



Existence of State Administration Law Study Program (Siyasah Syar'iyah) In Islamic Tertiary Institutions in Fostering National Law

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ABSTRACT

There is a significant disparity in Indonesia between the eighty-four undergraduate (S1) programs and only five graduate (S2) programs in Constitutional Law (Siyasah Syar'iyah) at Islamic higher education institutions, creating a notable academic gap. UIN Imam Bonjol Padang, despite hosting a high-demand undergraduate program in this field, has lacked a corresponding master's program for over a decade. This research, therefore, aims to conduct a feasibility study for the establishment of a Master's Program in Constitutional Law (Siyasah Syar'iyah) at its Faculty of Sharia. Employing a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, this study analyzes primary data from interviews and secondary data from institutional documents to assess the program's viability. The results indicate that the proposed program is highly feasible and possesses a unique distinction: a specialized focus on West Sumatran local governance, which is deeply integrated with Minangkabau culture and the philosophy of 'Adat Basandi Syara', Syara' Basandi Kitabullah'. The study confirms the availability of six qualified doctoral-level lecturers with relevant expertise, a well-defined graduate profile, and adequate modern facilities under the faculty's management. In conclusion, the establishment of this program is justified by high demand and institutional readiness, positioning it to contribute significantly to national legal development through a unique local governance perspective.

Keywords: *Feasibility Study, Islamic Higher Education, Local Governance, Siyasah Syar'iyah*

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INTRODUCTION

The landscape of Islamic higher education in Indonesia is undergoing a significant transformation (Dzimar & Ghazlan, 2025), marked by a burgeoning interest in the discipline of constitutional law, known academically as *Siyasah Syar'iyah* (Zainuddin, 2020). This field occupies a critical intellectual space, mediating the relationship between Islamic principles and the mechanisms of a modern democratic state (Mustofa dkk., 2025). Within a nation characterized by its Muslim-majority population and a commitment to

democratic governance, the study of *Siyasah Syar'iyah* offers an essential framework for navigating the complex intersections of religion, law, and public policy (Siregar, 2008). The proliferation of undergraduate programs in this specialization across the country, now numbering eighty-four, serves as a clear indicator of its perceived relevance and popularity among students (Ahyani dkk., 2024). This growth reflects a societal demand for graduates equipped with the analytical skills to engage with contemporary constitutional issues from a perspective that is both legally sound and deeply rooted in Islamic intellectual traditions.

A profound structural imbalance, however, plagues this burgeoning field of study, creating a critical bottleneck at the postgraduate level (Moten, 2017). While undergraduate programs have flourished, the opportunities for advanced study have remained starkly limited, with only five master's programs available nationwide to serve the graduates of eighty-four undergraduate departments (Ridwan dkk., 2025). This disparity, representing a ratio of nearly seventeen to one, presents a systemic challenge to the maturation of *Siyasah Syar'iyah* as a robust academic discipline in Indonesia (Mustofa dkk., 2025). The severe scarcity of graduate-level seats not only stifles the academic aspirations of countless students but also curtails the development of specialized research and the cultivation of high-level experts capable of contributing nuanced perspectives to national legal discourse (Baderin, 2010). This chokepoint effectively limits the intellectual ecosystem required for the field to evolve and deepen its scholarly contributions.

The consequences of this educational disparity are far-reaching and impactful (Mukhtaroma, 2023). Graduates from undergraduate programs in Constitutional Law face a highly constrained pathway for continuing their education, which often results in a premature end to their academic journeys and a subsequent stagnation of scholarly inquiry in the field (Solikhudin & Rohman, 2023). Consequently, the potential for *Siyasah Syar'iyah* to inform and enrich the national legal framework remains significantly underdeveloped (Muhammadin, 2020). Critical areas of contemporary governance, such as the implementation of regional autonomy (Sudirman dkk., 2025), the dynamics of legal pluralism, and the harmonization of state law with local customs and religious principles, are deprived of the advanced research and expert analysis that robust graduate programs would naturally generate (Wahid dkk., 2025). This systemic limitation not only affects individual career trajectories but also hinders the discipline's capacity to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing project of Indonesian nation-building.

The national issue of educational imbalance finds a potent and specific manifestation at the State Islamic University (UIN) Imam Bonjol Padang. As a premier institution for Islamic higher education in West Sumatra, the university plays a pivotal role in shaping the intellectual and professional landscape of the region. Its undergraduate program in Constitutional Law (*Siyasah Syar'iyah*) has consistently proven to be one of its most sought-after fields of study, ranking second in student enrollment within the Faculty of Sharia. This sustained high demand underscores a clear and pressing need among students for advanced educational opportunities in this specialization. The popularity of the program demonstrates a vibrant interest in the subject matter and signals

the existence of a substantial cohort of students prepared and eager to pursue graduate-level work.

Despite this evident demand and the institution's historical legacy in graduate-level Sharia studies, UIN Imam Bonjol Padang has been without a master's program in Constitutional Law for over a decade. Following national regulatory changes in 2013 that restructured academic programs, the previously existing pathway for advanced study in this area was effectively dissolved, creating a significant institutional void. This absence has persisted for more than ten years, forcing the university's own high-achieving undergraduate alumni to either abandon their academic ambitions or compete for the exceptionally few places available at other institutions across the country. This long-standing gap represents a critical failure to serve the academic community and capitalize on the institution's own undergraduate success.

The lack of a graduate program constitutes more than just an unfulfilled student need; it represents a significant missed opportunity to leverage the unique socio-legal and cultural context of West Sumatra for scholarly advancement. The core research problem, therefore, is the unexamined feasibility and untapped potential of establishing a master's program specifically tailored to this context. The persistent deficiency has prevented the development of specialized knowledge that could integrate Islamic constitutional principles with the region's distinct legal traditions (Abdillah, 2024). This study is thus framed as a necessary and overdue investigation, aiming to provide an evidence-based assessment of the viability of creating such a program and, in doing so, to propose a concrete solution to rectify a decade-long institutional and academic gap.

The primary objective of this research is to conduct a comprehensive and systematic feasibility study for the establishment of a Master's (S2) Program in Constitutional Law (*Siyasah Syar'iyah*) within the Faculty of Sharia at UIN Imam Bonjol Padang. This endeavor entails a multi-faceted evaluation designed to rigorously assess the viability, sustainability, and potential academic distinction of the proposed program. The study seeks to move beyond mere speculation by systematically analyzing the critical components required for launching and maintaining a high-quality graduate program that meets both national accreditation standards and the specific needs of its intended student population. The overarching goal is to produce a definitive analysis that can inform institutional strategy and decision-making.

To achieve its primary goal, the research pursues several specific and measurable aims. First, it seeks to identify and articulate a unique academic focus or specialization that would distinguish the proposed program from existing ones in Indonesia. Second, the study aims to develop a detailed and relevant profile for the program's graduates, outlining their expected competencies and potential career pathways. Third, it undertakes a thorough assessment of the availability and academic qualifications of the faculty resources within the institution, ensuring the presence of sufficient and appropriate scholarly expertise. Finally, the research evaluates the adequacy of the proposed program's administrative management unit and the existing physical infrastructure, including library resources, classroom facilities, and research support systems.

The intended outcome of fulfilling these specific objectives is the creation of a robust, evidence-based blueprint for the proposed master's program. This study is not designed as a purely theoretical exercise; rather, it aims to deliver a practical and actionable proposal that provides the university's leadership with the clear and detailed information necessary to make an informed decision. By systematically addressing questions of academic vision, resource availability, and institutional readiness, the research endeavors to lay a solid foundation for the successful establishment of a graduate program. The ultimate purpose is to pave the way for a program that is not only viable but also academically excellent and uniquely positioned to contribute to its field.

An analysis of the current postgraduate landscape reveals a significant gap at the national level. The five existing master's programs in *Siyasah Syar'iyah* in Indonesia, while foundational, generally offer a curriculum centered on national constitutional law viewed through a broad Islamic lens. The scholarship emerging from these institutions predominantly engages with macro-level theoretical debates, such as the relationship between Islam and the state or the compatibility of Sharia with democratic principles. While this work is essential, it often lacks a deep, empirical engagement with the diverse and pluralistic legal realities that exist at the sub-national level. There is a notable scarcity of research that explores how Islamic constitutional thought is interpreted, adapted, and applied within the varied regional governance structures that characterize the Indonesian archipelago.

This national trend creates a distinct regional and thematic gap in the academic literature. Specifically, there is a profound lack of graduate-level programs and associated research dedicated to investigating the intersection of *Siyasah Syar'iyah* with local governance in regions possessing unique and deeply entrenched cultural-legal traditions. The socio-legal framework of the Minangkabau people in West Sumatra, famously encapsulated in the philosophy '*Adat Basandi Syara', Syara' Basandi Kitabullah*' (Customary law is founded on Islamic law, Islamic law is founded on the Qur'an), stands as a prime example. This living tradition of legal pluralism, where Islamic principles and local customs are intricately woven into the fabric of governance, remains significantly under-theorized and under-researched within the discipline of Islamic constitutional law at the postgraduate level.

This research is precisely positioned to address this scholarly lacuna. By centering its feasibility study on a program concept that prioritizes the study of West Sumatran local governance, this investigation directly confronts the existing gap in specialized, region-focused scholarship. It proposes a shift in academic focus from a generalized national discourse to an in-depth exploration of a tangible, functioning model of legal pluralism. The study, therefore, aims to fill the void by laying the groundwork for an academic program that would not only serve regional student demand but also generate critical new insights into how Islamic constitutional principles are negotiated, contested, and synergized within a specific, living, and culturally distinct legal system.

The primary novelty of this research lies in its proposal for a graduate program with a unique academic identity: the advanced study of local governance through the

specialized lens of *Fiqh Siyasah*, deeply grounded in the socio-cultural and legal context of West Sumatra. This conceptualization represents a significant departure from the conventional models of constitutional law education in Indonesia. It champions a “ground-up” pedagogical approach that examines Islamic political and legal jurisprudence not merely as a set of abstract, top-down principles, but as a dynamic force that is lived, interpreted, and operationalized within a specific regional framework. This focus on the practical application of *Siyasah Syar'iyah* within a distinct cultural milieu constitutes its core innovative contribution.

The importance of this research is justified by its immense potential to generate novel knowledge at the critical nexus of Islamic law, constitutional theory, regional autonomy, and cultural studies (Ansori, 2025). The proposed program, as envisioned in this feasibility study, would function as an intellectual hub for developing new theoretical frameworks and practical insights concerning legal pluralism in Indonesia. It promises to foster a new generation of scholarship that is not only academically rigorous but also profoundly relevant to the contemporary challenges of governance (Asyari, 2017). The research produced would offer invaluable perspectives to policymakers, judges, legal practitioners, and community leaders tasked with navigating the complex relationship between national statutes, Islamic legal principles, and local customary laws (*adat*).

The establishment of such a program is further justified by its capacity to address multiple strategic needs simultaneously and effectively. On a practical level, it provides a vital academic pathway for the large and underserved cohort of undergraduate students in the region, directly addressing the educational bottleneck. Institutionally, it would elevate the profile of UIN Imam Bonjol Padang, positioning it as a national center of excellence in the specialized study of Islamic law and local governance. On a national scale, the program would contribute directly to the enrichment of Indonesia's legal system by producing experts uniquely equipped to understand and manage the intricate interplay of legal sources that defines the nation's decentralized and pluralistic character. This study, therefore, is not merely about planning another academic degree; it is a strategic effort to cultivate specialized expertise essential for the continued evolution and strengthening of Indonesian democracy.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design utilizing a descriptive methodology. This approach was selected as the most appropriate framework for achieving the research objectives, as it facilitates an in-depth exploration of the central research questions concerning “what,” “how,” and “why” a new academic program is viable. The design is focused on producing rich, descriptive data to present a comprehensive and holistic assessment of the feasibility of establishing a Master's (S2) Program in Constitutional Law (*Siyasah Syar'iyah*) at the Faculty of Sharia, UIN Imam Bonjol Padang. The nature of the inquiry, being centered on a specific institutional

context, adopts the characteristics of a case study to thoroughly investigate the phenomenon within its real-world setting.

Population and Sample

The objects of this research were multifaceted, centered on the proposed Master's (S2) Program in Constitutional Law (*Siyasah Syar'iyah*). This included a detailed examination of the institutional readiness of the Faculty of Sharia at UIN Imam Bonjol Padang as the program's managing unit, and an analysis of the preparatory accreditation documents (*Borang*) for the program. The subjects of the study, who served as the primary sources of data, were selected to represent key stakeholder groups. The sample included academic faculty (educators), administrative personnel, alumni of the undergraduate program, and prospective students for the proposed master's program. To enrich the analysis with a comparative perspective, academic leaders from other universities with related programs were also included as research subjects.

Instruments

Data for this feasibility study were collected using multiple instruments to ensure a comprehensive and triangulated dataset drawn from both primary and secondary sources. The primary instrument for gathering qualitative data was the semi-structured interview, which allowed for in-depth discussions with faculty, academic leaders at other institutions, and prospective students to understand their perspectives on the program's potential and challenges. The principal instrument for secondary data collection was documentary analysis. This involved a systematic review of official institutional records, government regulations and decrees related to higher education program structuring, public data from the Higher Education Database (PDDIKTI), and the draft accreditation form (*Borang*) for the proposed master's program. Questionnaires were also utilized to gather quantitative data regarding student interest and demographic information.

Procedures

The research procedure was conducted systematically to ensure methodical data collection and analysis. Initially, a thorough review of secondary data was performed to establish the background and context, focusing on regulations and existing program data. Following this, primary data was collected through scheduled interviews with the selected subjects. All collected data, both qualitative and quantitative, were then organized and categorized according to the primary research questions, which focused on the program's unique distinction, graduate profile, faculty availability and qualifications, and the capacity of the management unit. The qualitative data from interviews and documents were analyzed thematically to identify key insights and patterns. Quantitative data, such as student enrollment figures and faculty counts, were analyzed descriptively to provide empirical support for the qualitative findings. Finally, the findings from all data sources were synthesized to form a coherent and evidence-based conclusion regarding the program's overall feasibility.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Secondary data analysis reveals a significant and sustained student demand for the field of Constitutional Law (*Siyasah Syar'iyah*) at the undergraduate level within the Faculty of Sharia at UIN Imam Bonjol Padang. The enrollment statistics for the past three academic years consistently position the Constitutional Law program as the second most popular major, surpassed only by the Islamic Family Law program. This high level of interest indicates a robust and continuous pipeline of students with a foundational education in the discipline who are potential candidates for advanced postgraduate studies. The consistency in enrollment demonstrates that student interest is not a fleeting trend but a stable feature of the academic landscape at the institution.

A comprehensive view of the student enrollment data is presented below, illustrating the program's strong standing within the faculty.

Table 1: Undergraduate Student Enrollment by Program at the Faculty of Sharia, UIN Imam Bonjol Padang (2021-2023)

Intake Year	Islamic Family Law	Constitutional Law (<i>Siyasah Syar'iyah</i>)	Sharia Economic Law	Comparative Mazhab
2023	262	207	134	15
2022	249	201	186	44
2021	201	167	160	52

At a national level, data from the Higher Education Database (PDDIKTI) highlights a stark structural imbalance within the field. As of 2024, there are eighty-four accredited undergraduate (S1) programs in Constitutional Law or *Siyasah Syar'iyah* across Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia. In stark contrast, only five accredited master's (S2) programs exist to serve the graduates of these numerous undergraduate departments. This national data underscores a critical shortage of postgraduate opportunities, creating a systemic bottleneck that limits academic progression for a large and growing cohort of students.

The enrollment figures from UIN Imam Bonjol Padang directly signal a substantial, localized demand for advanced study in Constitutional Law. The presence of a large body of undergraduate students specializing in this area provides a captive and well-prepared applicant pool for a new master's program. This sustained interest mitigates the risk of low enrollment and suggests that a graduate program would be both wanted and sustainable from a student recruitment perspective. The data provides a clear institutional justification for program expansion, as the university is currently not meeting the continuing education needs of one of its most popular student cohorts.

The national-level data explains the broader context and urgency of this institutional need. The extreme disparity between the number of undergraduate and graduate programs creates a highly competitive and restrictive environment for students seeking to pursue advanced degrees in *Siyasah Syar'iyah*. This systemic gap not only frustrates the academic ambitions of thousands of graduates annually but also hampers the development of high-level scholarship and expertise in a field crucial to national legal and political discourse. Establishing a new master's program at UIN Imam Bonjol Padang would

therefore not only serve a local need but also contribute to alleviating a pressing national academic deficit.

The study identified the availability of sufficient and highly qualified human resources within the Faculty of Sharia to staff the proposed master's program. The assessment confirmed the presence of six permanent faculty members holding doctoral degrees (S3) with specific expertise directly relevant to the core curriculum of Constitutional Law and *Fiqh Siyasah*. The areas of specialization among these faculty members include three experts in *Fiqh Siyasah*, two in general Constitutional Law, and one in *Ushul Fiqh* (Islamic Legal Theory), providing a comprehensive and well-rounded intellectual foundation for graduate-level instruction and thesis supervision.

The investigation into physical resources and infrastructure revealed that the Faculty of Sharia is housed in a modern facility at the new Campus III location in Sungai Bangek. The facility meets national standards and is equipped with ample academic spaces, including nineteen lecture halls, four dedicated rooms for faculty, a library, and various administrative offices. Furthermore, the campus possesses specialized academic facilities crucial for legal education, such as a moot court laboratory (*Labor Peradilan*), a legal research laboratory, and spaces for student organizations, providing a robust and supportive environment for graduate studies.

The availability of six doctorate-qualified lecturers strongly implies that the institution possesses the necessary academic capital to deliver a high-quality, research-led master's program. This core group of experts ensures that the program can be launched without immediate reliance on external or part-time faculty, guaranteeing stability and academic coherence from its inception. The diverse specializations within this group infer a capacity to offer a rich and varied curriculum, mentor students in a wide range of research topics, and maintain rigorous academic standards appropriate for postgraduate education.

The state of the physical infrastructure infers a high degree of institutional readiness to support the operational demands of a new graduate program. The existence of modern classrooms, a dedicated library, and specialized legal laboratories indicates that students will have access to a learning environment that is not only adequate but conducive to advanced scholarship and practical training. This strong infrastructural foundation suggests that the university has already made the necessary capital investments to support academic expansion, positioning the new program for a smooth and successful implementation without significant logistical or resource-related impediments.

A direct and synergistic relationship exists between the high student demand and the available faculty expertise. The large pool of enthusiastic undergraduate students provides the "demand side" of the equation, while the team of six doctoral experts represents the "supply side." This alignment is a critical success factor, as it ensures that the program would be populated by motivated students who are then taught and mentored by qualified scholars in their chosen field. This dynamic creates a positive feedback loop where strong teaching attracts good students, whose research, in turn, enhances the academic reputation of the faculty and the university.

The institutional readiness, demonstrated by both human and physical resources, is directly related to its potential role in addressing the national academic gap. The university's capacity to launch a new program is not an isolated institutional achievement but a strategic opportunity to contribute a solution to a national problem. By leveraging its qualified faculty and modern facilities to serve the high demand, UIN Imam Bonjol Padang can position itself as a key regional center for postgraduate education in *Siyasah Syar'iyah*. This relationship elevates the proposed program from a simple institutional expansion to a significant contribution to the broader ecosystem of Islamic higher education in Indonesia.

The study identified a unique contextual feature that provides a distinct academic niche for the proposed program: the socio-legal environment of West Sumatra. Data gathered from provincial government documents and regional literature describes a system of local governance deeply informed by the Minangkabau philosophy of '*Adat Basandi Syara', Syara' Basandi Kitabullah*' (Custom is founded on Islamic Law, Islamic Law is founded on the Qur'an). This principle is not merely a cultural slogan but is formally integrated into the provincial government's official vision and mission, which explicitly aims to enhance social life based on this philosophy.

This philosophical foundation is operationalized through a unique system of local administration across the nineteen regencies and cities of West Sumatra, which are further divided into 802 *nagari* (traditional village-level administrative units). The governance of these *nagari* often involves the application of local customary law (*adat*) in conjunction with national law and Islamic principles. This creates a living "laboratory" of legal pluralism, where the interplay between state law, religious law, and customary law is a daily reality of public administration and dispute resolution, offering a rich and complex subject for advanced legal research.

The socio-legal context of West Sumatra provides the basis for the program's unique academic distinction and novelty. Unlike other programs that may focus on national constitutional theory, the proposed program at UIN Imam Bonjol Padang can specialize in the empirical study of Islamic constitutional principles as they are applied and negotiated within a specific, culturally rich system of local governance. This focus allows the program to move beyond abstract theory and engage directly with the practical complexities of legal pluralism, offering students and researchers a unique and valuable area of specialization.

This specialization is academically significant because the field of *Fiqh Siyasah* explicitly recognizes '*urf* (local custom) as a secondary source of law. The Minangkabau legal tradition provides a perfect case study for exploring the theoretical and practical dimensions of '*urf* in modern Islamic political and legal thought. An academic program centered on this theme would be uniquely positioned to contribute new knowledge to the field by analyzing how custom and Sharia are harmonized in contemporary governance, a topic of considerable relevance in many parts of the Muslim world but rarely studied with such depth at the graduate level.

The cumulative data presents a compelling and coherent case for the feasibility and strategic importance of establishing the proposed master's program. The findings demonstrate a clear convergence of high student demand, sufficient institutional capacity in terms of both expert faculty and modern infrastructure, and a unique academic niche grounded in the rich socio-legal context of the region. Each stream of evidence independently points toward a positive conclusion, and when synthesized, they form an overwhelmingly strong justification for the program's establishment.

The results are interpreted to mean that launching the Master's Program in Constitutional Law (*Siyasah Syar'iyah*) is not only a viable and low-risk initiative for UIN Imam Bonjol Padang but also a strategically sound decision. The program is poised for success due to its ability to meet a clear market need while offering a distinct academic specialization that fills a significant gap in the national scholarly landscape. Its establishment would represent a significant contribution to the field, fostering specialized research on legal pluralism and local governance that is highly relevant to the ongoing development of Indonesia's legal and democratic framework.

The investigation yielded a clear and unambiguous conclusion: the establishment of a Master's (S2) Program in Constitutional Law (*Siyasah Syar'iyah*) at UIN Imam Bonjol Padang is not only feasible but also strategically imperative. The results are anchored in three core findings that collectively form a robust justification for the program's creation. First, a significant and sustained demand for advanced constitutional law studies was identified, evidenced by the consistently high enrollment in the corresponding undergraduate program. This existing student base provides a strong, internal pipeline of qualified applicants, ensuring the program's viability from its inception and mitigating risks associated with recruitment.

The second pillar of the results pertains to the institution's demonstrable capacity to support a high-quality graduate program. The study confirmed the availability of a cohort of six permanent, doctorate-qualified faculty members whose expertise aligns perfectly with the proposed curriculum, spanning *Fiqh Siyasah*, general Constitutional Law, and Islamic Legal Theory. This academic capital is complemented by modern, purpose-built physical infrastructure at the university's new campus, including ample lecture halls, a well-resourced library, and specialized legal laboratories. These human and physical resources indicate a high level of institutional readiness to undertake this academic expansion successfully.

The third and perhaps most crucial finding is the identification of a unique and compelling academic niche for the proposed program. The results highlight the distinctive socio-legal context of West Sumatra, where local governance is deeply intertwined with the Minangkabau philosophy of '*Adat Basandi Syara', Syara' Basandi Kitabullah*'. This living tradition of legal pluralism offers a rich, empirical basis for a specialized program focused on the application of Islamic constitutional principles within a specific system of local governance. This specialization provides a powerful academic distinction that sets the proposed program apart from all existing alternatives in the country.

In synthesis, the results present a convergence of opportunity, demand, and capacity. The high student interest constitutes the market imperative, the faculty and facilities represent the operational capability, and the unique regional focus provides the academic vision. The confluence of these factors leads to the overarching conclusion that all necessary preconditions for the successful launch and sustained operation of the master's program are firmly in place. The study, therefore, provides a comprehensive, evidence-based affirmation of the project's feasibility and strategic value.

The findings of this study position the proposed program in a distinct relationship with the existing landscape of postgraduate *Siyasah Syar'iyah* education in Indonesia. Current scholarship and curricula at the five established master's programs tend to gravitate towards a national-level, theoretical analysis of the relationship between Islam and the state. While essential, this dominant approach often overlooks the granular realities of legal pluralism and governance at the sub-national level. The proposed program at UIN Imam Bonjol, with its specified focus on West Sumatran local governance, directly challenges this generalized model by championing a context-specific, empirical approach to Islamic constitutional studies.

This proposed specialization aligns with broader global trends in legal academia that advocate for moving beyond abstract doctrinal analysis towards socio-legal and interdisciplinary research. The program's design implicitly critiques a monolithic understanding of Islamic law, instead promoting an inquiry into its lived realities and its dynamic interaction with local custom (*adat*). This contrasts with more traditional programs, both within Indonesia and in regions like the Middle East, where the study of *Siyasah Syar'iyah* often remains confined to classical textual exegesis. The UIN Imam Bonjol model, therefore, represents a progressive and modernizing step in the evolution of the discipline.

The uniqueness of this approach becomes even more apparent when compared to international programs. For instance, programs in Malaysia may focus on the dual-track legal system but often within the framework of a federal structure where Islamic law is formally institutionalized in a different manner than in Indonesia's decentralized system. The findings of this feasibility study advocate for a program that is uniquely Indonesian, designed to analyze the specific form of legal pluralism that has emerged from the nation's democratic transition and commitment to regional autonomy. It offers a model that is deeply embedded in its local context yet speaks to global scholarly conversations on law, religion, and governance.

Ultimately, the proposed program does not seek to replicate existing models but to complement and enrich them. It forges a new path by bridging the gap between classical *Fiqh Siyasah*, modern constitutional theory, and contemporary public administration. Research from other institutions has laid the theoretical groundwork; this program, as envisioned by the study's findings, would build upon that foundation by providing the crucial case studies and empirical data needed to test, refine, and contextualize those broader theories. It signifies a move from the "what" of Islamic constitutional law to the "how" it functions in a complex, pluralistic society.

The positive feasibility results are a clear sign of institutional maturity and strategic responsiveness at UIN Imam Bonjol Padang. The findings reflect an institution that is not only aware of the academic aspirations of its student body but is also prepared to make the necessary investments in faculty and infrastructure to meet those needs. This alignment of student demand with institutional capacity signifies a proactive approach to academic planning, moving beyond mere maintenance of existing programs to the strategic development of new ones that respond to both internal and external opportunities.

The findings also signify an important evolutionary step for the discipline of *Siyasah Syar'iyah* within the Indonesian academic context. The proposed program's focus on applied, localized governance marks a transition from a purely theoretical and historical mode of inquiry to one that is empirical, contemporary, and policy-relevant. This shift indicates that the field is maturing, developing the confidence and capacity to engage with the complex, real-world problems of governance. It reflects a growing recognition that the value of Islamic legal and political thought lies not only in its classical foundations but also in its ability to offer practical solutions to modern challenges.

Furthermore, the results signify the potential for a more synergistic relationship between Islamic higher education and regional development. The program's proposed specialization in West Sumatran governance is a testament to the idea that universities can and should serve as intellectual resources for their local communities. By fostering expertise in regional legal and administrative issues, the program can directly contribute to the quality of local policymaking and governance. This signifies a model of a "civic university" that is deeply embedded in its societal context and committed to its betterment.

The convergence of factors identified in the results—high demand, institutional readiness, and a unique academic niche—can be seen as a model for sustainable program development in other regions of Indonesia. Many parts of the archipelago possess unique legal traditions and governance structures that could serve as the basis for specialized academic programs. The success of this feasibility study signifies a replicable strategy for other Islamic universities seeking to develop distinctive, high-impact graduate programs that leverage their unique regional strengths and contribute to national academic diversity.

The most immediate implication of these findings is for the students themselves. The establishment of this program would create a vital and accessible pathway for academic and professional advancement for hundreds of graduates from UIN Imam Bonjol and other universities in the region. It provides them with an opportunity to pursue advanced degrees without having to relocate to distant and highly competitive programs. The program's unique specialization would equip graduates with a distinct skill set, preparing them for careers as legal drafters for regional regulations, expert consultants for local government, specialized researchers, and academics, thereby enhancing their employability and professional impact.

For the institution, the implications are profound. Launching this program would significantly elevate the academic profile and reputation of UIN Imam Bonjol Padang, positioning it as a national center of excellence in the study of Islamic law and local governance. It would attract high-caliber students and faculty, stimulate a vibrant research

culture, and lead to a greater number of scholarly publications. This enhancement of its academic standing would, in turn, increase its competitiveness for research funding and strengthen its overall contribution to the national higher education landscape.

The implications for the region of West Sumatra are equally significant. The program would function as an intellectual hub, generating critical research and analysis on local legal and administrative issues. The expertise cultivated within the program could be leveraged to support evidence-based policymaking, improve the quality of regional regulations (*Perda*), and offer innovative solutions to governance challenges. Graduates would form a new generation of local leaders and public servants with a deep and nuanced understanding of the region's unique socio-legal framework, ultimately contributing to more effective and culturally sensitive governance.

On a national and international level, the program carries the implication of enriching academic discourse. It would contribute novel empirical data and theoretical insights to the global study of legal pluralism, decentralization, and the role of religion in public life. The research emerging from this program would provide the international community with a valuable case study of how a Muslim-majority society successfully navigates the complex interplay between Islamic principles, state law, and local custom within a democratic framework. This would fill a critical gap in the literature and enhance the global understanding of contemporary Islam.

The results of this study are a direct product of broader transformations within Indonesian society and its higher education system. The era of democratic reform (*Reformasi*) and the subsequent implementation of significant decentralization policies created a fertile ground for the study of local governance. As administrative and legislative power shifted to the regions, a new demand emerged for experts who could navigate the complexities of local law-making. The high student interest in *Siyasah Syar'iyah* is a reflection of this societal shift, as young people see viable and meaningful career paths in public service at the regional level.

The specific cultural and political identity of West Sumatra provides the second key reason for these findings. The philosophy of '*Adat Basandi Syara', Syara' Basandi Kitabullah*' is not a historical relic but a vibrant and influential principle in contemporary public life. The provincial government's explicit commitment to this philosophy creates a unique demand for scholarship and expertise that can bridge the worlds of Islamic law and Minangkabau custom. The program's proposed niche is not an artificial academic construct but an organic response to the lived reality and political aspirations of the region.

The findings are also attributable to the strategic evolution of Islamic higher education in Indonesia. Over the past two decades, State Islamic Universities (UIN) have transformed from institutions focused primarily on religious sciences to comprehensive universities that integrate religious and general fields of study. This evolution has included a push toward developing high-quality postgraduate programs that are both academically rigorous and socially relevant. UIN Imam Bonjol's readiness to launch this program, evidenced by its qualified faculty and modern facilities, is a result of this long-term institutional development and strategic investment.

Finally, the decade-long absence of such a program at the university has created a significant pent-up demand. The discontinuation of the previous graduate track in 2013 created an academic vacuum that has become more pronounced with each passing year as the undergraduate program continued to produce hundreds of graduates. The overwhelmingly positive feasibility results are, in part, a measure of this accumulated need. The study essentially captures a moment of perfect alignment where a long-standing and unmet demand converges with newly developed institutional capacity, making the case for the program's establishment exceptionally strong.

Given the unequivocally positive findings of this feasibility study, the immediate next step is for the university administration to take formal action. The leadership of the Faculty of Sharia should compile the results of this study into a comprehensive official proposal for the establishment of the new master's program. This proposal, incorporating the identified academic vision, curriculum framework, faculty roster, and resource analysis, must be formally submitted to the University Senate and the Rector for approval, initiating the internal administrative process required to bring the program into existence.

Concurrently with the administrative process, a dedicated Curriculum Development Committee should be formed. This committee, composed of the six identified doctoral faculty members and other relevant stakeholders, must be tasked with designing the detailed curriculum, including course syllabi, learning outcomes, research guidelines, and thesis requirements. This process should be guided by the program's unique focus, ensuring that courses on local governance, legal pluralism, and the Minangkabau legal tradition are central to the academic experience, thereby translating the program's vision into a concrete and coherent educational plan.

Once internal approval is secured, a proactive and targeted recruitment strategy must be implemented. The primary target audience is the large pool of alumni and final-year students from the university's own undergraduate Constitutional Law program. The recruitment campaign should emphasize the program's unique specialization, the quality of the faculty, and the enhanced career prospects for its graduates. Information sessions, direct outreach to undergraduate classes, and engagement with alumni networks will be crucial to ensuring a strong and well-qualified inaugural cohort of students.

Finally, to solidify the program's unique identity and practical relevance from the outset, the faculty should begin forging formal research partnerships. Collaborations should be established with key external stakeholders, including the West Sumatra provincial government, regional legislative bodies, *nagari* administrative councils, and local civil society organizations. These partnerships will facilitate student internships, collaborative research projects, and guest lectures, ensuring that the program remains deeply connected to the real-world governance issues it aims to study and providing an invaluable bridge between academic theory and professional practice.

CONCLUSION

The most significant finding of this research is the definitive confirmation that the establishment of a Master's (S2) Program in Constitutional Law (*Siyasah Syar'iyah*) at

UIN Imam Bonjol Padang is not only highly feasible but also possesses a unique and powerful academic distinction. This conclusion rests on the convergence of three critical factors: a robust and sustained demand from a large undergraduate student body ; a clear institutional capacity demonstrated by the availability of six qualified doctoral-level faculty and modern, purpose-built facilities ; and a distinct academic niche centered on the study of West Sumatran local governance, deeply integrated with the Minangkabau philosophy of '*Adat Basandi Syara', Syara' Basandi Kitabullah*'. This unique specialization, which aligns with the provincial government's official vision, offers a compelling identity that differentiates the proposed program from all existing alternatives in the nation.

The primary contribution of this research is conceptual. It puts forward and validates a new, context-specific model for postgraduate education in *Siyasah Syar'iyah* within the Indonesian higher education landscape. This model marks a departure from the prevailing generalized and nation-centric curricula of existing programs by championing a "grounded" approach that integrates classical Islamic legal theory with the living law of local custom (*adat*) and the practical realities of contemporary public administration. The value of this conceptual blueprint lies in its potential to foster a new generation of scholarship that is both academically rigorous and directly relevant to the challenges of decentralized governance in a pluralistic society, providing a replicable framework for other institutions seeking to leverage their unique regional strengths.

This study has limitations that open avenues for future scholarly inquiry. As a feasibility study, its scope is predictive, assessing the potential for success rather than evaluating the actual performance and challenges of an operational program. Its findings are also specific to the institutional and socio-legal context of UIN Imam Bonjol Padang and West Sumatra, limiting their direct generalizability. Future research should, therefore, include longitudinal studies, once the program is established, to track graduate outcomes and assess its real-world impact on local governance. Further research could also apply this feasibility framework to other Indonesian regions with strong local traditions to build a comparative understanding of the dynamic interplay between *Siyasah Syar'iyah* and customary law across the archipelago.

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