

Muhammadiyah as an Agent of Social Engineering in Perspective of Development Law Theory

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Abstract

The existence of Muhammadiyah as Indonesia's largest socio-religious organization has evolved from a religious purification movement into a comprehensive legal reform force that aligns with national development. This study aims to analyze Muhammadiyah's role through the lens of Mochtar Kusumaatmadja's Theory of Developmental Law, which positions law as a "tool of social engineering" to steer societal change toward modernization. Using a normative-empirical legal research method with a qualitative approach, this study examines how Muhammadiyah bridges the gap between formal regulations (law in

books) and social reality (law in action). The analysis focuses on three primary pillars: Social Engineering: Through the Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid, Muhammadiyah transforms traditional mindsets into modern, rational, and law-conscious behavior by issuing responsive fatwas that regulate social interactions (*muamalah*). Legal Culture: In accordance with Lawrence M. Friedman's theory, Muhammadiyah internalizes values of discipline, integrity, and legal literacy through its vast network of thousands of educational and health institutions (AUM). Welfare State & Constitutional Jihad: The organization acts as a strategic partner to the state by providing inclusive public services and conducting "Constitutional Jihad" through judicial reviews to ensure national laws remain aligned with public interest and social justice. The study concludes that Muhammadiyah's concept of *Darul Ahdi wa Syahadah* provides a theological and ethical foundation for viewing the state as a field of service. This synergy between socio-religious movements and developmental law creates a sustainable model for inclusive national legal development in Indonesia.

KEYWORDS

Muhammadiyah, Legal Development Theory, Social Engineering, Legal Culture, Welfare State.

Introduction

The existence of Muhammadiyah as the largest socio-religious organization in Indonesia has spanned over a century, with tangible contributions across various aspects of life. As a *tajdid* (renewal) movement, Muhammadiyah does not merely focus on the purification of faith but also actively engages in social dynamization through educational, health, and social service institutions. These efforts are a manifestation of the Progressive Islam ideology, which views religion as a solution to humanitarian issues. In the context of national

development, Muhammadiyah's initiatives often intersect with the state's broader agenda in fostering social order and progress¹.

Development in Indonesia cannot be separated from the role of law as a guide for civilization. As explained in the Theory of Developmental Law proposed by Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, law must function as more than merely a guardian of order. According to Al-Ghiffari in this theoretical framework, "the law is expected to function beyond that—as a 'means of social renewal' or '*law as a tool of social engineering*' to channel human activities toward the direction desired by the development process."² This underscores that every element of the nation, including civil society organizations (CSOs), bears a moral responsibility to align its activities with this vision of legal development.

The correlation between Muhammadiyah and national legal development has grown stronger through the adoption of the *welfare state* concept. From this perspective, the state has an active obligation to realize social justice and material welfare for its people. Muhammadiyah, through thousands of Muhammadiyah Social Enterprises (AUM), practically carries out the functions of a *welfare state* that have not yet been fully addressed by the government. Muhsi (2025) states that "the welfare state requires legal constraints to prevent the abuse of power, yet on the other hand, it requires the support of social institutions to distribute justice in a tangible manner."³ Muhammadiyah fills this gap as the state's partner in providing inclusive public services.

The relevance of Muhammadiyah in development can also be analyzed through Lawrence M. Friedman's Theory of Legal Systems. Friedman divides the legal system into three elements: substance,

¹ Heri Rifhan Safitrianingsih; Sumiyati; Fitriyah, Amaliyatul; Nurul, Hayati; Halili, "Manhaj Tarjih Muhammadiyah: Perspektif, Sumber, Pendekatan & Prosedur Teknis Selamat," *Paradigma: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Penelitian Pendidikan* 12, no. 1 (2026).

² Al-Ghiffari, "Implementation of Mochtar Kusumaatmadja's Development Law Theory in the Context of Public Service Digitalization."

³ Asriko Muhsi, Hesti Asmika, and Nurzannah, "Muhammadiyah and Social Services in the Fields of Health and Social Welfare."

structure, and legal culture. Muhammadiyah makes its greatest contribution to the aspect of legal *culture (legal culture)*⁴. "A good legal culture contributes to the formation of a healthy legal system, while a poor legal culture fosters the emergence of an imperfect legal system"⁵. By internalizing the values of discipline and order through its educational institutions, Muhammadiyah is cultivating a legal culture that supports the upholding of the rule of law in Indonesia.

In practical terms, the Muhammadiyah movement reflects Roscoe Pound's theory of *Social Engineering*. Pound viewed law as an instrument for balancing various interests within society (*interest balancing*). Muhammadiyah, through the Majelis Tarjih, engages in social engineering by issuing fatwas that regulate the muamalah (social interactions) of the community to align with social order and national development goals. Sa'bana et al. cite Pound's view that "law, as a tool of social engineering, aims to create harmony so that it can optimally fulfill human needs and interests within society."⁶

This synergy between civil society organizations and the state is increasingly urgent given the complexity of current national issues. Muhammadiyah positions itself through the concept of *Darul Ahdi wa Syahadah* (The State of Covenant and Testimony)⁷. This concept provides theological legitimacy for Muhammadiyah members to view the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) as a legitimate vehicle for service. Haedar Nashir emphasized that "Muhammadiyah views Indonesia not merely as a place of residence, but as a field of proof

⁴ Cahyaningrum, Reza Putri; Purnomo Muhammad; Novitasari, "Legal and Disciplinary Analysis of a University Dormitory: A Case Study of Muhammadiyah University of Kudus Based on Lawrence Meir Friedman's Theory."

⁵ Arsyad, Kamaruddin, and Adam, "The Role of Schools in Fostering Digital Literacy and Critical Awareness Among High School Students in Makassar: An Analysis of William F. Ogburn's Theory of Social Change."

⁶ Sofia Mubarakah Sa'bana and Rusdiana Navlia, "Penerapan Teori Fungsi Hukum Roscoe Pound: Social Engineering Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Jendela Hukum* 12, no. 1 (2025): 45–54.

⁷ Sandiah, "Darul Ahdi Wa Al-Syahadah: The Pancasila State from the Perspective of Progressive Islam."

to realize Islamic values that bring mercy to all of creation through just development.”⁸

The dynamics of muamalah in national issues demand responsive laws. Muhammadiyah employs the *maqashid al-syariah* (objectives of Sharia) approach, which emphasizes the protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property. This principle enables Muhammadiyah to offer innovative legal solutions, such as the development of transparent Islamic economics and Islamic philanthropy (ZIS), as well as public policies and laws. According to Fauzi and Gunawan, “Muhammadiyah is involved in public policy and community welfare by promoting Islamic principles within a democratic context to achieve tangible justice in Indonesia.”⁹

However, the alignment between social movements and state law does not always proceed smoothly. There is often a gap between formal regulations (*law in books*) and social reality (*law in action*). Muhammadiyah steps in to bridge this gap by providing critical input on national legal products. The “Constitutional Jihad” campaign through *judicial review* demonstrates that Muhammadiyah acts as a check on power (*checks and balances*) to ensure that development laws remain aligned with the interests of the broader public, not merely those of the elite¹⁰.

In the era of disruption, the challenges of legal development have become increasingly complex with the emergence of issues such as the digital economy and the environmental crisis. Muhammadiyah responds to these challenges by developing thematic jurisprudence. This interdisciplinary approach is highly functional and aligns with the vision of legal development that is responsive to the dynamics of the times. As noted by Rahman, Muhammadiyah’s *ijtihad* employs an *istislahi*

⁸ Nashir, *Progressive Islam: Humanity, Enlightenment, and Transformation*.

⁹ Fauzi and Gunawan, “Global Philanthropy Shaping the Welfare State: Islamic and Jewish Perspectives.”

¹⁰ hukumonline.com, “Judicial Review, the Last Resort of ‘Constitutional Jihad.’”

approach grounded in the principle of the public good, which lies at the core of every development process¹¹.

By applying the perspective of Development Law Theory within Muhammadiyah, we can observe modern organizational governance. With a solid structural system, Muhammadiyah demonstrates how a community can be governed through effective internal legal frameworks. Recent research at Muhammadiyah University of Kudus indicates that strengthening dormitory culture and institutional discipline is part of the effort to build a national legal culture from an early stage¹². This demonstrates that legal social engineering begins at the smallest units within an organization.

Although many studies on Muhammadiyah have been conducted, there is a *research gap* that this study aims to fill, such as:

1. Theoretical Gap: Most previous studies have placed Muhammadiyah within the frameworks of Islamic studies, the sociology of religion, or practical politics. Research analyzing Muhammadiyah through the lens of Mochtar Kusumaatmadja's Theory of Developmental Law—particularly regarding its role as a subject of *social engineering*—remains very limited.
2. Practical Gap: There is a disconnect between state regulations (*law in books*) and public compliance at the grassroots level. This study examines how Muhammadiyah bridges this gap through the organizational structure and *legal culture* they have established.
3. Innovation Gap: There is still limited literature that integrates the concept of *Darul Abdi wa Syahadah* with Ogburn's *Welfare State* theory and social change within a comprehensive framework of Development Law Theory.

Based on the above discussion, an examination of Muhammadiyah from the perspective of Development Law Theory is crucial. This study aims to contribute to the discussion on how

¹¹ Rahman, "The Strategic Role of Muhammadiyah in the 2024 General Elections."

¹² Cahyaningrum, Reza Putri; Purnomo Muhammad; Novitasari, "Legal and Disciplinary Analysis of the University of Muhammadiyah Kudus Dormitory Based on Lawrence Meir Friedman's Theory."

collaboration between socio-religious forces and state legal doctrines can accelerate the achievement of national goals. By understanding the intersection between the *tajdid* movement, social engineering, and the vision of *the welfare state*, it is hoped that a new synthesis will emerge in viewing the role of mass organizations as a main pillar in inclusive, sustainable, and progressive national legal development in the future.

Based on the background and research gaps outlined above, the research questions for this study are: (1) How does Muhammadiyah function as an agent of social engineering in supporting the effectiveness of Development Law Theory in Indonesia? (2) How does the Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid contribute to shaping Legal Culture in accordance with Lawrence M. Friedman's theory? (3) To what extent are Muhammadiyah's concepts of *muamalah* and "Constitutional Jihad" oriented toward achieving a welfare state amidst dynamic social change?

This study employs a normative legal research method with a qualitative approach. This method was chosen to analyze the interaction between written legal norms (Development Law Theory) and the reality of the Muhammadiyah social-religious movement.

The approaches used are *the statutory approach* and the *conceptual approach*. As explained by Efendi and Ibrahim (2018)¹³, the conceptual approach draws upon perspectives and doctrines developed within legal science to construct a legal argument for resolving the issues at hand. In this context, the researcher employs Mochtar Kusumaatmadja's Theory of Development Law as the primary analytical framework.

The data used in this study consists of two types: primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through observation of statistical data from Muhammadiyah Social Enterprises (AUM) and documentation of the organization's internal policies related to national issues. Secondary data (legal materials) consists of primary legal materials and secondary legal materials. The primary legal materials in this study are the 1945 Constitution¹⁴ and Law No. 16 of 2017 on Mass

¹³ Efendi, J; Ibrahim, *Legal Research Methods: Normative and Empirical*.

¹⁴ Indonesia, "The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia."

Organizations¹⁵. Secondary legal materials consist of books authored by Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, official documents from the Central Leadership of Muhammadiyah (Muktamar Results, Tanfidz, and Manhaj Tarjih), as well as reputable academic journals.

Data collection was conducted through *library research*. According to J. Efendi and Johnny Ibrahim (2018)¹⁶, library research in qualitative legal studies aims to identify relevant theoretical foundations and concepts related to the research problem through an in-depth review of documents and literature. The researcher collected Tarjih fatwas and Muhammadiyah muamalah policies that have implications for legal development.

The collected data was analyzed using a descriptive-qualitative approach with *content analysis*. The analysis involved data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. As stated by Suyanto (2022)¹⁷, qualitative analysis in sociological legal research aims to systematically describe existing facts, followed by an in-depth and comprehensive interpretation of the relationships between the variables under study.

To ensure the validity of the data, the researcher employed source triangulation. The researcher compared data obtained from legal literature on development with internal Muhammadiyah documents as well as third-party statistical data (such as data from relevant ministries) to ensure that the resulting analysis is objective and valid.

A. Muhammadiyah as a Tajdid Movement

Muhammadiyah was founded by Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan on November 18, 1912, in Kauman, Yogyakarta, as a response to the state of the Muslim community, which was perceived to have become intertwined with superstitious practices, innovations (*bid'ah*), and

¹⁵ Indonesia, "Law No. 16 of 2017 on the Enactment of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law No. 2 of 2017 on Amendments to Law No. 17 of 2013 on Community Organizations as Law."

¹⁶ Efendi, J; Ibrahim, *Legal Research Methods: Normative and Empirical*.

¹⁷ Suyanto, *Legal Research Methods: An Introduction to Normative, Empirical, and Mixed Methods Research*.

superstitions (khurafat). The birth of this organization was not merely an effort at religious purification, but a social transformation movement driven by concern over the poverty and educational backwardness of the indigenous population under colonialism¹⁸. As explained by Haedar Nashir (2021)¹⁹, "Muhammadiyah was born as a tajdid movement that combined the purification of faith with the renewal of worldly affairs to realize a progressive Islam." In its early days, Ahmad Dahlan took a revolutionary step by correcting the direction of the qiblah and establishing modern-style schools that combined religious studies with general education—a move that, at the time, was viewed as unconventional yet crucial for laying the foundation of human resource development in Indonesia.

In its subsequent growth phase, Muhammadiyah expanded its influence nationally by establishing itself as an organization focused on social service through the motto "Less Talk, More Action." This transformation was evident in the establishment of the Majelis Tarjih in 1927, which served as a religious authority to provide legal certainty regarding Islamic law for the organization's members. The formation of this council marked a significant shift from merely a charitable movement to an intellectual-legal movement. According to Raska et al. (2023), "The Majelis Tarjih not only serves to select the stronger legal opinion but also engages in ijtihad regarding new issues for which there are no legal precedents in classical texts."²⁰ This indicates that since the early 20th century, Muhammadiyah has laid the groundwork for social *engineering* through the instruments of fatwas and organized moral guidance.

From the era of independence through the New Order period, Muhammadiyah increasingly solidified its position as a legal reform movement by strengthening its educational and health institutions.

¹⁸ Muhammadiyah, *Treatise on Progressive Islam (Proceedings of the 48th Muhammadiyah Congress, 2022)*.

¹⁹ Nashir, *Progressive Islam: Humanity, Enlightenment, and Transformation*.

²⁰ Raska et al., "Analysis of Muhammadiyah's Role in the Dynamics of Moderate Islam's Development: Ery Charmelita Raska, Haikal Akbar, Astika Nurul Hidayah."

Amid political turmoil, the organization consistently championed a moderate and modernist interpretation of Islam, setting it apart from both traditionalist and radical movements. From a legal perspective, Muhammadiyah began to actively contribute to the codification of family law and national education policies. As noted by Azra (2019)²¹, Muhammadiyah successfully integrated Islamic values with the spirit of Indonesian nationalism, making its movement a pillar of the social stability required for the national development process. At this stage, Muhammadiyah's "legal reform" was carried out by disseminating values of discipline and social order through the Muhammadiyah Social Welfare Network (AUM), which is spread across the entire country.

In the contemporary era, Muhammadiyah has transformed into a *civil society force* that systematically carries out "Constitutional Jihad" as a form of macro-level legal reform. This movement is no longer solely focused on the organization's internal laws but actively corrects public policies through the Constitutional Court, demonstrating the organization's tangible role as a guardian of the constitution's integrity and the people's interests. "These legal actions are a tangible manifestation of the application of just development law, where civil society organizations act as a counterbalance to ensure state regulations remain aligned with the public good"²². This transformation proves that Muhammadiyah is a dynamic and proactive collective legal entity.

Broadly speaking, the history of Muhammadiyah is a long journey from a cultural da'wah movement toward a comprehensive legal reform movement. Beginning with the physical realignment of the qiblah, Muhammadiyah now strives to correct the nation's "direction" through legal advocacy and Progressive Islamic thought. In accordance with the doctrine of *Darul Ahdi wa Syahadah*, Muhammadiyah views law as an instrument for achieving a just and prosperous society. Within the framework of Development Law Theory, Muhammadiyah has carried out a function of *social engineering* by transforming traditional mindsets into modern ones, while ensuring that national law retains its religious moral spirit. The sustainability of this movement hinges on its ability to

²¹ Azra, *The Relevance of Moderate Islam: From Indonesia to the World*.

²² Rahman, "The Strategic Role of Muhammadiyah in the 2024 General Elections."

continuously engage in *tajdid* that is responsive to the changing times without losing its original identity as a *da'wah* movement advocating for the promotion of good and the prevention of evil.

An analysis of the Muhammadiyah movement through the lens of Development Law Theory (DLT) requires demonstrating that this organization is not merely a religious entity, but a social *engineering* mechanism with tangible infrastructure to support national development. Mochtar Kusumaatmadja asserts that law must serve as a tool to channel human activities toward the direction desired by development. Muhammadiyah, through its systemic network, has transformed religious values into measurable and functional instruments of social behavioral change.

The implementation of Roscoe Pound's *social engineering* is clearly evident in the mechanism of the Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid, which is not merely a fatwa-issuing body but a legal navigation center that transforms traditional behavior into modern behavior. Raska et al. (2023) explain that Muhammadiyah's *ijtihad* is multidimensional, where "the *Manhaj Tarjih* is not confined to textual interpretations but also considers scientific knowledge and social realities as the basis for legal decision-making."²³ This enables Islamic law to remain dynamic and support the national economic development agenda.

B. Muhammadiyah in the Perspective of Development Law Theory

The Theory of Developmental Law (THP), conceived by Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, is the most influential legal thought in the history of modern Indonesian law. This theory emerged from a critique of classical legal positivism, which tends to be static and functions merely as an instrument of order. Kusumaatmadja offered a new paradigm in which law is positioned as the "driving force" for social transformation in a developing society. From this perspective, the law

²³ Raska et al., "Analysis of Muhammadiyah's Role in the Dynamics of Moderate Islam's Development: Ery Charmelita Raska, Haikal Akbar Astika, Nurul Hidayah."

must not merely trail behind change but must be capable of anticipating and steering that change toward a just national vision.

The essence of THP lies in its function as a means of social renewal. As emphasized by Mochtar Kusumaatmadja in his seminal work, Law is a tool for maintaining order in society²⁴. Given its function, law is fundamentally conservative, meaning it looks to the past. However, law can also function as a means *of* social renewal or “*law as a tool of social engineering*.”²⁵ This quote underscores that law possesses a dual dimension: maintaining existing stability while simultaneously serving as an instrument to engineer societal behavior patterns toward planned modernity.

Theoretically, the Theory of Developmental Law is an intelligent synthesis between Roscoe Pound’s *Sociological Jurisprudence* and the sociological realities of Indonesian society²⁶. Kusumaatmadja modified Pound’s concept by adapting it to Indonesian culture, which highly values the principles of consensus-building and mutual cooperation. Kriswanto explains that, in Mochtar’s view, social engineering through law in Indonesia must not be carried out mechanically or through coercion alone, but must take into account the cultural aspects and values alive within society to avoid triggering social unrest that is counterproductive to development itself²⁷.

The implementation of THP requires synchronization between the substance of the law, bureaucracy, and public awareness. According to Kusumaatmadja, the success of law as a tool for development depends heavily on the quality of legal officials and the level of legal literacy among citizens²⁸. Development law will not function effectively if it

²⁴ Al-Ghiffari, “Implementation of Mochtar Kusumaatmadja’s Development Law Theory in the Context of Public Service Digitalization.”

²⁵ Kusumaatmadja, *Introduction to Legal Science: A Comprehensive Review*.

²⁶ Riyandono, “The Implementation of Rescoe Pound’s Legal Theory in Legal Development in Indonesia.”

²⁷ Kriswanto, “Legal Harmonization in Indonesia from a Legal Theory Perspective.”

²⁸ Al-Ghiffari, “The Implementation of Mochtar Kusumaatmadja’s Development Law Theory in the Context of Public Service

remains confined to the legislative level without being supported by clean institutional structures and a progressive legal culture. Therefore, the involvement of non-state institutions such as civil society organizations is a crucial variable in socializing and implementing the vision of development law at the grassroots level.

Development Law theory remains relevant for addressing the challenges of globalization and digital disruption. Development law is now required to be responsive to economic and technological dynamics while remaining firmly within constitutional boundaries. As outlined by Ali, law from a development perspective must balance the demands of legal certainty with the demands of dynamic justice²⁹. Thus, Development Law Theory (THP) provides legitimacy for the state and civil society to engage in continuous legal *ijtihad* to ensure that national development remains on the track of the rule of law that humanizes humanity.

A correlative analysis between Muhammadiyah and the Theory of Developmental Law (THP) begins with the understanding that both share a common vision regarding orderly social change. Muhammadiyah, as an organization founded before independence, has practiced “social engineering” long before *the* concept of “*law as a tool of social engineering*” gained popularity in Indonesia. In the context of the Theory of Developmental Law, Muhammadiyah acts as a collective agent bridging religious norms with the ideals of national legal development, fostering harmony between theological obedience and legal compliance.

The first pillar in this correlation is the role of the Majelis Tarjih as a producer of responsive “*soft law*.” In THP, law must be dynamic and adapt to societal needs. Rahman explains that the Manhaj Tarjih is a system of Islamic legal discovery procedures that is not only text-oriented but also employs scientific approaches and contemporary realities—³⁰.” This multidimensional nature of *ijtihad* aligns with the

Digitalization”; Kusumaatmadja, *Introduction to Legal Science: A Comprehensive Review*.

²⁹ Ali, *Unveiling Legal Theory and Judicial Theory*.

³⁰ Rahman, “The Strategic Role of Muhammadiyah in the 2024 General Elections.”

principles of legal development, which demand that regulations be capable of rationally addressing the challenges of the times.

Furthermore, Muhammadiyah functions as a material contributor to the formation of national law through the concept of *Darul Ahdi wa Syahadah*. This concept affirms that Indonesia is a nation of agreement that must be filled with tangible works. Haedar Nashir emphasized that Muhammadiyah views the Pancasila state as a field of testimony or “*syahadah*” to realize the public good through systemic development.”³¹ This statement indicates that for Muhammadiyah, development is not merely a government agenda, but a religious obligation that must be supported by just legal instruments.

Muhammadiyah’s implementation of social engineering is clearly evident in the field of education as a tool for shaping *legal culture*. In accordance with Lawrence M. Friedman’s theory, without a sound legal culture, the legal system will be paralyzed³². By managing thousands of educational institutions, Muhammadiyah transmits the values of citizenship and respect for the law. Muhammadiyah’s human development efforts aim to provide the “raw material” in the form of citizens possessing high levels of legal literacy and public ethics, which are absolute prerequisites for the functioning of development law.

Muhammadiyah’s health sector also makes a significant contribution to supporting *the welfare state*. Development law in Indonesia has a mandate to realize social justice, and Muhammadiyah is present to fill the gaps in public services not yet reached by the state. Muhsi et al. note that the Muhammadiyah Hospital Network (RSMA), comprising 122 hospitals and 231 clinics, acts as social infrastructure capable of mitigating crises and assisting the state in fulfilling citizens’ constitutional right to health³³. The effectiveness of the law in the health sector is greatly aided by the existence of autonomous institutions with high credibility in the eyes of the public, such as Muhammadiyah.

³¹ Nashir, *Progressive Islam: Humanity, Enlightenment, and Transformation*.

³² Dewa et al., “Implementation of the New Separation of Powers Theory in the State Institutional System in Indonesia.”

³³ Asriko Muhsi, Hesti Asmika, and Nurzannah, “Muhammadiyah and Social Services in the Fields of Health and Social Welfare.”

The next correlation lies in the “Constitutional Jihad” initiative, which demonstrates Muhammadiyah’s role as a guardian of the rule of law. When the state produces legal instruments deemed to deviate from the spirit of development for the people’s welfare, Muhammadiyah intervenes using formal legal mechanisms (*judicial review*). Bachtiar states that “Constitutional Jihad is proof that Muhammadiyah does not merely operate in the realm of verbal da’wah, but actively engages in legal corrections to ensure the law remains a tool for the prosperity of the people.”³⁴ Muhammadiyah’s success in winning a *judicial review* of the Water Resources Management Law ()³⁵ demonstrates their role as guardians of development direction to ensure it remains aligned with the public good. Additionally, national affairs intersecting with environmental law are addressed in the Fiqh of Water and the Fiqh of Disasters, issued by the Environmental Affairs Council of the Muhammadiyah Central Board³⁶

In the field of philanthropy, from Roscoe Pound’s perspective on *social engineering*, Muhammadiyah acts as an agent intervening in traditions that hinder progress by balancing various interests (*interest balancing*), such as those of the market, the state, and society. Through its fatwas on Islamic economics and contemporary muamalah, Muhammadiyah offers a just economic model. This aligns with the legal objectives of development in the economic sphere, namely fostering equity and preventing monopolies that could disrupt national stability. Through LAZISMU (Muhammadiyah’s Charity, Zakat, Infaq, and Shodaqoh Institution) as a tool for shifting the paradigm of zakat from a consumptive to a productive form, it facilitates wealth redistribution that supports the effectiveness of tax laws and social security, thereby fostering social engineering of the community’s mindset. This action constitutes a concrete application of norms to alter societal economic behavior. Muhsin et al. state that “Islamic philanthropy managed by Muhammadiyah makes a tangible contribution to poverty alleviation and the economic empowerment of the community, in line with

³⁴ Bachtiar and Baidhawiy, “Theologizing Democracy in the Context of Muhammadiyah’s Ijtihad.”

³⁵ MKRI, Decision No. 85/PUU-XI/2013 In the Name of Justice.

³⁶ Tajdid, *Fiqh of Water*; Nasri, “Muhammadiyah’s Fiqh of Disaster.”

national development targets.”³⁷ The integration of religious obligations (zakat) and the state’s legal objectives (social welfare) creates a synergy that strengthens the legitimacy of the law in the public eye. According to Raska et al., “Muhammadiyah uses fatwas not only as a guide for worship but also as a policy instrument to create a more just and productive social order, which is substantively aligned with the legal objectives of development.”³⁸

Muhammadiyah’s role in mitigating social resistance to legal reform also warrants analysis. Many state regulations are rejected by the public because they are perceived as conflicting with religious norms. Muhammadiyah, with its Progressive Islam approach, often offers a middle ground through moderate and pro-development religious interpretations. As explained by Latif in * *, “The support of mainstream religious organizations such as Muhammadiyah is key to the successful implementation of development policies that are sensitive and require collective behavioral change.”³⁹ Issues of muamalah in the national context are reinforced through the “Constitutional Jihad” campaign⁴⁰. This movement is an application of the principle that development laws must not violate citizens’ fundamental rights. Rahman stated, “Muhammadiyah’s Constitutional Jihad is a form of civil society participation in correcting state policies deemed to deviate from the ideals of social justice.”⁴¹ Muhammadiyah’s initiative to provide religious legitimacy for environmental conservation represents a visionary form of *social engineering*. In THP, development must not damage the environment for the sake of short-term interests, and Muhammadiyah strengthens the state’s environmental regulations by

³⁷ Asriko Muhsy, Hesti Asmika, and Nurzannah, “Muhammadiyah and Social Services in the Fields of Health and Social Welfare.”

³⁸ Raska et al., “Analysis of Muhammadiyah’s Role in the Dynamics of Moderate Islam’s Development: Ery Charmelita Raska, Haikal Akbar Astika, Nurul Hidayah.”

³⁹ Latif, *The Complete State: The Historicity, Rationality, and Actuality of Pancasila*.

⁴⁰ hukumonline.com, “Judicial Review, the Last Resort of ‘Constitutional Jihad.’”

⁴¹ Rahman, “The Strategic Role of Muhammadiyah in the 2024 General Elections.”

providing moral sanctions and ethical guidelines for its followers to preserve nature as part of their worship.

The modern governance of Muhammadiyah's Social Enterprises (AUM) reflects the principles of *good governance* that are the ideal of state administrative law. Muhammadiyah demonstrates that a transparent and accountable organizational system can operate independently. This serves as a model for the development of other public institutions in Indonesia. The effectiveness of development laws depends heavily on bureaucratic efficiency, and Muhammadiyah has practiced effective bureaucracy on the scale of the largest mass organization. Managing assets worth trillions of rupiah demands a high level of professionalism. The challenge is ensuring that AUM continues to function as an inclusive instrument of social engineering, not merely a business entity pursuing profitability.

The political participation of Muhammadiyah members, directed toward value-based politics, helps strengthen the nation's legal framework. Muhammadiyah consistently maintains a distance from practical politics while still monitoring public policy. This aligns with legal system theory, which states that the legal structure (apparatus and institutions) must be staffed by individuals of high integrity. Muhammadiyah serves as a crucible for educating the nation's future leaders who will fill strategic positions within the national legal system.

Theoretically, Muhammadiyah serves as a "social buffer" ensuring that accelerated legal development does not lead to social fractures. Excessively rapid development often triggers legal conflicts. Through its extensive network of study circles, Muhammadiyah functions as an effective medium for the dissemination and education of legal knowledge. Legal information that has been vetted through a religious lens via Muhammadiyah is more readily accepted and *voluntarily complied with* by the Muslim community. However, a significant challenge arises when fatwas from the Majelis Tarjih are not fully aligned with—or even precede—formal state regulations, which can cause legal confusion at the grassroots level. Social engineering processes aimed at changing traditions that hinder progress often face a major barrier in the form of cultural resistance, whether from within the organization or from other traditional groups. As a strategic partner of the government, Muhammadiyah faces the challenge of maintaining a

critical distance to ensure its social engineering agenda is not co-opted by practical political interests or the government's development agenda, which may be top-down in nature.

The success of legal development in Indonesia requires the integration of legal substance, structure, and culture. Muhammadiyah makes a significant contribution to the cultural aspect of the legal system through its educational system. By instilling the values of discipline, honesty, and independence from an early age in school, Muhammadiyah is building a foundation of law-abiding citizens. Cahyaningrum et al. note that "legal development will fail if the community's legal culture remains communal-traditional in nature, disregarding legal certainty, and Muhammadiyah transforms that culture into a rational-progressive legal culture."⁴² The internalization of values carried out by Muhammadiyah, which operates thousands of social enterprises (AUM) in the fields of education, health, and the economy, enables this organization to engage in social and mental engineering by instilling discipline, honesty, and anti-corruption behavior from an early age, synchronized with national development that continues to move dynamically.

Muhammadiyah, from the perspective of Development Law Theory, acts as a driving subject that uses organizational norms as a means of social engineering in a structured and planned manner. Unlike state law, which is coercive from top to bottom, Muhammadiyah carries out its reform function thru organizational decisions and the fatwas of the Majelis Tarjih, which are voluntarily internalized to transform traditional behavior patterns into rational-modern ones. This aligns with the core of Mochtar Kusumaatmadja's theory, which views law not merely as a guardian of order, but as a tool to guide society toward progress. Thru a network of charitable endeavors in the fields of education, health, and economy, Muhammadiyah builds social infrastructure that serves as a tangible embodiment of just legal values, while also filling the void left by the state in distributing welfare evenly. Furthermore, the integration of theological values of *tajdid* (renewal)

⁴² Cahyaningrum, Reza Putri; Purnomo Muhammad; Novitasari, "Legal and Disciplinary Analysis of the University of Muhammadiyah Kudus Dormitory: A Case Study Based on Lawrence Meir Friedman's Theory."

with orderly organizational management creates a legal certainty at the grassroots level, which is an absolute requirement for the success of national development. Muhammadiyah not only acts as an agent of change in a sporadic manner but also serves as an institution that provides a normative framework for the creation of a civil society. By prioritizing rationality and the eradication of cultural barriers that hinder productivity, this organization proves that effective social transformation requires a synergy between clear rules (organizational guidelines) and concrete actions (charitable efforts). In this context, Muhammadiyah serves as a driving force for development, balancing social stability and the dynamics of change to achieve the goal of general welfare.

As an agent of social change, Muhammadiyah also plays a role in modernizing Islamic law in Indonesia by contextualizing religious texts into contemporary social realities. This effort ensures that Islamic law is not static, but rather adaptive to the developmental needs of the times, such as in issues of environmental protection, women's rights, and child protection. By positioning religion as a moral force that supports state law, Muhammadiyah strengthens the social cohesion necessary for development to not only pursue economic growth but also uphold humanitarian values. As a result, this organization successfully created a social ecosystem conducive to the supremacy of law and sustainable social justice.

Meanwhile, thru the lens of Lawrence M. Friedman's Legal System Theory, it shows that this organization operates as a complete and independent legal ecosystem. Structurally, Muhammadiyah has a very solid and disciplined organizational hierarchy—from the central level to the branches—that functions like the executive and legislative bodies in a country. The decision-making mechanism thru the Majelis Tarjih and Tajdid creates procedural certainty in formulating norms, so that every organizational movement is based on orderly and accountable governance. This well-established structure serves as the backbone for the organization's effectiveness in distributing social policies to millions of its members across Indonesia.

From the substantive side, Muhammadiyah produces normative products such as the Islamic Living Guidelines for Muhammadiyah Members (PHIWM) and various progressive contemporary

jurisprudence. These rules are not merely static religious doctrines, but rather become "living law" that provides practical guidance on modern issues such as health, environment, and economy. The substance produced is adaptive and rational, thus capable of bridging the gap between the noble values of religion and the concrete needs of societal development. The clarity of these internal norms enables Muhammadiyah to carry out measurable social transformations and has a strong organizational legal foundation.

The main determining factor in this analysis is the Legal Culture successfully built by Muhammadiyah within society. This organization has created a collective awareness that upholds discipline, order, and rationality, which directly erodes the culture of fatalism or apathy. Thru the internalization of organizational values, Muhammadiyah members exhibit high compliance with the shared rules, which Friedman refers to as the driving force of the legal system. The synergy between a solid structure, relevant substance, and a positive legal culture makes Muhammadiyah an agent of change that not only maintains its existence but also actively engineers the social order toward a more advanced direction.

Table 1: Muhammadiyah in Lawrence Meir Friedman's Legal System Theory Approach

Components of the Legal System (Friedman)	Muhammadiyah's Contribution to Development
Substance	Material input in the drafting of laws through <i>Legislative Drafts</i> and Tarjih Fatwas.
Structure	A solid organizational structure from the central level down to the branch (village) level as the implementers of legal values.
Culture	Internalization of work ethics and legal compliance through thousands of schools and universities.

Source: Processed research findings

The ultimate goal of development law is the achievement of a welfare state. Muhammadiyah realizes this through the concept of dynamic muamalah. By possessing assets in the health and economic sectors that are professionally managed, Muhammadiyah assists the state in fulfilling the constitutional rights of citizens, which form the core of the welfare state theory. Rahman asserts that “Muhammadiyah’s role in the public sector proves that legal development need not be government-centralized, but can be accelerated through the autonomy of mass organizations that adhere to principles.”⁴³ Thus, Muhammadiyah is not merely an object of legal development, but an active subject that determines the success of legal transformation in Indonesia.

Muhammadiyah and Developmental Legal Theory are two complementary entities in the grand project of Indonesia’s modernization. While DLT provides the legal framework for development, Muhammadiyah provides its ethical spirit and sociological foundation. This synergy ensures that development in Indonesia does not merely pursue physical growth and legal certainty, but also substantive justice and sustainable civilizational enlightenment for all the people of Indonesia⁴⁴. In the digital age, the challenges of legal development have become more complex (such as the digital economy and environmental crises). Muhammadiyah is called upon to undertake a faster *tajdid* to prevent a *cultural lag* between rapidly advancing technology and the mental readiness of the community. According to William Fielding Ogburn’s theory of cultural-technological social change, this involves the synchronization of technological progress with religious values. Muhammadiyah’s *tajdid* ensures that material changes (such as the digitalization of the economy) are accompanied by immaterial readiness (digital ethics). Without Muhammadiyah’s role in this “value engineering,” development law will face obstacles in the form of *cultural lag*, which could trigger massive legal violations in the digital world.

⁴³ Rahman, “The Strategic Role of Muhammadiyah in the 2024 General Elections.”

⁴⁴ Kriswanto, “Legal Harmonization in Indonesia from a Legal Theory Perspective.”

Conclusion

Muhammadiyah is a tangible manifestation of a collective entity that applies Development Law Theory through a *social engineering* approach grounded in Progressive Islamic values. This study concludes that Muhammadiyah's relevance to Mochtar Kusumaatmadja's thought lies in the organization's ability to integrate religious norms into the functional framework of law as a tool for societal renewal. Through the mechanisms of Tarjih and Tajdid, Muhammadiyah not only purifies teachings but also engages in value engineering that transforms traditional behavior into modern, rational, and law-conscious behavior, thereby creating harmony between the theological obedience of the faithful and the demands of national legal development.

Empirically, Muhammadiyah's role in strengthening the national legal system is evident through the massive contributions of Muhammadiyah Social Enterprises (AUM), which address the core pillars of *the welfare state*. By building self-sustaining educational and health infrastructure, Muhammadiyah has assisted the state in fostering a progressive *legal culture* and bridging *the legal gaps* in public services that remain unreachable by government bureaucracy. The "Constitutional Jihad" initiative further underscores Muhammadiyah's strategic role as a guardian of legal sovereignty, ensuring that every legislative product remains aligned with the public interest and consistent with the spirit of the constitution.

The government, through relevant ministries and legislative bodies, should position Muhammadiyah not merely as an object of development, but as a formal strategic partner in every stage of the national legislative process. Given Muhammadiyah's dominant role in shaping *legal culture* at the grassroots level, the active involvement of legal experts and Tarjih figures in public hearings on draft legislation is crucial. This aims to ensure that every regulation produced possesses strong sociological and religious legitimacy, thereby minimizing potential public resistance and accelerating the effectiveness of the law as a means of societal renewal in accordance with the ideals of Development Law Theory.

For the internal Muhammadiyah organization, particularly the Tarjih and Tajdid Council and the Institute for Wisdom and Public

Policy (LHKP), it is recommended to continue expanding the scope of thematic *ijtihad* that addresses contemporary legal issues in an interdisciplinary manner. Muhammadiyah needs to strengthen positive legal literacy among its cadres and members through the integration of a more in-depth national legal curriculum at every level of education and religious study. With this strengthened legal understanding, the "Constitutional Jihad" movement carried out by Muhammadiyah will not only be reactive to existing regulations but will also be able to initiate progressive legal changes to realize a more just and progressive national *muamalah* order.

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