



From Curriculum to Qanun: Translating Restorative Justice through Islamic Criminal Law Education in Aceh, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study examines how restorative justice is translated through Islamic criminal law education and circulated within the institutional context of enforcing Qanun Jinayat in Aceh, Indonesia. The study aims to explain the curricular and pedagogical mechanisms that negotiate restorative principles and how the resulting knowledge is contextualized beyond the classroom. Employing a qualitative and socio-legal approach, this research analyzes curriculum documents, Semester Learning Plans, and conducts in-depth interviews with four key informants at UIN Ar-Raniry using qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis. The results indicate that restorative justice is not institutionalized as a standalone course but is integrated through the interplay of Islamic criminal jurisprudence (*fiqh al-jināyah*), conflict resolution courses, Islamic criminal law, national criminal law, and experiential learning. This configuration establishes a distributed, implicit, and contextual hidden curriculum in which restorative and retributive rationalities coexist rather than replace one another. The study identified a pattern of recursive knowledge circulation: legal problems and practices enter the university through teaching and research, while academic knowledge re-engages with legal institutions through research, continuing education, and professional capacity building. This study presents negotiated epistemological translation, a distributed hidden curriculum, and the recursive circulation of knowledge as an integrated framework for understanding Islamic criminal law education as an epistemic site mediating between *fiqh*, state law, criminal code, and legal practice.

Keywords

Restorative Justice;
Islamic Criminal
Law; Hidden
Curriculum;
Circulation of
Knowledge; Aceh's
Qanun Jinayat

Introduction

The development of restorative justice in contemporary criminal law discourse has shifted case resolution from a retributive paradigm toward restitution, victim participation, offender accountability, and the restoration of social relations. This development has even extended beyond the resolution of minor criminal offenses and entered into debates regarding gender-based violence, complex crimes, and the reform of criminal justice institutions. However, issues concerning power imbalances, procedural safeguards, and risks in restorative processes remain subjects of debate.¹ In Islamic criminal law, a similar orientation can indeed be found in the

¹ Marta Lamanuzzi, "Restorative Justice in Cases of Gender-Based Violence against Women: Perspectives on Shame, Symbolic Interactionism and Agency," *The International Journal of Restorative Justice* 7, no. 2 (2024): 226–49; Joanna Shapland et al., "Mitigating Risk in Restorative Justice," *The International Journal of Restorative Justice* 7, no. 2 (2024): 250–73.



institutions of *qisās*, *diyāh*, forgiveness (*al-ʿafw*), reconciliation (*ṣulḥ*), and repentance (*tawbah*).² A number of studies have subsequently sought to reposition Islamic criminal law within the global discourse on *restorative justice* by demonstrating that the resolution of criminal offenses in Islam is not solely oriented toward punishment but also encompasses dimensions of reconciliation and restoration.³ Nevertheless, simply equating Islamic penal mechanisms with modern restorative justice raises conceptual issues because both stem from different normative structures and epistemological genealogies. Islamic criminal law constructs a relationship between the rights of God (*ḥuqūq Allāh*), the rights of human beings (*ḥuqūq al-ʿibād*), moral responsibility, and communal interests, whereas modern *restorative justice* has evolved from a critique of the conventional criminal justice system. Therefore, the academic question is no longer merely whether the principles of restorative justice exist in Islamic criminal law education, but how these principles are interpreted, taught, and translated into the practice of Islamic criminal law in contemporary era.

This issue becomes increasingly important when considered within the context of legal education, as universities not only transmit legal norms but also shape how future legal scholars and practitioners understand justice, punishment, victims, offenders, and conflict resolution through curriculum design, teaching, research, and academic experiences. International attention to restorative justice education reflects this trend. A special issue of the *Journal of Legal Education* in 2025, for example, highlights growing efforts to integrate restorative justice into law school curricula, criminal law instruction, clinical programs, and community-based learning.⁴ Smith-Cunnien and Parilla demonstrate that restorative principles can be directly integrated into conventional criminal law instruction without necessarily having to be structured as a separate course.⁵ Several other studies show that the interconnection between teaching, research, and community engagement can create a circulation of knowledge between the theory and practice of restorative justice.⁶ Curricular issues become more complex in Islamic higher education because students must reconcile classical *fiqh*, positive law, socio-legal realities, and changing conceptions of justice. Recent studies on Islamic religious universities in Indonesia also show that the integration of disciplines remains an epistemological challenge when Islamic studies interact with

² Susan C Hascall, “Restorative Justice in Islam: Should Qisas Be Considered A Form of Restorative Justice?,” *Berkeley Journal of Middle Eastern & Islamic Law* 4, no. 1 (2011): 35–78; Absar Aftab Absar, “Restorative Justice in Islam with Special Reference to the Concept of Diyya,” *Journal of Victimology and Victim Justice* 3, no. 1 (2020): 38–56.

³ Mutaz M. Qafisheh, “Restorative Justice in the Islamic Penal Law: A Contribution to the Global System,” *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences* 7, no. 1 (2012): 487–507; Andrew Fallon, “Restoration as the Spirit of Islamic Justice,” *Contemporary Justice Review: Issues in Criminal, Social, and Restorative Justice* 23, no. 4 (2020): 1–14; Achmad Musyahid, Lomba Sultan, and Abdul Syatar, “Umar Bin Khattab’s Philosophical Ijtihad Thinking on The Restorative Justice Approach In Islamic Criminal Law,” *Al-Risalah Jurnal Ilmu Syariah Dan Hukum* 25, no. 2 (2024): 224–44.

⁴ Lindsey Pointer, Aparna Polavarapu, and Alanna Ojibway, “Restorative Justice in Legal Education,” *Journal of Legal Education* 73, no. 4 (2025): 899–905.

⁵ Susan L Smith-Cunnien and Peter F Parilla, “Restorative Justice in the Criminal Justice Curriculum,” *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* 12, no. 2 (2001): 385–403.

⁶ Francisco Ibáñez-Carrasco and Pilar Riaño-Alcalá, “Organizing Community-Based Research Knowledge between Universities and Communities: Lessons Learned,” *Community Development Journal* 46, no. 1 (2011): 72–88; Brenda E Morrison and Dorothy Vaandering, “Restorative Justice: Pedagogy, Praxis, and Discipline,” *Journal of School Violence* 11, no. 2 (2012): 138–55; Rowan Sweeney, “Restorative Pedagogy in the University Criminology Classroom: Learning about Restorative Justice with Restorative Practices and Values,” *Laws* 11, no. 4 (2022): 58; Thalia González, Heather Sattler, and Annalise J Buth, “New Directions in Whole-school Restorative Justice Implementation,” *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (2019): 207–20.



modern disciplines and local realities.⁷ Thus, the issue is not merely whether the term restorative justice appears in the curriculum, but whether the curriculum is capable of providing an epistemological bridge that enables Islamic criminal law to engage in a critical dialogue with contemporary restorative justice paradigms and the living reality of the law.

Nevertheless, the emerging literature still operates within several relatively separate academic discourses. The first group examines restorative justice normatively within Islamic criminal law through *qisās*, *diyah*, *ṣulḥ*, forgiveness, and the moral foundations of punishment in Islam. This literature successfully demonstrates the compatibility between certain institutions of Islamic criminal law and restorative values, but its primary focus remains on doctrinal reconstruction and has not yet sufficiently explained how this knowledge is transmitted through educational institutions.⁸ The second group operates within the discourse of legal education, emphasizing pedagogical innovation, criminal law curriculum reform, experiential learning, and the development of future legal professionals with a restorative perspective. However, these debates have largely emerged within the context of law schools and the secular criminal justice system in the West.⁹ A third group addresses curriculum transformation and epistemological integration in Islamic higher education, including Islamic universities' responses to state policies, technological developments, and local socio-religious contexts.¹⁰ These three discourses have not yet been extensively brought together. Consequently, there remains an unexplored academic space regarding how Islamic Criminal Law education programs translate restorative principles from the body of *fiqh al-jināyah* and contemporary criminal law discourse into the curriculum, teaching, academic research, and the practice of a living legal system. This gap is significant because a curriculum should not be understood merely as a collection of courses, but rather as an institutional mechanism for the production and transmission of knowledge that enables a legal concept to move from normative discourse toward social and regulatory practice.

Aceh provides a strategic arena for examining this issue because it is one of the jurisdictions that simultaneously positions Islamic criminal law as both a subject of higher education and a component of positive law implemented through the Aceh's Qanun Jinayat (AQJ). The enactment of Aceh Qanun No. 6 of 2014 on Jinayat Law has also influenced the development of legal education in Aceh, including the strengthening of course content on *fiqh al-jināyah* and *qānūn al-jināyāt*, studies of Islamic sharia in Aceh, and the practices of the Sharia Courts.¹¹ In the context

⁷ Anhar Anhar et al., "Paradigms of Scientific Integration in Sumatra's State Islamic Universities," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 14, no. 1 (2026): 1–26.

⁸ Qafisheh, "Restorative Justice in the Islamic Penal Law: A Contribution to the Global System"; Junaedi Junaedi et al., "Tafsir Tarbawi of Restorative Justice in Qur'anic Jinayat Verses; Nahdatul Ulama Pesantren Perspective," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2026): 52–69; Joko Budi Darmawan et al., "Incorporating Islah Principles into Restorative Justice: Bridging Contemporary Legal Practice and Islamic Values," *MILRev: Metro Islamic Law Review* 4, no. 1 (2025): 269–94; Mohammed Abu-Nimer and Ilham Nasser, "Forgiveness in The A Rab and Islamic Contexts: Between Theology and Practice," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 41, no. 3 (2013): 474–94; Farrukh B Hakeem, "Alternative Perspectives on Penalty under Sharia: A Review Essay," *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice* 27, no. 1 (2003): 85–105.

⁹ Pointer, Polavarapu, and Ojibway, "Restorative Justice in Legal Education"; Darmawan et al., "Incorporating Islah Principles into Restorative Justice: Bridging Contemporary Legal Practice and Islamic Values."

¹⁰ Muqowim Muqowim and Zulkipli Lessy, "Revisiting Islamic Studies: Cementing Bases for Integrating Science and Religion in Islamic Higher Educational Institutions," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 18, no. 1 (2021): 1–20; Slamet Firdaus et al., "Transforming Islamic Higher Education: Integrating Islamic Values & Digital Technology at UIN Siber Cirebon," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 13, no. 3 (2025): 2337–62.

¹¹ Jailani Jailani, "Dampak Penerapan Hukum Jinayat Terhadap Pengembangan Kurikulum Fakultas Syari'ah Dan Hukum Di Aceh," *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 19, no. 2 (2019): 294–307.

of UIN Ar-Raniry, this position is particularly relevant because the Islamic Criminal Law Program examines the philosophical, substantive, procedural, and socio-legal dimensions of *jināyah*, while its educational process takes place within a legal environment that formally institutionalizes Sharia norms.

Previous studies have demonstrated the influence of Sharia implementation on educational policy and curriculum development in Aceh, but have not adequately explained how restorative justice is integrated pedagogically and how the knowledge formed through this process is translated into research and the enforcement of the *qānūn al-jināyāt*.¹² Based on this, this study poses two questions: (1) Through what curricular and pedagogical mechanisms are restorative principles translated into Islamic Criminal Law education at UIN Ar-Raniry? (2) How does the restorative knowledge produced through learning and research circulate and become contextualized within academic relations regarding the enforcement of the Islamic criminal law in Aceh? This study aims to explain the movement of knowledge from the educational curriculum to the enforcement of criminal code and argues that Islamic criminal law education is not merely an arena of knowledge intermediation where the principles of restorative justice are interpreted, contextualized, and circulated within the relationship between Islamic legal discourse and the institutional environment of *qānūn al-jināyāt* implementation.

Literature Review

Studies on restorative justice in Islamic criminal law have emerged from efforts to reinterpret the institutions of *fiqh al-jināyah*, which are not solely oriented toward punishment but also provide mechanisms for the restoration of victims, offenders, and the social relationships affected by criminal acts. Studies of Islamic criminal law have extensively explored the restorative potential within the framework of *qisās* through *diyah*, *al-ʿafw*, and *ṣulḥ*, as well as the points of convergence between these mechanisms and *restorative justice*.¹³ In this framework, granting victims or their families the right to forgive, receive compensation, or reach a settlement indicates that the authority to resolve cases is not entirely monopolized by the state or law enforcement agencies. More recent studies have even expanded this approach by viewing *diyah* and reconciliation as a potential foundation for the development of an Indonesian criminal law system that is more restoration-oriented.¹⁴

Nevertheless, the literature remains dominated by a normative-comparative approach that seeks to demonstrate the compatibility between the principles of Islamic criminal law and restorative

¹² Salma Hayati Mukhlisah and Salma Hayati, "Internalisasi Mata Kuliah Studi Syariat Islam Di Aceh Dalam Kurikulum UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh," *An-Nuha: Jurnal Kajian Islam, Pendidikan, Budaya Dan Sosial* 6, no. 1 (2019): 37–55; Mujiburrahman Mujiburrahman et al., "The State Intervention in the Islamic Education in Aceh: Threats or Opportunities," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 12, no. 2 (2024): 539–64.

¹³ Qafisheh, "Restorative Justice in the Islamic Penal Law: A Contribution to the Global System"; Hascall, "Restorative Justice in Islam: Should Qisas Be Considered A Form of Restorative Justice?"; Absar, "Restorative Justice in Islam with Special Reference to the Concept of Diyya."

¹⁴ Abu Hapsin and Nazar Nurdin, "Diat and Peace Money in the Crime of Culpable Homicide," *Al-Ahkam* 32, no. 2 (2022): 189–210; Hadi Purnomo, Widhi Handoko, and Murad Altwaikat, "Reframing Medical Malpractice Resolution: Restorative Justice between Indonesian Criminal Law and Iṣlāḥ in Contemporary Islamic Law," *MILRev: Metro Islamic Law Review* 5, no. 1 (2026): 299–327; Nur Rochaeti et al., "A Restorative Justice System in Indonesia: A Close View from the Indigenous Peoples' Practices," *Sriwijaya Law Review* 7, no. 1 (2023): 87–104; Mohd Din Ismawansa, Alvi Syahrin, Mohammad Ekaputra, "Restorative Justice in Indonesian Criminal Law: Integrating Pancasila Values in Police Discretion Practices," *International Journal of Innovative Research and Scientific Studies* 8, no. 2 (2025): 1978–85.



justice. Consequently, restorative justice is more often positioned as a substantive characteristic of *jināyah* norms rather than as legal knowledge that is produced, taught, negotiated, and recontextualized through educational institutions. A shift in focus from “whether Islamic law is restorative” to “how restorative knowledge in Islamic law is formed and transmitted” opens up an analytical space that has not yet been extensively explored in contemporary studies of Islamic criminal law.

In a separate development, studies on legal education are increasingly viewing restorative justice as a curricular and pedagogical issue. A special issue of the *Journal of Legal Education* in 2025 demonstrates that the integration of restorative justice into legal education is not limited to the creation of a single specialized course, but can occur through the teaching of substantive criminal law, alternative dispute resolution, legal clinics, research centers, community-based learning, and students’ direct experiences with conflict resolution practices.¹⁵ Bakhshay, for example, develops the idea that restorative principles can be incorporated into the teaching of black-letter criminal law, while Eisenberg and Guerin demonstrate that the relationship between learning, research, and community practice enables law schools to build a circulation of knowledge that connects theory with practice.¹⁶ These developments intersect with the debate regarding the hidden curriculum in legal education.

Recent studies show that values, professional orientations, and ways of understanding the law are often shaped not only through the formal curriculum but also through pedagogical practices, institutional interactions, clinical experiences, and normative messages conveyed implicitly.¹⁷ In this context, the presence of a legal value cannot be measured solely by course titles or formal curriculum documents. It must also be traced through the ways in which faculty members teach cases, the literature used, learning models, practical activities, field experiences, and the research orientation of students. This legal education literature provides an important framework for understanding that restorative justice can function as an implicit curriculum; however, discussions on this topic have so far primarily developed within Western law school environments and have not yet been widely applied to Islamic legal education.

This limitation becomes even more apparent when placed within the context of Islamic legal education, which faces epistemological challenges more complex than simply integrating new material into the curriculum. Islamic legal education must reconcile religious normative sources, the legacy of *fiqh*, the methodology of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, state positive law, developments in modern legal science, and ever-changing social realities. Recent studies on Sharia education indicate that the dominance of a normative-doctrinal approach can limit the curriculum’s ability to address contemporary social issues if it is not accompanied by contextual interpretive frameworks and engagement with modern legal scholarship and practice.¹⁸ At the same time, studies on the

¹⁵ Pointer, Polavarapu, and Ojibway, “Restorative Justice in Legal Education.”

¹⁶ Shirin Bakhshay, “Incorporating Restorative Justice into Black-Letter Criminal Law,” *Journal of Legal Education* 73, no. 4 (2025): 987–1000; Deborah Thompson Eisenberg and Toby Treem Guerin, “‘Will the Circle Be Unbroken’: The Role of Law School Centers in Advancing Restorative Justice Theory, Practice, and Education,” *Journal of Legal Education* 73, no. 4 (2025): 1019–36.

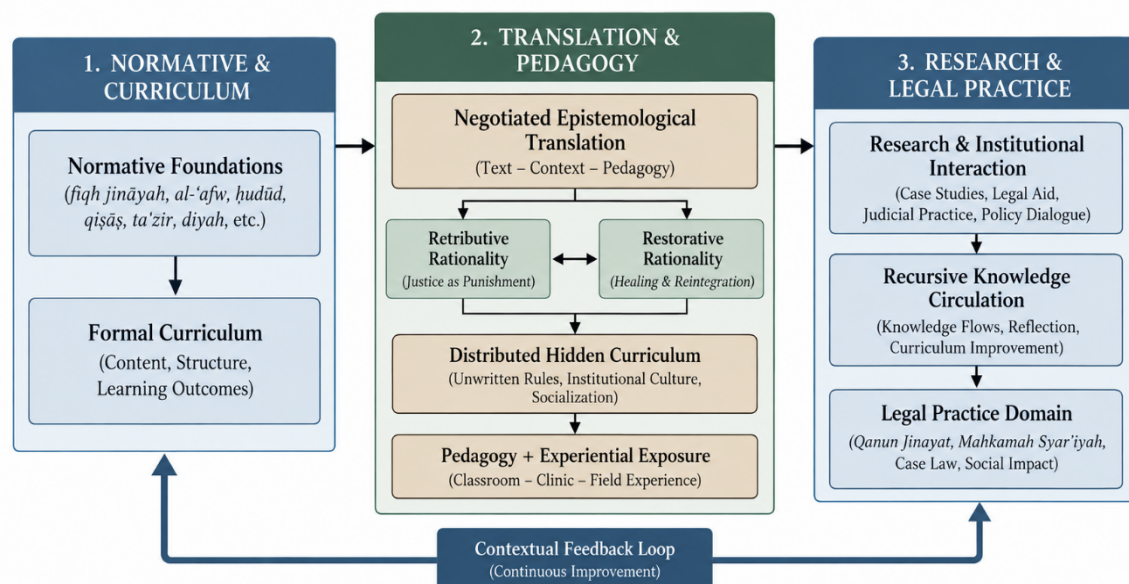
¹⁷ Cliff Zimmerman, “The Hidden Curriculum and the Discounting of Students’ Identity: The Sources of Disaffection and the Challenge in Formation of Professional Identity,” *Journal of Law Teaching and Learning* 2 (2025): 15; Eduardo R C Capulong, Andrew King-Ries, and Monte Mills, “Democratic Lawyering: Upending the ‘Hidden Curriculum’ to Prepare New Lawyers for a New World,” *JL Teaching & Learning* 2 (2025): 191.

¹⁸ Dinata Firmamansyah, “Rekonstruksi Epistemologi Hukum Islam: Analisis Pemikiran Fazlur Rahman Sebagai Fondasi Kurikulum Pendidikan Syariah Modern,” *Lentera Pendidikan: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Dan Keguruan Islam* 1, no. 4 (2025): 184–97.

integration of disciplines in Indonesian Islamic universities reveal that the relationship between religious studies and modern disciplines does not proceed linearly but rather through distinct epistemological configurations within each institution.¹⁹ Studies on the hidden curriculum in Islamic legal education also indicate that the formation of students' identities, character, and values occurs through educational dimensions that are not always manifested in the formal curriculum structure.²⁰

These findings are significant for the study of Islamic criminal law because *fiqh al-jināyah* is not taught in a sterile normative space; it interacts with national criminal law, developments in criminal policy, human rights, judicial practices, and local legal systems. Thus, the integration of restorative justice into Islamic criminal law education should be understood not merely as the addition of course material, but as an epistemological translation process—that is, a mechanism linking Islamic normative traditions with contemporary legal knowledge and the institutional realities in which the law is applied.

Figure 1. Pedagogical translation and knowledge circulation in Islamic criminal law education.



Source: Authors' conceptualization based on the analytical framework developed in this study.

A synthesis of these three strands of literature reveals an unfilled research gap. Studies on Islamic criminal law have extensively explained the normative foundations and compatibility of restorative justice with *qisās*, *diyah*, *ṣulḥ*, and forgiveness; studies on legal education have demonstrated how *restorative justice* can be integrated through formal curricula, pedagogy, legal clinics, and *the hidden curriculum*; while studies in Islamic higher education have identified the importance of epistemological integration between Islamic traditions, modern disciplines, and social contexts. However, these three strands of research are still rarely brought together to explain how Islamic criminal law education functions as a mechanism of translation between the norms of *fiqh al-jināyah*, the *restorative justice* paradigm, and living legal practice. This gap becomes even more significant in the context of Aceh because UIN Ar-Raniry not only teaches Islamic criminal

¹⁹ Anhar et al., "Paradigms of Scientific Integration in Sumatra's State Islamic Universities."

²⁰ Yahya Obaid et al., "Revealing Identity to Form Student Character: Application of the Hidden Curriculum in Islamic Legal Education," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 8, no. 3 (2024): 1782–99.

law in an academic setting but also operates within a jurisdiction that enforces the *qānūn al-jināyāt* and maintains direct ties with the Sharia Court and Sharia enforcement institutions.

This research manuscript itself demonstrates that restorative principles are not offered as a standalone course but are integrated through courses such as Conflict Resolution, Conflict Management, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Textual Studies and Legal Issues in Islamic Criminal Law, as well as through student practicums and research experiences. On this basis, the novelty of this study lies in the use of the concepts of “restorative justice as a hidden curriculum” and “knowledge translation” to explain how Islamic criminal law education serves as an intermediary space that channels knowledge from the curriculum toward research, legal institutions, and the enforcement of the *qānūn al-jināyāt*. From this perspective, this study does not merely evaluate the curriculum’s content but offers an analysis of the epistemic function of Islamic legal education in bridging doctrine, pedagogy, and local legal practice.

Figure 1 illustrates the analytical framework used in this study to conceptualize the process of translating restorative justice in Islamic criminal law education. Rather than assuming a linear movement from Islamic legal doctrine to legal practice, this framework identifies three interconnected domains. First, the normative foundations in *fiqh jināyah* are organized through the formal curriculum. Second, this normative material undergoes an epistemological translation negotiated through pedagogical encounters between restorative and retributive rationalities, which in turn shapes a hidden curriculum distributed through classroom learning and institutional experiences. Third, the knowledge generated in this educational process circulates through research and institutional interactions with the realm of *qānūn al-jināyāt* and broader legal practice. This contextual feedback loop indicates that the process is recursive, not unidirectional: legal issues and institutional experiences can re-enter the academic sphere as material for learning, research, and curricular reflection. Thus, this framework positions Islamic legal education as an epistemic intermediary arena that connects *fiqh*, pedagogy, and legal practice, without assuming a direct causal influence of the curriculum on the enforcement of the Islamic criminal law.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative design using a socio-legal and case study approach to analyze how the principles of restorative justice are implemented through the Islamic criminal law education within the context of legal pluralism in Aceh, Indonesia.²¹ UIN Ar-Raniry was selected because its Islamic Criminal Law program is situated in an environment where Islamic criminal jurisprudence (*fiqh al-jināyah*), the Aceh’s Qanun Jinayat (AQJ), national law, customary law, and the practices of the Sharia Court interact directly. The research focus is not on evaluating curriculum administration but on tracing how restorative knowledge is shaped, negotiated, and contextualized through learning and academic interactions. The units of analysis include the curriculum structure, relevant Semester Learning Plans (RPS), pedagogical practices as reconstructed through interviews, and forms of academic relationships in the context of the application of the AQJ.

Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with four key informants who were purposively selected based on their involvement, institutional relationships, and knowledge regarding the teaching of Islamic Criminal Law and restorative justice. The informants consisted

²¹ Ida Keumala Jeumpa et al., “The Qualitative Socio-legal Case Study Using a Restorative Justice Framework to Explore Child Sexual Abuse Case Settlements in Aceh, Indonesia,” *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 2026.

of two members of the leadership of the Faculty of Sharia and Law (KBA and AB), one head of the Islamic Criminal Law Program (DS), and one Islamic Criminal Law lecturer with a focus on related issues (AJS). Purposive sampling was used because the research required informants with direct experience and knowledge of the phenomenon under study.²² Interviews were conducted in 2023 after obtaining informed consent from each informant. Interview data were supplemented with document analysis, including curriculum structures, course syllabi, learning materials, and academic documents relevant to *fiqh al-jināyah*, the AQJ, conflict resolution, and the practices of the Sharia Court.

The analytical framework employs the concepts of the hidden curriculum and knowledge translation. The hidden curriculum is used to identify restorative values that are not always explicitly stated in the formal course descriptions but are present through course materials, case selection, learning strategies, judicial practices, and interactions with practitioners.²³ Indicators include *ṣulh*, *al-ʿafw*, *diyāh*, reconciliation, restoration, stakeholder participation, and conflict resolution. Knowledge translation is used to trace the movement of knowledge from *fiqh al-jināyah* and the discourse on restorative justice toward the curriculum, teaching, and the practical context of the AQJ.²⁴ This framework does not equate *qisās* with restorative justice, but rather identifies restorative potential in procedural options such as forgiveness, reconciliation, and compensation.

Document data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis, while interview data were analyzed through thematic analysis.²⁵ Coding was organized into five categories: (1) the normative basis of restorative justice in *fiqh al-jināyah*; (2) pedagogical strategies for reconciling restorative and retributive orientations; (3) the contextualization of learning with the AQJ, national law, and customary law; (4) forms of knowledge circulation between academic spaces and legal practice; and (5) academic interactions with Sharia enforcement institutions. Documents and interviews were read comparatively to identify patterns of alignment, tension, or contradiction. This study did not conduct a quantitative mapping of theses or academic research; therefore, it does not make claims regarding the dominance, prevalence, or significance of any particular research theme.

The validity of the findings is strengthened through triangulation among interviews, curriculum documents, course syllabi (RPS), and verifiable institutional sources.²⁶ Claims regarding the hidden curriculum are not established merely because restorative justice is not a standalone course, but must be demonstrated through the interconnections between informants' statements, the substance of instruction, case selections, and pedagogical experiences. Similarly, knowledge

²² Lawrence A Palinkas et al., "Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research," *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research* 42, no. 5 (2015): 533–44.

²³ Zimmerman, "The Hidden Curriculum and the Discounting of Students' Identity: The Sources of Disaffection and the Challenge in Formation of Professional Identity"; Capulong, King-Ries, and Mills, "Democratic Lawyering: Upending the "Hidden Curriculum" to Prepare New Lawyers for a New World."

²⁴ Hamid Golhasany and Blane Harvey, "Navigating Barriers and Pathways in Capacity Development for Knowledge Mobilization: Perspectives from McGill University's Faculty of Education," in *Frontiers in Education*, vol. 10 (Frontiers Media SA, 2025), 1423832; Martine Chamberland et al., "Harnessing a Knowledge Translation Framework to Implement an Undergraduate Medical Education Intervention: A Longitudinal Study," *Perspectives on Medical Education* 11, no. 6 (2022): 333–40.

²⁵ Virginia Braun, Victoria Clarke, and Nikki Hayfield, "'A Starting Point for Your Journey, Not a Map': Nikki Hayfield in Conversation with Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke about Thematic Analysis," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 19, no. 2 (2022): 424–45; Udo Kuckartz and Stefan Radiker, *Qualitative Content Analysis: Methods, Practice and Software* (SAGE Publications Ltd, 2023).

²⁶ Jeumpa et al., "The Qualitative Socio-legal Case Study Using a Restorative Justice Framework to Explore Child Sexual Abuse Case Settlements in Aceh, Indonesia."



translation is not understood as a direct causal relationship between the university and changes to the AQJ, but rather as a process of knowledge circulation that can be traced through learning and institutional interactions. Informants' testimonies regarding practices outside the university are treated as their perceptions or experiences, not institutional facts, unless supported by primary sources or independent documentation.

Results

Negotiating Fiqh al-Jināyah, Criminal Code, and Restorative Justice

The curriculum of the Islamic Criminal Law Program at UIN Ar-Raniry demonstrates that education in *jināyah* is not built upon a single legal source. The course material spans Islamic criminal jurisprudence (*fiqh al-jināyah*), national criminal law, the AQJ, and conflict resolution mechanisms that have evolved within society. This structure is evident in courses covering the substantive and procedural dimensions of Islamic criminal law, as well as courses focused on conflict resolution. Curriculum data also indicates that the Islamic Sharia Studies program in Aceh serves as a space to connect Islamic legal doctrine with the institutionalization of sharia within a local context. With this configuration, the AQJ does not stand as a separate subject of local law, but rather serves as one of the contexts used to bridge normative knowledge of *jināyah* with the law as applied in Aceh. However, this structure does not result in a specific course explicitly titled "Restorative Justice." An examination of the curriculum structure actually reveals that material related to restorative resolution is spread across several courses, particularly Conflict Resolution, Conflict Management, Alternative Dispute Resolution, and the Study of Texts and Issues in Islamic Criminal Law. In the study of *fiqh al-jināyah*, restorative elements also emerge through discussions of forgiveness, reconciliation, and resolutions involving the parties involved. These findings indicate a discrepancy between formal curricular visibility and substantive pedagogical presence: restorative justice has limited formal visibility within the course structure, yet its elements can be found in the content and conflict-resolution orientation scattered throughout the curriculum.

This contextualization also reveals pedagogical tensions. Students study *hudūd*, *qisās*, and *ta'zīr* as punitive frameworks in *fiqh al-jināyah*, while in conflict-resolution-oriented courses they are introduced to deliberation, reconciliation, and alternative dispute resolution. At the same time, the AQJ presents the context of Aceh's positive law, which includes, among other things, flogging (*ʿuqūbah*), fines, and imprisonment. Thus, restorative justice does not exist to replace the punitive paradigm but coexists with a legal structure that also maintains a punitive character. Research data, therefore, does not support equating *qisās* or the entire AQJ with restorative justice. What is evident, rather, is the coexistence of retributive and restorative knowledge within the Islamic legal educational environment. Interviews with informants reveal that the relationship between these frameworks is primarily established through contextualization in the learning process.²⁷ Instructors not only introduce the normative provisions of *fiqh al-jināyah* but also connect them to national criminal law, the AQJ, and evolving legal issues in Aceh. Judicial practice and interactions with legal practitioners provide additional opportunities for students to observe how the doctrines they study interact with more complex legal configurations. However, the research data do not indicate

²⁷ Interview with KBA, Dean of the Faculty of Sharia and Law, UIN Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh, 2023; DS, Head of the Islamic Criminal Law Study Program, UIN Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh, 2023; AJS, Lecturer in Islamic Criminal Law, UIN Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh, 2023.

that this process has been formalized as a standalone restorative justice pedagogical model. The main findings, in fact, point to curricular negotiation: restorative principles are present through the intersection of several courses and learning experiences with a penal system that simultaneously incorporates both restorative and retributive orientations.

Table 1. The position of restorative justice within the Islamic criminal law curriculum structure.

Curricular Area	Foundation/Main Content	Identified Restorative Dimensions	Forms of Negotiation
Criminal jurisprudence	<i>Hudūd, Qiṣāṣ, Diyah, Ta'zīr</i>	<i>Diyah</i> , forgiveness, reconciliation	Restoration coexists with the penal system
Islamic criminal procedure law	Case resolution procedures	The positions of the parties and case resolution	Procedural doctrine versus legal practice
Conflict resolution/management	Conflicts and resolution mechanisms	Reconciliation and deliberation	Restorative values incorporated through conflict resolution
Alternative dispute resolution	Non-litigation resolution	Negotiation, mediation, and settlement	Alternatives to adjudicative resolution
Study of texts and issues in HPI	Contemporary HPI issues	Contextualization of restorative concepts	<i>Fiqh</i> applied to contemporary issues
A study of Islamic Sharia in Aceh	Sharia in the Acehnese context	The relationship between norms and social practices	<i>Fiqh</i> meets Qanun and local realities
Judicial practice	Institutional experiences	Observations on Case Resolution	Theory versus practice in the Sharia Court

Source: Curriculum structure of the Islamic Criminal Law Study Program: Course Outline (RPS) for Conflict Resolution, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Islamic Criminal Law, and Qanun Jinayat Studies; and Interview Notes, 2023.

Table 1 shows that the role of *restorative justice* in the Islamic Criminal Law curriculum cannot be confined to a single course but is shaped through the intersection of several domains of legal knowledge. *Fiqh al-jināyah* provides both the normative basis for criminal punishment and a framework for *diyah*, forgiveness, and reconciliation; the courses on conflict resolution and alternative dispute resolution introduce non-adjudicative resolution mechanisms; while legal code studies and courtroom experiences expose students to the institutionalization of Islamic criminal law in Aceh. This configuration demonstrates that the curriculum does not eliminate one paradigm in favor of another. The key finding, in fact, lies in “curricular negotiation”—that is, the coexistence and intersection of restorative and retributive rationalities within the Islamic Criminal Law educational framework, even though the degree and form of this negotiation vary across different learning contexts.

Restorative Justice as a Hidden Curriculum

Research findings indicate that *restorative justice* does not hold a formal position as a standalone course in the Islamic Criminal Law curriculum at UIN Ar-Raniry. An examination of the curriculum structure, however, reveals that material overlapping with restorative resolution is distributed across courses such as Conflict Resolution, Conflict Management, Alternative Dispute Resolution, and the Study of Texts and Issues in Islamic Criminal Law. This pattern differs from integration through a *stand-alone course*: restorative knowledge is dispersed across several learning

spaces with distinct functions. Therefore, the absence of the term “Restorative Justice” does not in itself indicate the absence of restorative knowledge. This structure highlights the gap between the formal curriculum (which organizes courses based on academic disciplines) and the pedagogical content, where conflict resolution principles can be introduced without explicitly labeling them as “restorative justice.”²⁸

This pattern becomes clearer when courses are examined based on their substantive focus. Conflict Resolution and Conflict Management provide a learning space for conflict management, while Alternative Dispute Resolution introduces forms of resolution outside adjudicative mechanisms. The Study of Islamic Criminal Law Texts and Issues opens a space to bring together the doctrine of *jināyah* with contemporary legal issues. In a broader context, Islamic Criminal Law and Islamic Criminal Procedure provide the normative framework of *jināyah*, while Studies in Qanun Jinayat and Criminal Procedure connect it to the AQJ and national criminal law. The curriculum structure does indeed place Victimology, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Conflict Management, Conflict Resolution, and Penology as part of courses oriented toward the implementation of the law.

The dimension of the hidden curriculum becomes more apparent when documentary data is analyzed in conjunction with interviews. According to informants involved in teaching Islamic Criminal Law, learning does not stop at mastering doctrine but is directed toward connecting *jināyah* material with national criminal law and issues related to the resolution of contemporary criminal offenses.²⁹ The research manuscript also notes the use of case studies on the resolution of contemporary criminal offenses and their connection to courses focused on conflict resolution. In terms of practical experience, learning is expanded through judicial practicums, internships at legal aid institutions, fieldwork/academic visits to the Sharia Court, and the involvement of practitioners as guest lecturers. Thus, the restorative orientation is not only evident in documents but also through how learning is contextualized by academic actors.

The interview findings also indicate that this process does not take place within a single normative framework. Faculty informants described differences in orientation between approaches that emphasize punishment and those that emphasize a more comprehensive resolution of conflict.³⁰ Consequently, students are simultaneously exposed to the doctrines of *hudūd*, *qisās*, and *ta‘zīr*; the Qanun Jinayat along with its *‘uqūbah* framework; and instruction on reconciliation and alternative dispute resolution. Curriculum documents also show that the courses “Qanun Jinayat Studies” and “Criminal Procedure” utilize the Qanun Jinayat, the Qanun Acara Jinayat, and the Criminal Code (KUHP) within the same learning space. This finding indicates pedagogical coexistence, rather than a linear internalization of restorative justice.

Based on the triangulation of these documents and interviews, the study identifies restorative justice as a hidden curriculum at three levels: substantive dispersion, when restorative concepts are dispersed across several courses without specific terminology; pedagogical contextualization, where criminal law material is interpreted alongside contemporary legal issues and conflict resolution; and experiential exposure, where students interact with legal institutions and practitioners through academic activities. This claim does not imply that all of these courses systematically teach restorative justice. Rather, its integration is distributed, implicit, and context-

²⁸ Interview with KBA and AJS.

²⁹ Interview with AB.

³⁰ Interview with AJS.

dependent. Its “hidden” nature, therefore, is not merely due to the absence of a course titled “Restorative Justice,” but because the restorative orientation permeates courses, pedagogical practices, and institutional experiences without being codified as a standalone curriculum component.

Table 2. Empirical configuration of restorative justice as a hidden curriculum.

Analytical Layer	Empirical Evidence	Position of Restorative Justice	Evidentiary Boundary
Formal curriculum	There are no specific courses on restorative justice	Not explicitly mentioned in the nomenclature	Absence of nomenclature ≠ absence of substance
Substantive dispersion	Conflict Resolution, Conflict Management, APS, Textual Studies, and HPI Issues	Scattered across various courses	Not all material is automatically restorative in nature
Normative contextualization	<i>Fiqh al-jināyah</i> , Qanun Jinayat, the Criminal Code (KUHP), and conflict resolution are studied within the same curricular framework	Brings together several legal rationalities	Does not demonstrate harmonization between restorative and retributive approaches
Pedagogical contextualization	Case studies of contemporary legal issues	Restorative justice emerges as a perspective on conflict resolution	Data is insufficient to generalize all classroom practices
Experiential exposure	Practicums, internships, Sharia courts, and practitioners	Students are exposed to institutional practices	<i>Exposure</i> does not automatically mean internalization of restorative justice
Analytical findings	Cross-learning space patterns	Distributed hidden curriculum	Implicit and <i>context-dependent</i>

Source: Processed from curriculum documents, outline courses, and interview notes, 2023.

Table 2 shows that the integration of restorative justice into Islamic Criminal Law education does not occur through a single, explicit curricular pathway, but rather through several interconnected layers. At the formal level, restorative justice does not appear as the title of a standalone course, but its substance is embedded in courses related to conflict resolution and the study of Islamic criminal law. At the pedagogical level, this distribution is expanded through the contextualization of contemporary legal issues, while at the experiential level, students engage with legal practice through fieldwork, internships, and interactions with practitioners. This pattern indicates that the hidden curriculum operates in a distributed rather than centralized manner: restorative values are not codified in a single course, but circulate through a combination of course content, learning processes, and institutional experiences. Thus, restorative justice in the Islamic Criminal Law Study Program at UIN Ar-Raniry can be identified as a distributed, implicit, and context-dependent hidden curriculum rather than an explicitly institutionalized curricular component, although the research data are insufficient to conclude that this orientation is uniformly internalized by all students.



Knowledge Circulation through Research and Institutional Interaction

The circulation of knowledge regarding Islamic Criminal Law does not end with the classroom learning process. Research data indicate that issues related to the AQJ and the practices of the Sharia Court are also the subject of academic research by students and faculty. Identified themes include the offenses of *khalwat* and *khamar*, customary law-based criminal resolution, analysis of Sharia Court rulings, *ṣulḥ*, restitution, case resolution mechanisms, and the protection of child victims of sexual violence. These findings are not intended to suggest that these themes dominate research at UIN Ar-Raniry, as this study did not construct a quantitative corpus of academic works. Rather, these works are treated as illustrative evidence that the legal issues studied in criminal law education are also reexamined through research on legal practices in Aceh.³¹

This research reveals a trajectory of knowledge that differs from that of curricular learning. While the curriculum exposes students to *fiqh al-jināyah*, national criminal law, the AQJ, and conflict resolution mechanisms as domains of knowledge, research allows these issues to be contextualized through actual cases, rulings, and case resolution practices. Thus, research functions as a site of contextualization, not as direct evidence of the success of restorative justice education. This distinction is important because the existence of theses on *ṣulḥ*, restitution, or case resolution does not in and of itself prove that students acquired these perspectives from a specific course. The available data only allows this study to demonstrate a thematic continuity between issues present in the academic sphere and those arising in the context of legal code enforcement.

The circulation of knowledge also occurs through the relationship between the university and law enforcement actors. Informants from the Islamic Criminal Law Program explained that UIN Ar-Raniry faculty members are involved in capacity-building activities for Sharia Court judges through technical guidance, competency certification, and other academic activities, with faculty members serving as academic mentors.³² Interview data also indicate that some Sharia Court judges are pursuing doctoral studies at UIN Ar-Raniry. This pattern reveals a two-way relationship: judicial practitioners enter the university environment through advanced education, while academics enter the space for practitioners' capacity building through academic activities. The university thus serves not only as a site for the production of knowledge but also as a space where academic knowledge and institutional experience in law enforcement intersect.³³

A similar relationship was identified between academics and the Sharia bureaucracy. An informant from the faculty leadership stated that there is a connection between UIN Ar-Raniry academics and the Islamic Sharia Agency within the context of Sharia implementation in Aceh.³⁴ However, the interview data is insufficient to conclude that the involvement of academics directly determines policy or alters the substance of the AQJ. Therefore, in this study, this relationship is interpreted as "institutional interaction," not "institutional influence." This distinction allows for an analysis of the university's role without transforming institutional correlations into causal claims. What the data demonstrate is the existence of channels of interaction (through graduate education, capacity building, and academic engagement) that connect the university to the institutional environment governing the implementation of Islamic criminal law in Aceh.

From these two pathways (research and institutional interaction), a pattern of knowledge

³¹ Interview with AB and AJS.

³² Interview with DS.

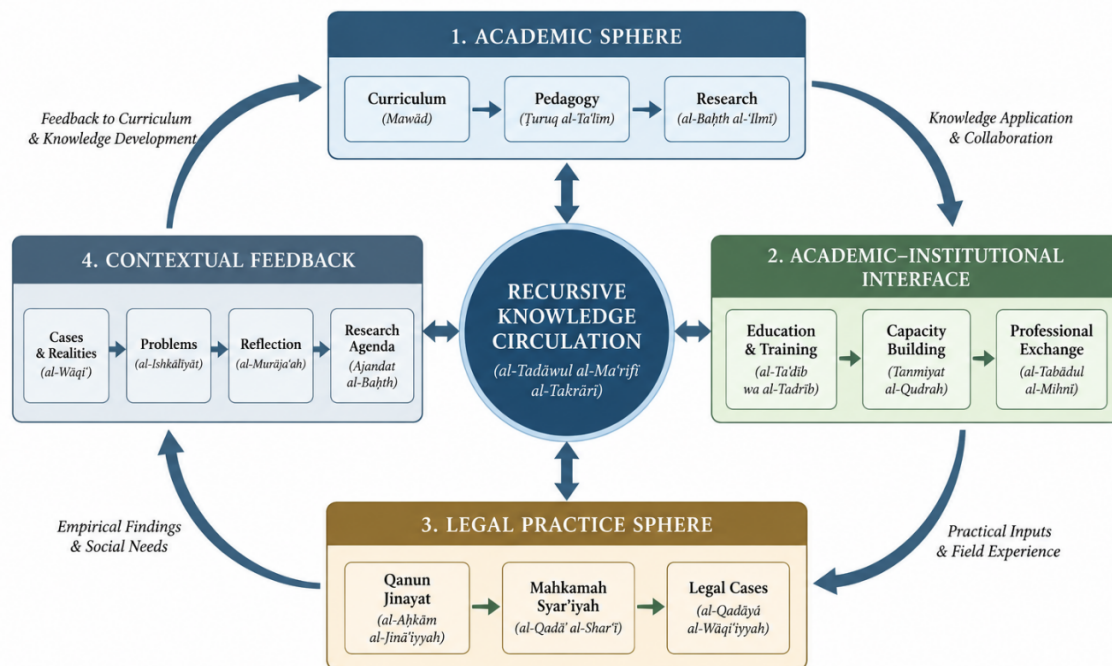
³³ Interview with DS.

³⁴ Interview with KBA.



circulation emerges that is more complex than a linear transfer of knowledge from the campus to the legal code. Knowledge moves through several spaces: the doctrines of *fiqh al-jināyah* enter the curriculum; the curriculum is contextualized through teaching; issues regarding the AQJ and court rulings re-enter the university as research subjects; and academics and practitioners meet through education and capacity building. In this pattern, the legal code is not merely the “result” of the educational process, but also a source of issues that are brought back into the academic sphere. Therefore, the relationship between the curriculum and legal code is more accurately understood as a recursive process rather than a linear one: academic knowledge moves toward practice, while practical experience in turn becomes material for learning, research, and academic reflection.

Figure 2. Knowledge circulation between Islamic Criminal Law education and the AQJ context.



Source: Authors' conceptualization based on empirical findings.

Figure 2 illustrates that the circulation of knowledge between Islamic Criminal Law education and the AQJ context does not occur linearly but rather through four interconnected domains. Knowledge shaped through the curriculum, pedagogy, and research moves toward the space of academic-institutional interaction, where academics and practitioners meet through education, capacity building, and professional exchange. At the same time, the AQJ, the practices of the Sharia Courts, and legal cases generate issues and empirical experiences that can re-enter the academic sphere as material for reflection, research, and the contextualization of learning. Thus, recursive knowledge circulation does not indicate a causal relationship between the university and changes to the AQJ, but rather a process of knowledge exchange that enables legal practice to serve as both a source of academic knowledge production and a space for contextualizing the knowledge produced by the university.

Table 3. Pathways of knowledge circulation between Islamic legal education and the AQJ Context.

Circulation Pathway	Empirical Evidence	Knowledge Function	Evidentiary Boundary
Curriculum → Research	Qanun, Sharia Court rulings, <i>ṣulḥ</i> , restitution, and adat as research themes	<i>Contextualization</i>	Does not prove that all themes originate from the restorative justice learning
Legal practice → Research	Cases and rulings become the subject of academic study	<i>Knowledge re-entry</i>	Research is not synonymous with changes in legal practice
University → Legal actors	Technical training, capacity building, academic mentoring	<i>Academic–professional exchange</i>	Does not demonstrate a change in judicial decisions
Legal actors → University	Judges of the Sharia Court pursue advanced education	<i>Circulation from practice to academia</i>	Does not directly demonstrate a change in the curriculum
Academia ↔ Sharia institutions	Interaction between academics and Sharia institutions	<i>Institutional interaction</i>	Cannot be equated with a direct influence on Qanun
Analytical finding	Cross-class, cross-research, and cross-institutional knowledge circulation	<i>Recursive knowledge circulation</i>	Circulatory relationships, not causal-linear

Source: Processed from curriculum documents, research materials, and interview notes, 2023.

Table 3 shows that the relationship between Islamic Criminal Law education and the AQJ does not follow a one-way transfer model from the university to legal institutions. Research brings issues regarding the AQJ and the practices of the Sharia Courts back into the academic sphere, while continuing education and capacity-building activities create a space for interaction between academics and practitioners. Thus, the process identified is more accurately described as recursive knowledge circulation: the university produces and contextualizes knowledge, but at the same time re-engages with issues, experiences, and institutional practices as objects of academic reflection. These findings support the use of the term “from curriculum to legal code” as a pathway for knowledge translation, but do not support the interpretation that the UIN Ar-Raniry curriculum directly caused changes in the formulation or enforcement of the AQJ.

Discussion

The first finding shifts the issue of restorative justice in Islamic criminal law from a debate over doctrinal compatibility to a matter of pedagogical translation. Previous literature has identified *diyah*, *ṣulḥ*, and forgiveness as mechanisms that provide restorative space within Islamic criminal law. Absar, for example, highlights the restorative nature of *diyah*; however, the existence of such mechanisms does not imply that the entire structure of Islamic criminal punishment is synonymous with restorative justice.³⁵ This distinction

³⁵ Absar, “Restorative Justice in Islam with Special Reference to the Concept of Diyya.”



is important because *qisās* remains rooted in the construction of accountability for offenses, whereas a restorative orientation emerges when the legal structure offers victims or their families the option to grant forgiveness, accept compensation, or reach a settlement. Thus, the coexistence of restorative and retributive knowledge found in the curriculum of UIN Ar-Raniry does not constitute a pedagogical inconsistency. Rather, it demonstrates an “epistemological translation”—a process in which the doctrines of *fiqh al-jināyah* are not mechanically transposed into modern categories of restorative justice, but are interpreted in conjunction with the national criminal code and conflict resolution mechanisms to elucidate the plurality of rationalities of justice operating within a single legal framework.

This finding expands upon recent developments in restorative justice education. Pointer, Polavarapu, and Ojibway demonstrate that restorative justice is beginning to occupy an important position in legal education, while Bakhshay shows that restorative principles can be incorporated even into the teaching of *black-letter criminal law*, meaning that restorative justice education need not depend on the existence of a specialized course.³⁶ The case of UIN Ar-Raniry reveals a more complex configuration because students are not only bringing restorative justice into contact with state criminal law but also with *fiqh al-jināyah*, the AQJ, national law, and conflict resolution within Acehnese society. Therefore, the curricular negotiation identified in this study does not indicate a victory of the restorative paradigm over the retributive paradigm. Rather, Islamic Criminal Law education serves as a space where multiple rationalities of justice coexist. The theoretical implication is that the integration of restorative justice into Islamic legal education is better understood as a process of negotiated epistemological translation rather than merely the addition of restorative justice material to an existing curriculum.

The second finding deepens this argument through the concept of the hidden curriculum. Legal education literature indicates that the hidden curriculum operates through values, assumptions, relationships, and institutional experiences that are not always explicitly stated in the formal curriculum. Capulong, King-Ries, and Mills even caution that values allowed to operate implicitly in legal education can shape professional identities without ever being stated as formal instructional objectives.³⁷ In Islamic legal education, Obaid et al. found that the hidden curriculum operates through faculty-student interactions, Islamic legal practice, academic culture, and extracurricular activities.³⁸ Findings from UIN Ar-Raniry expand upon this understanding of how various orientations toward justice are presented and negotiated in Islamic legal education. However, this study also demonstrates that the distributed curriculum and the hidden curriculum must be distinguished. The presence of conflict resolution material in several courses constitutes a substantive dispersion that can still be formally identified; it becomes a hidden curricular process when that orientation operates through pedagogical contextualization and institutional experiences without being codified as a standalone restorative justice framework. Therefore, restorative justice in this case functions as a distributed, implicit, and context-dependent hidden curriculum, rather than merely “restorative justice courses that are not explicitly labeled as such.”

This distinction simultaneously highlights both the limitations and the potential of the identified integration model. Its distributed nature allows restorative values to permeate various learning spaces without requiring a radical restructuring of the curriculum; however, its implicit nature also

³⁶ Pointer, Polavarapu, and Ojibway, “Restorative Justice in Legal Education”; Bakhshay, “Incorporating Restorative Justice into Black-Letter Criminal Law.”

³⁷ Capulong, King-Ries, and Mills, “Democratic Lawyering: Upending the “Hidden Curriculum” to Prepare New Lawyers for a New World.”

³⁸ Obaid et al., “Revealing Identity to Form Student Character: Application of the Hidden Curriculum in Islamic Legal Education.”



means that the depth and consistency of learning depend on how instructors contextualize the material. Recent developments in legal education, however, point to the growing importance of making such a pedagogical orientation more intentional; a special issue of the *Journal of Legal Education* from 2025 highlights various strategies for incorporating restorative justice into courses, learning communities, research centers, and legal education experiences.³⁹ In the context of UIN Ar-Raniry, the implication is not that restorative justice should be made a separate required course, but rather that the relationship between *al-ʿafw*, *ṣulḥ*, *diyah*, victim restitution, the AQJ, and conflict resolution mechanisms needs to be made more pedagogically visible. This step is crucial so that students are not merely confronted with two discourses of justice (restorative and retributive) without the analytical tools to understand their relationships and tensions.

The third finding extends the analysis beyond the classroom. The literature on knowledge mobilization views the relationship between universities and knowledge users not merely as a one-way dissemination of research findings, but as a process requiring connections, exchange, and the capacity to link academic knowledge with needs outside the university. Golhasany and Harvey demonstrate that knowledge mobilization in higher education occurs through interactions among researchers, students, partners, and the institutional environment where knowledge is applied.⁴⁰ The pattern in Aceh exhibits an even more circulatory character. Legal code and rulings of the Sharia Court enter the university as teaching materials and research subjects; academics interact with practitioners through capacity-building activities; while judicial practitioners enter the university through continuing education. Therefore, the relationship from the curriculum to the legal code should not be interpreted as a linear knowledge transfer. The research findings propose the concept of recursive knowledge circulation: legal practice provides problems for the production of academic knowledge, while academic knowledge re-enters the space of interaction with legal actors and institutions.

This circulatory model simultaneously defines the limits of this study's contribution. This article does not prove that the UIN Ar-Raniry curriculum caused changes in the AQJ, altered judicial rulings, or resulted in a uniform internalization of restorative justice among students. What can be demonstrated is the existence of three interrelated processes: negotiated epistemological translation, when various legal rationalities are brought together in education; a distributed hidden curriculum, when restorative orientations permeate course materials, pedagogy, and institutional experiences; and recursive knowledge circulation, when legal knowledge and problems circulate between the university, research, practitioners, and the context of AQJ implementation. These three processes shift Islamic Criminal Law education from a space for the transmission of doctrine to an arena of epistemic intermediation between *fiqh*, state law, legal code, and social practices. At the same time, the focus on four informants from a single program, the lack of a quantitative corpus of student research, and the absence of measurements of changes in student attitudes limit the generalizability of the findings. Further research, therefore, needs to test this model through classroom observations, longitudinal analysis of course syllabi, interviews with students and judges, and comparisons with Islamic Criminal Law programs in other regions.

³⁹ Pointer, Polavarapu, and Ojibway, "Restorative Justice in Legal Education."

⁴⁰ Golhasany and Harvey, "Navigating Barriers and Pathways in Capacity Development for Knowledge Mobilization: Perspectives from McGill University's Faculty of Education."

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the integration of restorative justice into Islamic Criminal Law education at UIN Ar-Raniry does not occur through the institutionalization of a single specialized course, but rather through a process of translation dispersed across the curriculum structure, pedagogical practices, and institutional experiences. *Fiqh al-jināyah*, AQJ, national criminal law, and conflict resolution mechanisms are brought together in the same learning space, so that students are confronted with both restorative and retributive rationalities simultaneously. In this configuration, restorative justice functions as a distributed, implicit, and context-dependent hidden curriculum, rather than as a paradigm that replaces the structure of Islamic criminal justice. Outside the classroom, student and faculty research, as well as academic interactions with legal practitioners and institutions, reveal a circulation of knowledge between the university and the context of AQJ implementation. This relationship is recursive rather than linear: legal practice becomes the object of academic reflection, while academic knowledge, in turn, interacts with the institutional environment through research, continuing education, and capacity building.

Theoretically, this study proposes three interrelated concepts (negotiated epistemological translation, distributed hidden curriculum, and recursive knowledge circulation) to explain the position of Islamic legal education as an intermediary epistemic arena between *fiqh* doctrine, state law, the AQJ, and social practices. This model avoids the assumption that normative compatibility between certain principles in *fiqh al-jināyah* and restorative justice automatically results in pedagogical integration or changes in legal practice. Practically, these findings highlight the need to make the connections between *al-ʿafw*, *ṣulḥ*, *diyah*, victim restitution, and the rationality of punishment in the AQJ more explicit as objects of pedagogical reflection. However, this study is limited to a single academic program and four key informants, and it does not measure changes in students' orientations or the causal impact of education on the enforcement of the AQJ. Future research should test this model through classroom observations, interviews with students and practitioners, longitudinal analysis of course syllabi, and comparative studies of Islamic criminal law education at other institutions.

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