

## WOMEN'S ROLES AND STRATEGIES TO MAINTAIN HARMONY IN THE ERA OF LEGAL PRURALISM: WHAT CAN WE DO?

Shinta Dewi Rismawati<sup>1</sup>, Silvia Milady Azkiya T<sup>2</sup>, Irham Baihaqi Thoha<sup>3</sup>,  
Supomo Ari Sasongko<sup>4</sup>, Muhammad Navis Aufa<sup>5</sup>, Vida Nikmal Maulaa<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1,3,5,6</sup>UIN K.H. Abdurahman Wahid Pekalongan

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Gadjah Mada

<sup>4</sup> SMP Negeri 1 Kedungwuni

<sup>1</sup>[shinta.dewi.rismawati@uingusdur.ac.id](mailto:shinta.dewi.rismawati@uingusdur.ac.id)

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi beragam peran yang dimainkan oleh perempuan dan strategi yang mereka terapkan untuk menegakkan keharmonisan di tengah sistem hukum dan norma budaya yang berbeda. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan penelitian kualitatif dengan menggunakan studi kepustakaan. Data dikumpulkan, dan data dianalisis dengan menggunakan analisis isi yang dikombinasikan dengan analisis model interaktif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perempuan dengan segala pengetahuan, kemampuan, dan sumber daya yang dimilikinya dapat berperan sebagai pendorong, motivator, inspirator, dan pencari solusi yang penting dalam mengatasi permasalahan yang dihadapi oleh perempuan, masyarakat, dan tempat tinggalnya. Strategi yang digunakan oleh perempuan di era ini mencerminkan ketangguhan, kemampuan beradaptasi, dan tekad mereka untuk menjaga keharmonisan dalam sistem hukum prural. Perempuan dapat mengadvokasi inklusivitas hukum, berkolaborasi di seluruh komunitas, memberdayakan diri mereka sendiri dan orang lain, serta berpartisipasi dalam proses pembuatan kebijakan, yang secara efektif dapat menavigasi kompleksitas di dalam sistem hukum yang berbeda. Oleh karena itu, mengakui dan mendukung upaya perempuan di bidang ini sangat penting untuk membangun masyarakat yang kohesif dan adil.

**Kata kunci:** perempuan dan kerukunan, pluralisme hukum, agen perubahan

### ABSTRACT

*This research aims to explore the diverse roles played by women and the strategies they employ to uphold harmony amid varying legal systems and cultural norms. The research uses a library research approach using library data. This research uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method. The data are collected, and the data is analyzed using content analysis combined with interactive model analysis. The results show that women with all their knowledge, abilities, and resources can play a role as drivers, motivators, inspirers, and important solution-seekers in overcoming the problems faced by women, their communities, and where they live. The strategies employed by women in this era reflect their resilience, adaptability, and determination to maintain harmony within complex legal systems. Women can advocate for legal inclusivity, collaborating across communities, empowering themselves and others, and participating in policy-making processes, which can effectively navigate the complexities of this legal*

*system. Therefore, recognizing and supporting women's efforts in this field is essential for building cohesive and equitable communities.*

**Keywords:** *women and harmony, legal pluralism, agent of change*

## INTRODUCTION

In a world characterized by legal pluralism, where multiple legal systems coexist within a society, women play crucial roles in maintaining harmony and promoting justice.(Mang-Benza et al., 2023). Legal pluralism refers to the coexistence of different legal systems, such as customary law, religious law, and state law, within a single jurisdiction(Shuaib, 2017). This pluralistic landscape presents unique challenges and opportunities for women, who often find themselves at the intersection of various legal frameworks.

In the context of legal pluralism, women's problems can arise from the coexistence of multiple legal systems(Cohen et al., 2024; Manea, 2023) including customary law, Islamic law, and state law, which can lead to conflicting norms and interpretations(Arifin, 2021; Elbalti, 2019). This complexity can result in challenges for women's rights and equality, particularly in societies where these legal systems are deeply ingrained and often prioritize traditional or religious norms over modern human rights standards(Butchart, 2021)

Women face various challenges within legal pluralism systems due to gender inequalities and biases(Baumle, 2009). Feminist praxis faces challenges in addressing gender inequalities, poverty, and plural legal systems in settings with diverse cultural norms(Cornwall & Molyneux, 2006). The absence of women's perspectives in the development of international law has led to a narrow jurisprudence that perpetuates the unequal treatment of women globally (Brenner, 2014)

Throughout history, women have faced systemic discrimination, legal barriers, and cultural norms that have constrained their rights and freedoms. Most ancient legal systems deprived women of their human rights, resulting in discrimination and injustice (Hamdaoui, 2023). These legal systems often place women in subordinate positions, making it more difficult for them to exercise agency and contribute to maintaining harmony. In legal pluralism, women face challenges due to the inherent sexism in law. The issue lies in the differentiation of

women from men, leading to discrimination within the legal system (Gil Ruiz, 2015; Smart, 2017). While Rakia said that Feminist legal theory is reflected in various Indonesian laws and regulations, overlapping regulations still subordinate women's roles to men (Rakia & Hidayat, 2022). Women navigate and balance roles in plural legal systems by leveraging operational ambiguity. In Ghana and Senegal, they win rights in contradictory legal principles areas, like inheritance and divorce (Hern, 2022).

Additionally, cultural norms and traditional practices within legal pluralistic societies may also limit women's ability to fully participate in decision-making processes (M. Maluleke, 2012; M. J. Maluleke, 2017; Udoh et al., 2020) (Wibawa et al., 2023) and conflict resolution (Wibawa et al., 2023), thus hindering their efforts to maintain harmony. Therefore, it is essential to critically analyze the impact of legal pluralism on women and consider the potential barriers they face in fulfilling their roles and strategies for maintaining harmony.

Gender dynamics and the role of women have always been central to the functioning of societies, and this holds in the era of legal (Eade, 2014; Gend. Justice Leg. Plur., 2013). So, women have been tasked with upholding social harmony and ensuring the smooth functioning of their communities. This research aims to explore the diverse roles played by women and the strategies they employ to uphold harmony amid varying legal systems and cultural norms.

## **METHODS**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method. This study employs a library research methodology, incorporating data from various sources such as books, articles, regulations, and notes (Belotto, 2018; Sutton & Austin, 2015). The collected data undergoes content analysis as well as interactive model analysis (The Global Fund et al., 2015). The analytical process involves three concurrent activities: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification (Wu et al., 2022).

**DISSCUSION**

**The Roles of Women in Maintaining Harmony are Contextual**

The role of women in maintaining harmony in society is very important because they have various significant roles in building and maintaining harmony in the family, community, and country. From the results of the search for secondary data sources, the roles of women in maintaining harmony in the era of legal pluralism can be categorized as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Women's roles in maintaining harmony in the era of legal pluralism

Role	Explained	Figures
Advocates for Justice and Equality	Women are the main advocates for justice and equality in the legal system. They fight for women's rights in many areas. They fight for equality in law and society and they help build a more just and inclusive foundation	Kartini, Dewi Sartika (Indonesia) Malala Yousafzai (Pakistan) Gulalai Ismail (Pakistan) Sirimavo Bandaranaike (Sri Lanka) Loretta Ross (Amerika Serikat)
Mediators and Community Leaders	Women mediate conflicts and tensions in pluralistic societies with the ability to promote dialogue and cooperation between different groups. As community leaders, they can also mobilize resources and coordinate efforts to promote tolerance and harmony.	Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (Liberia) Aung San Suu Kyi (Myanmar) Emmeline Pankhurst (Inggris) Susan B. Anthony (Amerika Serikat)
Protector of Human Rights, Environmental Rights and Animal Protection	Women are human rights protectors, fighting for the rights of vulnerable individuals and groups in society. They may engage in advocacy for the rights of minorities, refugees, or animals. By protecting these rights, they help maintain the principles of justice and humanity in society.	Jane Goodall (Inggris) Helena Norberg-Hodge: (Norvegia) Sunitha Krishnan (India) Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim (Chad)

Legal Education and Awareness Advocates	Women are often important agents in spreading knowledge about laws and rights to the community. They engage in legal education and training programs that aim to raise legal awareness among women and the general public.	Ruth Bader Ginsburg (Amerika) Gloria Steinem (Amerika)
Innovators in Community Development:	Women are often innovators in inclusive and sustainable community development. They are involved in development initiatives in various fields	Wangari Maathai (Kenya) Vandana Shiva (India) Fatoumata Ba (Senegal) Roya Mahboob (Afghanistan)
Keepers and transfers of values and traditions	Women play an important role in maintaining and transferring existing values and traditions to family members and communities for generations.	Rigoberta Menchú (Guatemala) Maggie Wilson (Australia) Winona LaDuke (Amerika Serikat):

Table 1, shows that women with all their knowledge, abilities, and resources can play a role as drivers, motivators, inspirers, and important solution-seekers in overcoming the problems faced by women and their communities where they live. From the table above, it can also be concluded that many of the roles played by women to maintain harmony are contextual. It is said to be contextual because this role cannot be separated from the background of women's lives, both internal and external. The internal aspect relates to her family background, education, and profession, while the external aspect relates to the situation and conditions in which the character lives her life.

In the era of legal pluralism, where diverse legal systems coexist within a society, the role of women in maintaining harmony becomes crucial. The findings above corroborate the study of Jane L. and Epstein on the roles of women in maintaining harmony in the era of legal pluralism is complex and multifaceted. (Leserman & Epstein, 1982). Women often serve as the primary guardians of traditional customs and norms within their communities (Sacks et al., 2022). Their pivotal role in maintaining social order and moral values

should not be underestimated. In many cultures, women are responsible for transmitting cultural knowledge, resolving conflicts, and preserving the cultural heritage. Their deep understanding of customary laws and traditions enables them to navigate the complexities of legal pluralism and in turn, contribute significantly to the preservation of harmony within the society (da Silva & Menezes, 2022; Handayani & Suparno, 2023).

Moreover, women have been instrumental in advocating for gender-inclusive legal reforms and promoting human rights within the context of legal pluralism. Their efforts have led to the recognition of women's rights within various legal systems, thereby fostering greater equality and social justice (Arisandy, 2019; Correa et al., 1994; Inasshabihah, 2020). It is essential to recognize and amplify the voices of women in discussions and decision-making processes related to legal pluralism. By harnessing their knowledge and experiences, societies can benefit from a more inclusive and equitable approach to legal pluralism, ultimately enhancing harmony and cohesion within diverse legal frameworks (Rai, 1995; Zahrudin, 2021).

Women's role in maintaining harmony in the era of legal pluralism extends beyond the preservation of traditional customs and norms (Handayani & Suparno, 2023). They also play a crucial role in bridging gaps between different legal systems and mediating conflicts that arise from their coexistence (Khurshid et al., 2023). Women often act as peacemakers and negotiators, using their interpersonal skills and deep understanding of cultural nuances to find common ground and facilitate peaceful resolutions (Khurshid et al., 2023). Their influence in advocating for gender-inclusive legal reforms also extends to addressing systemic inequalities and injustices within legal pluralism (Noreen & Razia Musarrat, 2013; Qazi Zada, 2021; Rizvi & Hussain, 2022). By actively participating in reform efforts, women contribute to the development of legal frameworks that are more responsive to the diverse needs and experiences of all members of society.

Their contributions are vital in ensuring that different legal systems coexist peacefully and that individual rights are respected. In this essay, we will explore the various roles that women can play in upholding harmony in

the era of legal pluralism, analyze key figures who have made significant contributions to this field, and discuss different perspectives on this topic.

### **Women's Strategies for Maintaining Harmony in the Era of Legal Pluralism**

The existence of women in a dynamic and plural society cannot be ignored because they have an important role in maintaining social harmony. For women to take on the role of an important agent to initiate and maintain harmony amid different legal system battles, is not an easy matter, because it takes various strategies to make it happen. From the day of the literature search, the strategies carried out by women to maintain harmony in the era of legal pluralism are identified in Table 2.

Table 2. Women's strategies to maintain harmony in the era of legal pruralism

Strategy	Explanation
Advocacy for Legal Inclusiveness:	Women can advocate for inclusive legal education and access for all sections of society, especially women and girls. By raising legal awareness among women, they can understand their rights under various legal systems and use that knowledge to protect themselves and their communities.
Collaboration and networking	Women can build networks and cooperation between different communities, including those representing minority legal systems. By collaborating, they can strengthen their voices, support each other, and create better understanding between different groups.
Education and empowerment	Women's education and empowerment can focus their efforts on educating and empowering communities, especially women and girls, about their rights in the context of legal pluralism. This can include providing access to legal information, training on legal rights, and support to fight for justice
Participation in Policy-Making Processes	Women can actively participate in policy-making processes, both at local and national levels, to ensure that their voices and interests are recognized. By being at the decision point, they can influence the direction of policies that are more inclusive and equitable.

<p>Strengthening cooperation at local, national and international levels</p>	<p>Women can take the initiative to develop and strengthen their existence by partnering with the government, NGOs, or other parties so that their mission can be achieved effectively and efficiently.</p>
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Within the context of legal pluralism, where multiple legal systems and authorities coexist, women encounter distinct challenges as they navigate these intricate frameworks (Fa'amatua'in, 2023; Van Engeland, 2015). To ensure the preservation of their rights and the maintenance of harmony, women employ diverse strategies that exemplify their resilience and resourcefulness. Women in the era of legal pluralism must navigate a complex network of legal systems and authorities, each with its own set of regulations and guidelines. To safeguard their rights and promote harmony within this multifaceted structure, women often utilize a range of strategies that demonstrate their ability to adapt and persevere (Ruibal & Fernandez Anderson, 2020) (Ruibal & Anderson, 2018). One such strategy involves the establishment of informal networks and support systems. These networks create a sense of community and solidarity among women, enabling them to exchange experiences, seek guidance, and access valuable resources (Wang & Yang, 2019; Yang & Leskovec, 2015).

Another alternative could be to establish connections with individuals in their social circle and utilize the support of friends or acquaintances to access resources and assistance (Zitnik et al., 2018). (Creating bonds with individuals who share similar interests and experiences can provide a sense of community and a network of support. Additionally, individuals can reach out to well-connected members of their society who can offer valuable information and resources (Gwaka et al., 2023). These connections can offer a reliable safety net in times of need, particularly when facing the pressures and demands of attending court proceedings (Escobar-Lemmon et al., 2021).

Moreover, women frequently pursue legal education and awareness to gain a comprehensive understanding of their rights in various legal frameworks (Erten & Keskin, 2022; Neumann, 2000). This knowledge grants them the ability to make well-informed choices and assert their interests within the intricate realm of the law. Additionally, women may also turn to non-governmental organizations or



international human rights entities for legal aid or support to navigate the intricacies of legal pluralism and secure access to justice(Chinkin, 1995; Chinkin & Charlesworth, 2006). In addition, women can utilize negotiation and mediation strategies to address conflicts within various legal systems. Through the process of engaging in dialogue and actively pursuing areas of agreement, women can strive towards achieving peaceful resolutions that uphold their rights within a wide range of legal contexts(Haugen & Singh, 2015)

The era of legal pluralism witnessed the remarkable resilience, adaptability, and determination of women as they employed various strategies to safeguard their rights and promote harmony within complex legal systems. Women played a crucial role in this era, effectively managing their dual responsibilities in the public sector and employing strategies such as effective communication, prioritizing family time, demonstrating commitment, and sharing domestic duties to maintain familial harmony. (Abduljaber & Kalin, 2021; Anderson & Golan, 2023; Cocodia, 2023). Through the implementation of these strategies and others, women contributed to the development of a legal pluralism that is fair, harmonious, and respectful of the rights of all individuals. By working collaboratively, both women and men can work towards reshaping laws and customs, fostering more inclusive and equitable communities.

## **CONCLUSION**

Women used feminism and women's rights as a platform to fight for peace and justice throughout the legal pluralism era. In terms of preventing prejudice and promoting gender equality, they are the trailblazers. Women have a remarkable power to transform the community into one that is more accepting and egalitarian since they are the activists and moderators. The vital function of women is portrayed in a variety of ways, acting as agents of inclinations. A potential combination is a legal pluralism, an integrated strategy that gives women the ability to enter the legal system, engage with many communities, empower themselves and other people, and take part in the formulation of public policy.

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