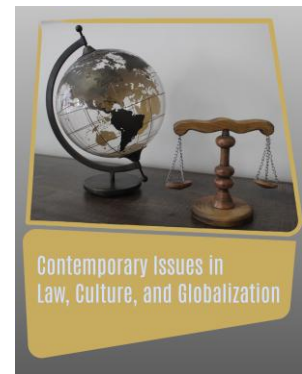




Legal Pluralism in Globalized Societies: Competing Normative Orders and Social Regulation

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore how individuals and institutional actors in Tehran understand, negotiate, and experience competing normative orders in everyday social regulation within a globalized urban context. This qualitative study was conducted using semi-structured interviews with 24 participants in Tehran, including legal practitioners, community mediators, civil society actors, academics, and citizens with direct experience of normative conflict. Participants were selected through purposive sampling followed by theoretical sampling until theoretical saturation was reached. Interviews focused on experiences of state law, religious norms, customary expectations, family authority, professional rules, and transnational rights discourses. All interviews were audio-recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed through thematic analysis. NVivo software was used for data organization, coding, category development, and retrieval of representative quotations. Trustworthiness was enhanced through member checking, peer review of codes, reflexive memo-writing, and maintaining an audit trail. The analysis generated five main categories: overlapping normative authorities, strategic forum selection, negotiated legitimacy, informal mediation and hybrid regulation, and rights-based tensions in plural normative settings. Participants described legal pluralism not merely as coexistence of multiple rules but as an active process of interpretation, negotiation, and selective compliance. State law was viewed as formally authoritative, but religious, familial, professional, and community-based norms often shaped practical decision-making. Globalization intensified these interactions by introducing international rights language, digital legal awareness, and comparative expectations of justice. Legal pluralism in globalized societies operates as a dynamic field of social regulation in which individuals move between formal and informal normative orders. The findings suggest that effective legal governance requires institutional sensitivity to plural normative realities while safeguarding equality, procedural fairness, and rights protection.

Keywords: legal pluralism; globalization; normative orders; social regulation; customary law; qualitative research; Tehran

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Introduction

Legal pluralism has become one of the most influential concepts for understanding law in contemporary societies, particularly where state law exists alongside religious norms, customary practices, family expectations, professional codes, transnational standards, and informal community mechanisms. Classical legal theory often treats state law as the central and

superior form of normative ordering, assuming that valid law is produced, authorized, and enforced by state institutions. However, socio-legal scholarship has long challenged this assumption by showing that social life is regulated through multiple overlapping normative orders, many of which operate outside, alongside, or in tension with official legal systems. Legal pluralism therefore provides a conceptual lens for examining how people actually experience law, not only as written statutes and court decisions but also as lived rules, social expectations, moral obligations, and institutional practices.

The foundational literature on legal pluralism argues that the state is not the only source of legal or quasi-legal ordering. Griffiths (1986) famously distinguished legal pluralism from legal centralism, defining legal centralism as the ideology that law is and should be the law of the state, uniform for all persons, exclusive of other normative orders, and administered through state institutions. From this perspective, legal pluralism reveals the empirical reality that more than one normative order may govern the same social field. Merry (1988) similarly emphasized that legal pluralism emerged from anthropology and socio-legal research to describe situations in which multiple normative systems coexist within a single social arena. Moore's (1973) concept of the "semi-autonomous social field" remains especially important because it explains how social groups can generate internal rules, exercise coercive pressure, and maintain regulatory capacity while still being embedded in wider legal and political structures. These theoretical foundations indicate that law should not be understood only through formal legal texts but also through the social settings in which rules are produced, interpreted, resisted, and applied.

In globalized societies, legal pluralism becomes even more complex. Globalization has intensified the movement of people, goods, capital, information, legal ideas, and rights discourses across national borders. As a result, individuals and institutions increasingly encounter overlapping legal and normative frameworks, including domestic law, international human rights norms, religious principles, customary obligations, market-based standards, platform rules, and transnational professional codes. Twining (2000) argued that globalization challenges traditional jurisprudence because law can no longer be adequately understood within a purely state-centered or territorially bounded framework. Similarly, Berman (2007, 2012) developed the concept of global legal pluralism to explain how contemporary actors are often regulated by multiple legal and quasi-legal regimes simultaneously. Michaels (2009) noted that legal globalization and legal pluralism intersect around the problem of irreducible normative plurality, particularly where no single superior authority can resolve all conflicts among competing orders.

The relevance of legal pluralism is not limited to colonial or postcolonial societies, although colonial governance historically produced many visible forms of plural legal ordering. Tamanaha (2008) argued that legal pluralism has been a recurring historical condition, from medieval Europe to colonial societies and contemporary global legal arrangements. This broader historical view is important because it prevents legal pluralism from being treated as a feature of "traditional" or "non-modern" societies only. Instead, plural normative ordering is present in highly modern urban settings, including global cities where state law interacts with religious identities, digital platforms, migration networks, international institutions, corporate regulations, and informal community practices. Legal pluralism therefore describes both local and global phenomena: it can be found in family disputes, workplace conflicts, neighborhood mediation, commercial transactions, online interactions, migration processes, and rights-based activism.

A central issue in the study of legal pluralism is the relationship between formal legality and social legitimacy. State law may possess formal authority, but this does not necessarily mean that people experience it as legitimate, accessible, morally persuasive, or practically useful. Conversely, informal norms may lack official recognition but still shape behavior because they are embedded in kinship relations, religious belief, economic dependence, professional reputation, or community belonging. Cover (1983) argued that law exists within a normative universe shaped by narratives, meanings, and communities of interpretation. This insight is crucial for understanding why individuals may comply with non-state norms even when formal

law provides different rights or procedures. Normative orders become effective not only because they are backed by sanctions but also because they are connected to identity, honor, trust, morality, fear, obligation, and social recognition.

The interaction between legal pluralism and social regulation is particularly significant in urban societies experiencing rapid globalization. Cities such as Tehran are characterized by dense institutional complexity, diverse social groups, expanding digital communication, educational mobility, professional specialization, and exposure to global rights discourses. In such contexts, people may rely on state law for documentation, litigation, contracts, criminal justice, and administrative procedures, while also turning to family elders, religious authorities, professional associations, neighborhood networks, or informal mediators for dispute resolution and moral guidance. These overlapping sources of regulation may complement each other, but they may also produce conflict. For example, formal legal rights may conflict with family expectations; religious interpretations may differ from civil procedures; professional ethics may challenge organizational hierarchy; and international rights language may create new expectations that are not fully reflected in domestic legal practice.

The concept of competing normative orders is useful because it captures the fact that pluralism is not always harmonious. Legal pluralism can provide flexibility, cultural recognition, and accessible dispute resolution, but it can also reproduce inequality, uncertainty, and selective protection. Von Benda-Beckmann (2002) warned that debates about legal pluralism often become polarized between those who celebrate plurality and those who fear conceptual confusion or legal fragmentation. A balanced approach recognizes that plural normative orders can empower marginalized groups in some contexts while constraining them in others. Informal mechanisms may resolve disputes quickly and preserve relationships, yet they may also pressure vulnerable individuals to accept unequal settlements. Religious or customary norms may provide moral meaning and social cohesion, but they may also conflict with principles of gender equality, individual autonomy, or procedural fairness. Therefore, legal pluralism must be studied empirically rather than assumed to be either beneficial or harmful.

Socio-legal research on legal consciousness also helps explain how individuals navigate normative plurality. People do not simply obey or disobey law; they interpret law through everyday experiences, social relationships, institutional encounters, and moral judgments. Ewick and Silbey (1998) showed that legal consciousness involves the ways people understand legality as part of ordinary life, including when they stand before law, act with law, or resist law. In plural normative contexts, legal consciousness becomes even more layered because individuals may compare state law with religious expectations, family norms, customary practices, and global ideas of justice. This comparison can produce strategic behavior, such as choosing one forum over another, invoking state law when it offers protection, relying on informal mediation when formal institutions seem slow or costly, or using rights language to challenge community pressure.

Despite the importance of legal pluralism, more qualitative research is needed on how people in globalized urban societies experience competing normative orders in everyday life. Much theoretical literature has explained legal pluralism conceptually, but empirical research can show how pluralism is lived, negotiated, and emotionally experienced by social actors. In particular, qualitative interviews can reveal how individuals interpret the legitimacy of different normative orders, how they choose among formal and informal mechanisms, and how they manage conflicts between rights, culture, religion, family, and institutional authority. This is especially relevant in cities where globalization does not eliminate local normative structures but instead reshapes their meaning and interaction.

Accordingly, the present study explores legal pluralism in Tehran as a globalized urban setting in which multiple normative orders shape social regulation. The study focuses on how participants understand the coexistence of state law, religious norms, customary expectations, family authority, professional rules, and transnational rights discourses. It asks how individuals and institutional actors experience normative conflict, how they select among competing forums, and how they evaluate the legitimacy and fairness of plural regulatory arrangements. By using semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis, this study

contributes to socio-legal scholarship by showing that legal pluralism is not merely a structural condition but an everyday practice of negotiation. The central argument is that legal pluralism in globalized societies operates through dynamic processes of interpretation, selective compliance, strategic forum use, and hybrid regulation, all of which shape the practical meaning of law and justice.

Methods and Materials

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore how competing normative orders are experienced and negotiated in a globalized urban society. A qualitative approach was appropriate because the study sought to understand meanings, interpretations, and lived experiences rather than to measure predetermined variables. The study was conducted in Tehran, Iran, as a major urban setting in which state law, religious norms, family expectations, professional standards, community practices, and global rights discourses interact in everyday social regulation.

The participants consisted of 24 individuals selected through purposive sampling and then theoretical sampling. The sample included legal practitioners, civil society actors, community mediators, academics, and citizens who had direct experience with situations involving overlapping normative orders. Inclusion criteria were: being at least 18 years old, residing or working in Tehran, having experience or knowledge of legal or normative conflict, and willingness to participate in a semi-structured interview. Exclusion criteria included unwillingness to be audio-recorded or inability to provide informed consent. Sampling continued until theoretical saturation was reached, meaning that additional interviews no longer produced substantially new codes, categories, or interpretive insights. Saturation was assessed during ongoing analysis, consistent with qualitative research literature emphasizing both code saturation and meaning saturation (Guest et al., 2006; Hennink et al., 2017).

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The interview guide included open-ended questions about participants' experiences with state law, religious norms, customary expectations, family authority, informal mediation, professional regulations, digital legal awareness, and global rights language. Example questions included: "Can you describe a situation in which different rules or expectations shaped the same dispute?", "How do people decide whether to use formal legal institutions or informal mediation?", "What makes a normative order legitimate in the eyes of ordinary people?", and "How has globalization or access to international information changed people's expectations of justice?"

The interviews lasted between 45 and 75 minutes. They were conducted in Persian and later translated into English for reporting purposes. All interviews were audio-recorded with participants' consent and transcribed verbatim. Field notes were written after each interview to record contextual observations, emerging analytic ideas, and reflexive reflections. Participants were assigned codes such as P1, P2, and P3 to protect confidentiality. Ethical principles of voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, and the right to withdraw were observed throughout the research process.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following the general phases proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006): familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. NVivo software was used to organize transcripts, manage codes, retrieve coded segments, compare emerging categories, and maintain analytic memos. The analysis began with repeated reading of transcripts to identify meaningful units related to normative conflict, social regulation, legitimacy, forum selection, rights, and informal authority. Initial codes were then grouped into broader categories based on conceptual similarity and recurrence across interviews.

To enhance trustworthiness, several strategies were used. Credibility was strengthened through member checking with selected participants and peer review of coding decisions. Dependability was supported through an audit trail documenting sampling decisions, interview procedures, coding revisions, and theme development. Confirmability was enhanced through reflexive memo-writing, which helped identify possible researcher assumptions about law, culture, and globalization.

Transferability was supported by providing thick descriptions of the research context, participant characteristics, and analytic categories, following qualitative trustworthiness principles proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Findings

A total of 24 participants from Tehran took part in the study. Of these, 13 participants were men and 11 were women. Regarding age, 5 participants were between 25 and 34 years old, 8 were between 35 and 44 years old, 7 were between 45 and 54 years old, and 4 were 55 years old or above. In terms of educational level, 4 participants held a bachelor's degree, 11 held a master's degree, and 9 held a doctoral or professional legal degree. Regarding occupational background, 6 participants were legal practitioners, 5 were civil society or NGO actors, 4 were community or religious mediators, 3 were university academics, and 6 were citizens who had direct experience with legal or normative conflict in family, workplace, neighborhood, or administrative settings. The diversity of participants allowed the study to capture legal pluralism from multiple perspectives, including formal legal, informal community, professional, and everyday social viewpoints.

The first main category concerned the coexistence of multiple normative authorities within the same social situation. Participants repeatedly explained that disputes were rarely shaped by state law alone. Instead, legal problems were influenced by civil law, religious interpretation, family expectations, workplace hierarchy, neighborhood reputation, and moral judgments. State law was described as formally powerful but not always socially decisive. For example, one participant stated, "The court may say one thing, but the family council says another, and sometimes the person follows the family because life continues there, not in the court" (P7). Another participant explained that people often experience law as "one voice among several voices," particularly in family, inheritance, marriage, and business disputes (P14). This category shows that legal pluralism is not an abstract institutional arrangement but an everyday reality in which individuals must interpret different sources of obligation. Participants emphasized that the authority of a norm depends not only on its legal validity but also on its social consequences. A rule backed by family pressure, religious belief, or professional reputation could become more behaviorally effective than formal law. Therefore, social regulation occurred through the interaction of official and unofficial normative authorities.

The second category was strategic forum selection, referring to how individuals choose among courts, administrative offices, religious advisors, family elders, professional bodies, online information sources, and informal mediators. Participants described this choice as pragmatic rather than purely ideological. People selected forums based on cost, speed, confidentiality, expected fairness, enforceability, emotional pressure, and social consequences. One lawyer noted, "People do not always ask which system is legally correct; they ask which path will solve the problem with the least damage" (P3). A civil society participant similarly stated, "Sometimes a woman knows her formal right, but she first tries mediation because going directly to court may increase family pressure" (P11). Forum selection was also influenced by distrust of formal institutions or fear that formal procedures would be slow, expensive, or socially disruptive. However, participants did not describe informal forums as always preferable. Some viewed them as useful for negotiation, while others saw them as mechanisms that could silence vulnerable parties. This category demonstrates that plural legal settings produce strategic agency but also unequal bargaining conditions. Individuals navigate different forums not from a position of complete freedom but within constraints shaped by gender, class, family dependence, institutional access, and social status.

The third category concerned negotiated legitimacy. Participants did not define legitimacy only in terms of legality. Instead, legitimacy was associated with fairness, moral acceptability, cultural familiarity, religious justification, procedural respect, and practical effectiveness. Many participants described state law as necessary for order and enforceability, while also acknowledging that people may not perceive a legal decision as legitimate if it appears disconnected from moral or cultural expectations. One academic participant observed, "In plural societies, legitimacy is layered. A rule may be legal, but people

ask whether it is religiously acceptable, socially honorable, and fair to the family” (P19). At the same time, younger and more globally connected participants emphasized rights language, individual dignity, gender equality, and personal autonomy. A participant involved in civil society work stated, “Now people compare. They read about rights in other countries, and then they ask why custom should decide everything here” (P8). This finding suggests that globalization introduces new evaluative standards into local normative debates. Participants did not simply reject tradition or accept global norms; rather, they negotiated among them. Legitimacy emerged as a contested process in which state law, religion, custom, and rights discourse competed to define justice.

The fourth category was informal mediation and hybrid social regulation. Participants frequently described situations in which formal and informal systems were combined. A dispute might begin with family negotiation, move to a lawyer’s office, return to mediation, and eventually be formalized through legal documentation. In workplace or commercial settings, professional norms and personal networks often shaped settlement before any formal complaint was filed. One mediator explained, “Our role is not outside law completely. We know the legal limits, but we try to translate them into language that families can accept” (P16). This statement illustrates hybridity: informal actors may rely on legal knowledge while presenting solutions through moral, religious, or relational language. Several participants argued that hybrid mechanisms can reduce conflict escalation and preserve social ties. However, others warned that hybrid regulation may blur accountability, especially when informal pressure is disguised as consensus. One participant stated, “They call it reconciliation, but sometimes it means the weaker person accepts what powerful people have already decided” (P22). Thus, hybrid regulation was experienced as both practical and problematic. It created flexible pathways for dispute resolution, but it also raised concerns about transparency, voluntariness, and protection of vulnerable individuals.

The fifth category concerned rights-based tensions and inequality. Participants emphasized that legal pluralism can produce unequal outcomes when individuals differ in their capacity to invoke, resist, or move between normative orders. Gender, economic resources, education, age, and family position shaped how people navigated plural regulation. Women, younger people, migrants, employees, and economically dependent individuals were described as more vulnerable to informal pressures. One participant explained, “Pluralism gives options to those who have power, but for weaker people it can become another layer of pressure” (P5). Another participant noted that rights awareness has increased through digital media and international exposure, but awareness does not automatically create protection: “Knowing your right is one thing; being able to use it against family or employer pressure is another” (P12). Participants therefore viewed legal pluralism as ambivalent. It may create culturally sensitive solutions and alternative paths to justice, but it may also fragment protection and allow powerful actors to choose the normative order most favorable to them. This category highlights the need to evaluate plural legal arrangements through the principles of equality, procedural fairness, and rights protection.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that legal pluralism in a globalized urban society operates as a dynamic process of social regulation rather than a static coexistence of separate legal systems. Participants described everyday disputes as being shaped by overlapping normative authorities, including state law, religious norms, family expectations, professional standards, community practices, and global rights discourses. This finding is consistent with Griffiths’ (1986) critique of legal centralism and Merry’s (1988) argument that legal pluralism directs attention to the coexistence of multiple normative orders within a single social field. The findings also support Moore’s (1973) concept of the semi-autonomous social field, because participants described families, workplaces, professional networks, and community mediation settings as capable of producing and enforcing rules while remaining connected to wider state law. In this sense, law was not experienced as a single command

structure but as a layered normative environment. The authority of formal law was recognized, yet everyday compliance often depended on social legitimacy, relational pressure, and practical consequences.

The category of strategic forum selection demonstrates that individuals in plural legal contexts are not passive recipients of normative orders. They actively choose among courts, lawyers, religious advisors, family elders, informal mediators, administrative agencies, and digital sources of legal information. This finding aligns with socio-legal theories that understand legal consciousness as practical, interpretive, and embedded in ordinary life (Ewick & Silbey, 1998). Participants selected forums based on perceived cost, speed, confidentiality, enforceability, social risk, and moral acceptability. This also supports Berman's (2007, 2012) argument that global legal pluralism requires attention to how actors navigate hybrid legal spaces where multiple regimes may claim authority over the same issue. However, the findings complicate any overly optimistic reading of forum choice. Strategic selection was shaped by unequal access to resources and by social pressures that limited real autonomy. Therefore, forum selection should be understood as constrained agency rather than unrestricted legal choice. People may move between normative orders, but their ability to do so depends on gender, economic resources, education, institutional literacy, and social support.

The finding on negotiated legitimacy shows that legality and legitimacy are not identical in participants' experiences. A rule could be formally valid but socially contested, while an informal norm could be unofficial but deeply influential. This finding is consistent with Cover's (1983) view that law exists within a normative universe shaped by narratives, meanings, and interpretive communities. Participants evaluated normative orders through multiple criteria, including legal authority, religious acceptability, cultural familiarity, family honor, fairness, dignity, and effectiveness. This layered understanding of legitimacy also corresponds with Twining's (2010) argument that legal pluralism should be understood within broader normative pluralism. In globalized societies, legitimacy is further complicated by transnational rights language. Participants, especially younger and civil society actors, described how digital media and global legal awareness have changed expectations about autonomy, equality, and justice. This supports Michaels' (2009) claim that legal globalization and legal pluralism intersect where domestic, non-state, and transnational normative orders coexist without a single final hierarchy.

The category of informal mediation and hybrid social regulation indicates that pluralism often works through practical combinations rather than clear separations between formal and informal law. Participants described disputes that moved between family negotiation, legal advice, religious reasoning, mediation, and formal documentation. This finding supports von Benda-Beckmann's (2002) argument that legal pluralism should not be reduced to a simple opposition between state law and non-state law. Instead, plural normative orders frequently interact, borrow from each other, and become mutually constitutive. Hybrid mechanisms may be valuable because they translate formal rights into culturally understandable language and provide accessible pathways for conflict resolution. However, the findings also reveal risks. Informal mediation can become coercive when powerful family members, employers, or community actors define compromise in ways that silence weaker parties. Thus, hybrid regulation should be evaluated not only by its capacity to resolve conflict but also by its procedural fairness, transparency, and protection of vulnerable individuals.

The final category, rights-based tensions and inequality, highlights the ambivalence of legal pluralism. Participants viewed plural normative orders as potentially flexible and culturally responsive, but they also identified risks of unequal protection. This finding is consistent with critical legal pluralist scholarship, which warns that plurality can reproduce domination when social power is unequally distributed (Merry, 1988; Tamanaha, 2008; von Benda-Beckmann, 2002). In the present study, economically dependent individuals, women, younger family members, employees, and socially marginalized groups were described as less able to resist informal pressure or invoke formal legal rights. This supports the view that legal pluralism must be analyzed in relation to power. The existence of multiple normative orders does not automatically expand justice; it may

instead allow dominant actors to select the norm that best preserves their authority. Therefore, legal pluralism in globalized societies should be approached through a rights-sensitive framework that recognizes cultural and normative diversity while maintaining safeguards against coercion, discrimination, and procedural inequality.

Overall, the study contributes to socio-legal scholarship by showing how legal pluralism is experienced as an everyday practice of negotiation in a globalized urban setting. Participants did not describe state law, religion, custom, family authority, and global rights discourse as isolated systems. Rather, they experienced these orders as overlapping, competing, and sometimes mutually reinforcing. This supports Santos' (1987) argument that legal orders may be interlegal, meaning that people live across different legal spaces and interpret one normative order through the language of another. In Tehran, globalization did not erase local or religious normative structures; instead, it introduced new comparisons, rights vocabularies, and expectations of justice into existing social fields. The result was not legal uniformity but intensified normative negotiation. This suggests that legal governance in globalized societies requires more than formal legal reform. It requires institutional awareness of how people actually use and experience law in relation to family, religion, custom, professional life, digital knowledge, and social power.

This study has several limitations. First, the sample was limited to 24 participants from Tehran, which may restrict the transferability of the findings to rural areas, smaller cities, or other national contexts. Second, the study relied on semi-structured interviews, meaning that the findings reflect participants' narratives and interpretations rather than direct observation of courts, mediation sessions, or family negotiations. Third, because legal pluralism involves sensitive issues such as family authority, gender relations, religious norms, and institutional trust, some participants may have moderated their responses. Fourth, the diversity of participant backgrounds strengthened the analysis but also limited the depth with which each professional or social subgroup could be examined separately. Finally, the findings should be interpreted as context-specific and qualitative rather than statistically generalizable.

Future research should compare experiences of legal pluralism across different cities, rural communities, and social groups to identify how local context shapes normative conflict and social regulation. Comparative studies could examine how legal pluralism operates in family law, labor relations, migration, digital governance, commercial disputes, and access to justice. Future studies may also use ethnographic observation of mediation practices, legal aid centers, community dispute resolution, and court-connected negotiation to complement interview-based data. Longitudinal research would be useful for examining how globalization, digital media, legal education, and social change transform people's expectations of law and rights over time. Further research should also focus specifically on vulnerable groups to understand how plural normative orders affect equality, autonomy, and procedural protection.

Legal practitioners, policymakers, and social institutions should recognize that people often experience law within plural normative environments. Formal legal institutions should improve accessibility, affordability, and public trust so that individuals are not forced into informal mechanisms because of fear, cost, or procedural complexity. Informal mediation should be guided by clear ethical standards, especially regarding voluntariness, confidentiality, gender equality, and protection from coercion. Legal awareness programs should explain not only formal rights but also practical strategies for safely navigating family, workplace, and community pressure. Policymakers should design rights-sensitive frameworks that respect cultural and religious diversity while ensuring that plural normative arrangements do not undermine equality, dignity, and access to justice.

Conclusion

This study explored legal pluralism in a globalized urban society by examining how participants in Tehran experienced competing normative orders and social regulation. The findings showed that individuals do not encounter law as a single unified system. Instead, they navigate overlapping authorities, including state law, religious norms, family expectations, customary

practices, professional rules, informal mediation, and global rights discourses. The study identified five main categories: overlapping normative authorities, strategic forum selection, negotiated legitimacy, informal mediation and hybrid regulation, and rights-based tensions in plural normative orders.

The study concludes that legal pluralism is both a resource and a challenge. It can provide flexible, culturally meaningful, and accessible pathways for resolving disputes, but it can also produce uncertainty, inequality, and coercive pressure. In globalized societies, pluralism becomes more complex because international rights language, digital information, and comparative legal awareness reshape local expectations of justice. Therefore, effective legal governance requires more than enforcing formal law. It requires understanding how people actually negotiate normative conflict in everyday life and ensuring that plural regulatory practices remain consistent with equality, dignity, fairness, and rights protection.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contributed to this study.

Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

All ethical principles were adhered in conducting and writing this article.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

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