsible for administrative coordination. Semi-structured interviews (60–90 minutes) explored the stages of the ritual, authority structures, sanction mechanisms, especially *sajikrama* (customary compensation/sanction), guardianship practices, and the practical relationship between *adat*, Islamic norms, and state requirements. With participants' consent, interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

To capture procedural sequencing and role distribution in situ, the study also included direct observation of one *nobat* marriage ceremony, with field notes documenting key interactions, symbolic practices, and institutional participation. In addition, the analysis incorporated a document review of relevant legal materials, including Indonesia's Marriage Law (Law No. 1/1974) and North Lombok Regional Regulation No. 6 of 2020, to situate local practices within broader legal and policy frameworks.

All qualitative materials (interview transcripts, observation notes, and document excerpts) were analyzed using thematic coding (Braun & Clarke, 2023). Coding proceeded from open coding to category development and then to higher-order themes aligned with legal pluralism theory, with particular attention to (1) authority negotiation (who validates marriage), (2) normative sequencing (how different normative orders are ordered in practice), and (3) legitimacy construction (how social, religious, and administrative legitimacy are cumulatively produced). Analytical trustworthiness was strengthened through triangulation across informant groups and data types, clarification of culturally specific terms during interviews, and detailed contextual description. Ethical

safeguards included informed consent, voluntary participation, anonymization of personal identities, and cultural sensitivity in documenting embedded practices; the study's main limitation is its single-site scope and small sample, which prioritizes socio-legal insight over broad representativeness.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Nobat as a Customary Legal Institution

In Andalan Village, *nobat* functions not only as a ceremonial sequence but as an institutionalized customary legal process. Community members conceptualize marriage as a communal matter that implicates family dignity and social order, not merely a private contract.

As explained by the customary leader,

"Marriage here is not only about the couple. It concerns adat, family dignity, and community order" (Kiyai Adat, personal communication, October 2025).

Following the initial elopement stage, the process moves into *tekang pengraos* (customary deliberation forum), a deliberative forum involving families and customary authorities where restitution, reconciliation, and procedural responsibilities are negotiated.

From a legal pluralism perspective, the deliberation stage operates as a quasi-adjudicative mechanism: it clarifies obligations, authorizes the continuation of the process, and restores communal equilibrium. The village head's presence further indicates that customary authority interacts with administrative governance, even when the state does not directly regulate ritual stages. In this sense, *nobat* represents strong legal pluralism in practice: its authority derives from communal recognition rather than statutory delegation.

In procedural terms, *nobat* begins with an elopement stage comparable to *merarik*, but its core institutional work lies in what follows. The deliberation forum convenes representatives of both families, customary authorities, and when necessary village officials who coordinate the interface with administrative requirements. The forum's function is not limited to symbolic reconciliation; it determines whether and how the marriage will proceed, what obligations must be fulfilled, and how social relations between families will be repaired.

This structured deliberation is significant for multicultural legal studies because it demonstrates that customary institutions can operate as governance mechanisms that manage conflict and facilitate coexistence (Hariri & Babussalam, 2024; Swenson, 2018). In the *nobat* setting, legitimacy is not treated as a binary outcome but as a process that must be secured through a sequence of socially recognized steps. The forum's decisions carry enforceability because participants anticipate reputational consequences and communal sanction in cases of non-compliance, an enforcement logic distinct from state coercion yet effective in practice (Merry, 1988).

Importantly, the customary–religious leader (Kiyai Adat) embodies institutional hybridity: the same figure may carry authority as a custodian of tradition and as a religious guide. This hybridity complicates simple distinctions between "customary" and "Islamic" authority and illustrates how pluralism can operate through blended roles rather than separate institutions (J. R. Bowen, 2003).

3.2 *Sajikrama* and Restorative Economic Sanction

A distinctive component of *nobat* is *sajikrama*, a customary payment imposed on the groom's side following elopement. Field accounts show that *sajikrama* is experienced as a binding obligation, even when framed as symbolic restoration of honor.

One participant described it as both responsibility and burden:

"The payment is our responsibility. It restores honor to the bride's family. But sometimes it is financially heavy" (Groom, personal communication, October 2025).

A village staff member similarly emphasized its compensatory logic:

"it is compensation for taking someone's daughter without prior permission" (Village staff, personal communication, October 2025).

Socio-legally, *sajikrama* functions as a restorative sanction: it aims to repair relational harm and reintegrate families. However, the negotiated amount may reflect social stratification, because expectations vary by family prestige. This indicates that customary sanctioning can both promote reconciliation and reproduce local hierarchies an important point for multicultural governance and equity debates (Sukarni et al., 2024).

Viewed through the lens of legal pluralism, *sajikrama* is more than a customary payment; it is a mechanism through which normative compliance is produced and social injury is repaired. In the local framing, elopement without prior agreement disrupts familial honor and community expectations. *Sajikrama* responds to this disruption by converting moral harm into a negotiable obligation, thereby enabling reintegration rather than escalation.

At the same time, the negotiation of the *sajikrama* amount reveals how customary justice is embedded within local political economy. When the expected payment increases according to family prestige, the sanction can become unevenly burdensome. This raises normative questions that align with the journal's interest in minority protection and justice: restorative mechanisms may still reproduce inequality if they track social stratification rather than capacity to pay. Such dynamics underscore that pluralism is not inherently emancipatory; it reflects the power relations of the social field in which it operates (von Benda-Beckmann, 2002).

These findings invite a nuanced assessment: *sajikrama* can sustain community cohesion and provide culturally meaningful restoration, yet it may also require deliberative safeguards to prevent excessive burdens that could generate economic vulnerability for young couples.

3.3 Guardianship as a Site of Authority Negotiation

Another revealing area of negotiation concerns the appointment of the marriage guardian (*wali* (marriage guardian)). While many Islamic legal traditions prioritize the bride's biological father, interview data show that when circumstances require flexibility, guardianship may be arranged through family deliberation endorsed by customary authority.

The village head explained that,

"if agreed by the family, adat allows another male relative or respected figure to act as guardian" (Village head, personal communication, October 2025).

The customary leader added that the decisive criterion is convergence of consent, communal agreement, and religious acceptability (Kiyai Adat, personal communication, October 2025).

This practice illustrates interpretive alignment rather than simple subordination of one normative system to another. Religious validity remains central; marriage must

still satisfy the requirements of *ijab-qabul* (offer–acceptance formula of the marriage contract), yet procedural determination is mediated through customary consensus. *Nobat,* therefore, highlights how plural societies operationalize legality through negotiated accommodation.

Guardianship is a critical site of legal negotiation because it directly implicates the validity of the marriage contract in Islamic jurisprudence. In *nobat*, the community does not disregard religious doctrine; rather, it seeks an arrangement that is religiously acceptable while also socially feasible in particular circumstances (e.g., absence of the biological father, family disputes, or practical barriers).

From a socio-legal angle, this illustrates how legal reasoning is performed collectively. Families and customary authorities deliberate to identify a guardian who can satisfy both the religious requirements of the contract and the community's expectations of propriety. This approach resonates with scholarship on Indonesian public reasoning, where legitimacy often depends on the ability to justify decisions across multiple normative registers (J. R. Bowen, 2003).

The guardianship case therefore supports an interpretation of *nobat* as dialogical pluralism: the community does not merely choose between norms; it actively interprets and aligns them. This alignment produces legitimacy without requiring one normative order to fully dominate the others.

3.4 Normative Sequencing and Layered Legitimacy

Observation and interviews indicate that *nobat* proceeds through a sequential layering of legitimacy. First, customary validation is secured through deliberation and completion of *sajikrama*. Second, religious validation is established through the marriage contract (*ijab-qabul*) and related ritual elements, including *taʿlīq ṭalāq* (conditional divorce pledge). Third, administrative registration provides civil documentation and formal recognition.

A couple described this sequence as practical necessity:

"After adat is completed, we go to the religious office for registration" (Couple, personal communication, October 2025).

Each layer performs a distinct function—social acceptance, religious validity, and administrative legality, and none is sufficient on its own to produce full legitimacy. A religiously valid marriage that bypasses *adat* may face social resistance; an *adat*-complete ritual without religious contracting is considered invalid; and the absence of registration limits access to civil rights attached to marriage status (Nasir, 2020).

Taken together, this sequence demonstrates layered legitimacy: legitimacy is cumulative and multi-dimensional, built through the ordered satisfaction of communal, religious, and state expectations (Von Haldenwang, 2016).

The sequential order observed in *nobat* is analytically important because it shows that pluralism can be organized, not chaotic. Customary validation comes first because it repairs social relations and authorizes the marriage as a communal event (Suhardi, 2025). Religious contracting follows because theological legitimacy is indispensable in a Muslim community and because state recognition is tied to religious validity under the national framework (Koenig, 2007). Administrative registration comes last, translating the marriage into documentary form that is legible to the state.

This sequencing produces what can be termed cumulative legality: each stage adds a layer of legitimacy that responds to a different audience community, religious authority, and state administration. Such cumulative legality helps explain why actors invest time

and resources in processes that may appear redundant from a purely statutory perspective. In multicultural societies, legal legitimacy is often audience-specific, and actors must satisfy multiple audiences to secure social stability and rights protection (Griffiths, 1986; Yarbrough, 2015).

However, layered legitimacy can also create points of vulnerability. If any stage is delayed or disputed, couples may face uncertainty in status recognition. This reinforces the practical significance of institutional coordination among customary leaders, religious offices, and village administration.

3.5 Implications for Multicultural Legal Studies and Rights-Sensitive Governance

Taken as a whole, the findings position *nobat* as an empirical example of dialogical and layered legal pluralism. Rather than illustrating a static "harmony" between culture and religion, *nobat* shows how normative orders are actively brought into alignment through deliberation, sanction, and institutional sequencing. This reinforces processual accounts of pluralism that emphasize interaction and strategic navigation of multiple normative sources (Merry, 1988; von Benda-Beckmann, 2002).

First, *nobat* demonstrates that *adat* remains a functioning regulatory system with adjudicative qualities. The deliberation forum (*tekang pengraos*) is not merely ceremonial; it authorizes the continuation of marriage, allocates obligations, and restores social relations. This supports the view that strong pluralism persists even under modern state administration, because communal legitimacy can sustain enforcement without state coercion (Griffiths, 1986).

Second, the guardianship arrangement highlights authority negotiation as an everyday practice of multicultural governance. Instead of treating Islamic law and customary governance as competing hierarchies, local actors pursue convergence: customary procedures are adjusted to maintain religious validity while ensuring social acceptance. This kind of practical bridging echoes broader observations on Indonesian legal reasoning, where religious and customary norms are often negotiated through community-based institutions and hybrid authorities (J. R. Bowen, 2003; Lukito, 2012; Salim, 2015).

Third, *sajikrama* foregrounds the normative and distributive dimensions of customary sanction. Its restorative purpose aligns with community-oriented justice, yet its variable burden suggests that customary regulation may reproduce inequalities embedded in social status. This resonates with socio-legal critiques that plural legal arenas are shaped by power relations and therefore do not automatically yield egalitarian outcomes (von Benda-Beckmann, 2002).

From a human-rights-oriented perspective, layered legitimacy has practical consequences. Administrative registration is not merely bureaucratic; it can affect access to marital rights and documentation (e.g., family cards, inheritance claims, and children's legal identity) (Griek, 2014). Where customary processes delay or complicate registration, families may become vulnerable in later disputes (Button et al., 2016; Kohn, 2025). Conversely, where state administration ignores local processes, it can generate social friction and undermine community-based dispute resolution. The nobat case therefore suggests that rights protection in multicultural societies is strengthened when state procedures recognize local governance while ensuring that customary mechanisms remain compatible with principles of fairness and non-discrimination.

These implications point to two directions for future research within multicultural studies. Comparative work across Sasak communities could clarify how variations in customary sanctioning shape gendered experiences and economic vulnerability. In

addition, studies of younger generations and migration could explore whether *nobat* is being reinterpreted as communities negotiate modernization, mobility, and digital communication, potentially reshaping the interface among *adat*, Islamic authority, and state law.

To further situate the findings within multicultural studies, it is useful to distinguish between narratives of "compatibility" and processes of "negotiation." Compatibility implies that norms naturally align; negotiation highlights that alignment must be achieved through interpretation, power balancing, and institutional practice. In *nobat*, alignment is accomplished through deliberation and sequencing, indicating that pluralism is an active governance task rather than a passive condition.

Hybrid institutional roles—especially the customary–religious leader—also matter. When authority is embodied in hybrid figures, pluralism is not only a relationship between legal systems but also a relationship within institutions. This helps explain why communities can maintain both customary authority and religious validity without treating them as mutually exclusive, echoing broader observations in Indonesian Islamic legal life (Salim, 2015).

Finally, the *nobat* case underscores that rights protection in multicultural societies often depends on how well normative layers are coordinated. Where administrative registration is treated as an afterthought, legal vulnerability can emerge later in disputes over property, inheritance, or child status. Conversely, when registration is pursued without attention to community processes, social legitimacy can be undermined. The challenge for multicultural governance is therefore twofold: to respect indigenous institutions as meaningful sites of order-making, and to ensure that customary mechanisms operate within a framework of fairness consistent with contemporary rights norms.

3.5.1. Beyond the Harmony Narrative

Studies of customary practice in Muslim societies often oscillate between two explanatory frames: conflict and harmony. Conflict narratives highlight normative contradiction; harmony narratives emphasize compatibility and assimilation. The *nobat* case suggests that both frames can miss the more common reality of negotiated coexistence. Even where actors affirm that "*adat* and religion must both be satisfied," satisfaction is achieved through procedural work—deliberation, compromise, and sequencing—rather than through automatic doctrinal fit.

Recognizing negotiation has analytical benefits for multicultural studies. It directs attention to the mechanisms through which pluralism is governed: who convenes deliberation, whose voices count, what sanctions are available, and how outcomes are justified. These mechanisms matter because they determine whether pluralism yields stability, exclusion, or contestation.

3.5.2 Authority, Hybridity, and Institutional Legitimacy

The findings also speak to debates on authority in legally plural fields. Legal centralism assumes a hierarchical order in which state law dominates. Pluralism scholarship, by contrast, highlights that authority can be dispersed and that institutions compete and cooperate for legitimacy (Griffiths, 1986; Merry, 1988). In *nobat*, customary authority has institutional depth: it convenes deliberation, sets conditions, and socializes compliance. Religious authority provides criteria for contractual validity, and village administration coordinates the interface with the state.

A key empirical insight is that authority is not always distributed across separate institutions; it can be condensed into hybrid roles. The Kiyai Adat acts as a bridge between

customary norms and religious validity. This hybridity helps explain how communities avoid framing choices as "either *adat* or Islam." Instead, the same authority can interpret both and articulate an outcome that is intelligible across normative registers. Such bridging is consistent with accounts of Indonesian public reasoning that emphasize justification to multiple audiences as a source of legitimacy (J. R. Bowen, 2003).

However, hybridity also raises questions of accountability. When authority is concentrated in a small set of leaders, deliberation may be inclusive or exclusive depending on local power relations. Future research could therefore examine whose interests are prioritized in deliberative forums and how disputes are resolved when authority is contested.

3.5.3 Sajikrama, Restorative Justice, and Equality

Customary sanctions are often discussed as either "tradition" or "punishment." The *nobat* evidence supports a more precise characterization: *sajikrama* operates as restorative justice, seeking to repair relational harm, recognize wrongdoing, and restore social equilibrium. This is particularly relevant in multicultural societies where state courts may be distant, costly, or perceived as culturally ill-fitting, and where community-based mechanisms remain central to dispute settlement.

At the same time, restorative mechanisms can be distributively uneven. If payment expectations track social prestige, sanctions may be heavier for couples with fewer resources. This does not negate the restorative intent, but it shows that customary justice can reproduce hierarchy. In plural legal analysis, this is a reminder that normative orders are embedded in social structure and may perpetuate inequality (von Benda-Beckmann, 2002).

An implication for multicultural governance is the importance of deliberative safeguards. Community leaders may retain cultural authority while also instituting principles of proportionality and transparency—for example, by calibrating obligations to capacity and by ensuring that women's perspectives are represented in deliberation about sanctions that affect household welfare.

3.5.4 Layered Legitimacy and Rights Protection

Layered legitimacy has direct relevance for rights protection. In a statutory framework that ties civil recognition to religious validity, administrative registration becomes a bridge between community life and state entitlements. When registration is delayed, families may encounter practical barriers in later interactions with the state, especially in disputes involving property, inheritance, divorce, or the legal status of children. The *nobat* sequence highlights that registration is commonly pursued only after customary and religious stages have been completed, because social legitimacy is treated as prior to documentary legality.

This ordering can be functional—preventing social conflict and ensuring community acceptance—but it can also create vulnerabilities when customary disputes prolong the process. For rights-oriented scholarship, the question becomes how to protect civil entitlements without undermining customary reconciliation mechanisms. One response is not to abolish customary processes, but to strengthen coordination among customary leaders, religious offices, and village administration so that documentation follows promptly once core legitimacy has been achieved.

More broadly, the *nobat* case shows that multicultural governance is not only about respecting difference; it is also about ensuring that the pathways through which legitimacy is produced do not exclude vulnerable actors. This includes attention to

gendered consequences of economic sanctions and to the accessibility of administrative registration for couples with limited resources.

3.5.5 Implications for Multicultural Legal Studies

Conceptually, this study supports an understanding of legal pluralism as organized and sequential. Rather than assuming that pluralism produces disorder, the *nobat* case shows that communities can develop stable procedures that allocate functions across normative orders: *adat* for social reconciliation, Islamic jurisprudence for contractual validity, and state regulation for civil documentation. This reinforces the idea that pluralism can be an institutional resource for governing diversity when mechanisms of coordination exist.

Empirically, the study highlights the value of micro-level institutional analysis for multicultural legal theory. Large-scale descriptions of pluralism may overlook how legitimacy is actually made in specific communities (Macdonald, 2023). By documenting deliberation forums, sanction mechanisms, and hybrid authorities, the article provides detail that can inform both comparative research and policy debates on indigenous recognition and rights protection in Indonesia and beyond.

At the level of multicultural policy, the *nobat* case suggests that recognition should be accompanied by dialogue and capacity-building rather than by mere formal acknowledgment. Recognition that ignores how customary forums actually operate may fail to improve rights outcomes, while reform efforts that dismiss customary legitimacy may undermine social cohesion. A rights-sensitive approach would therefore combine respect for community-based reconciliation with clear pathways to documentation and remedies when customary mechanisms disadvantage particular groups.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the *nobat* marriage tradition in Andalan Village, Bayan District (North Lombok), as a lived expression of legal pluralism within Indonesia's multicultural society. The findings show that *nobat* functions as a customary legal institution that organizes communal deliberation, applies restorative sanction through *sajikrama*, negotiates guardianship arrangements when necessary, and sequences customary validation, Islamic contracting, and administrative registration to produce what can be described as layered legitimacy.

These results complicate accounts that reduce Sasak marriage practices to a simple narrative of cultural–religious harmony. Rather than operating as parallel systems, *adat*, *fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence)*, and state regulation are co-activated in practice through ongoing negotiation about authority, procedural order, and the conditions of "valid" marriage. In this sense, *nobat* exemplifies strong and dialogical legal pluralism: no single authority monopolizes legality, and social, religious, and administrative recognition are treated as cumulative requirements for legitimacy and social stability.

Although this study is limited to a single village and a small set of informants, it offers socio-legal insight into how indigenous communities remain active agents in shaping plural legal orders. For multicultural legal studies and policy debates, the key implication is that inclusive governance should engage customary institutions as partners in rights protection, while remaining attentive to equity concerns related to customary sanctions and to the practical importance of civil registration for safeguarding legal identity and access to services. Future research could develop this analysis through comparative fieldwork across multiple sites in North Lombok, closer examination of the gendered implications of guardianship and sanctioning practices, and investigation of

how mobility, education, and digital communication are reshaping customary authority and its interface with Islamic and state institutions.

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