
The Role of Youth Innovation and Collaboration in Driving National Economic Growth Towards Golden Indonesia 2045: A Legal Perspective

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Abstract

Objective: This study aims to analyze the strategic role of youth in driving national economic growth through innovation and cross-sector collaboration, and to examine the relevance and effectiveness of legal policies that support this role in the context of achieving the vision of Golden Indonesia 2045. **Theoretical framework:** This study uses an interdisciplinary approach that combines the theories of youth empowerment, innovation-driven economy, and the legal framework of national development. This approach strengthens the understanding of how national regulations, such as Law No. 40 of 2009 concerning Youth and Presidential Regulation No. 18 of 2020 concerning RPJMN 2020–2024, support the role of youth in economic growth. **Literature review:** Youth Innovation in Economic Development, Cross-Sector Collaboration by Youth, Legal Basis for Youth Empowerment. **Methods:** This study uses a descriptive qualitative method, literature study, and policy analysis techniques. Data sources were obtained from national legal documents, academic journals, BAPPENAS policy reports, and relevant youth innovation case studies. The analysis technique was carried out through the stages of data reduction, thematic categorization, and normative interpretation. **Results:** The study indicate that youth have great potential to create digital innovation, social entrepreneurship, and creative economy that have a direct impact on national economic growth. However, the implementation of legal policies that support youth innovation still faces challenges in terms of institutional synergy, legal assistance, and access to capital. **Implications:** These findings provide implications that policy reform and strengthening of youth-friendly legal governance need to be a strategic priority for the government to achieve the goal of Indonesia Emas 2045. The synergy between vocational education, the business world, and legal institutions is the key to successful cross-sector collaboration. **Novelty:** The uniqueness of this study lies in the integration of strategic analysis of youth innovation and legal approaches in one systematic framework, as well as an emphasis on the importance of legal, social, and economic collaboration in long-term development based on the youth generation.

Keywords: innovation, collaboration, youth regulation, golden Indonesia, creative economy.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is entering a crucial phase in its national development history with an ambitious target known as Indonesia Emas 2045, marking 100 years of Indonesian independence. This vision carries the idea of becoming a developed country with strong economic growth, social equality, and technological progress. The success of achieving this vision is highly dependent on the contribution of all elements of the nation, especially the younger generation as agents of change who have a strategic role in the dynamics of national development. Indonesian youth have a significant number in the country's demographic structure, which provides great opportunities to be utilized as productive and innovative human resources. The younger generation is known to have high energy, creativity, and enthusiasm to create positive change in various fields, especially the economy [1][2]. Therefore, youth empowerment becomes the main focus in development policies aimed at maximizing their potential.

In the context of economic growth, innovation is a key factor that drives competitiveness and increases productivity [3]. Youth as a generation that is adaptive to the development of technology and information has a strategic position to create innovations, both in the form of products, services, and business models that can open up new economic opportunities. These innovations are not only technological innovations but also social and economic innovations that are relevant to the needs of society [4][5]. In addition to innovation, collaboration also plays an important role in accelerating economic growth. Collaboration between youth, as well as between youth and the private sector, academia, and government, can create synergies that strengthen the innovation ecosystem. Through collaboration, youth can share knowledge, resources, and networks, thereby increasing the effectiveness of efforts and the scale of economic impact generated [6][7].

From a legal perspective, the existence of regulations that support the empowerment and development of youth potential is very important to create a climate that is conducive to innovation and collaboration. Appropriate regulations can provide legal protection, facilitation, and certainty for youth in carrying out their various economic initiatives. However, an in-depth study is needed to ensure that existing regulations truly accommodate the needs and challenges faced by youth. Several relevant laws and regulations, such as Law Number 40 of 2009 concerning Youth, have established a legal framework for youth empowerment in Indonesia [8]. In addition, various government policies that focus on increasing the capacity and access of youth to financing, training, and business opportunities have also been implemented. However, the implementation of these policies still faces several obstacles that reduce their effectiveness.

A study by Jay Mitra (2019) emphasized that innovation carried out by the younger generation is the main driving force in the development of the creative economy in Indonesia. They highlighted how innovative ideas developed by young people can open up new jobs and increase the competitiveness of the local economy [9]. However, the focus of the study was more on microeconomic aspects, such as entrepreneurship and the development of small and medium enterprises, without discussing the legal implications that support or hinder the innovation process. In addition, research by Roberto, et al. (2021) shows that effective collaboration can strengthen access to capital, technology, and markets for young innovators [10]. However, the study has not yet explored in depth the legal aspects, especially how existing regulations can facilitate or limit the space for youth to collaborate.

From a legal perspective, the study by Ogamba highlights the importance of youth regulation as a legal instrument for empowering the younger generation [11]. This study discusses the Youth Law and its derivative regulations that aim to provide protection and facilities for youth in various fields, including the economy. However, Ogamba's study is more normative and descriptive without directly linking how these regulations can optimize youth innovation and collaboration in the context of national economic growth.

The similarity of these studies lies in the recognition that youth are key actors in driving economic development through innovation and collaboration. All studies agree that innovation and collaboration carried out by the younger generation have a positive impact on economic growth and human resource development. However, the difference lies mainly in the focus of the study, where most studies focus on economic and social aspects, while the legal aspects that are the foundation for the sustainability of innovation and collaboration still receive less attention. This gap opens up research opportunities that integrate a legal approach with studies of youth innovation and collaboration, to provide a comprehensive picture of how regulations can strengthen the role of youth in national economic growth. In addition, most studies also do not specifically highlight how existing regulations and policies can adapt to the dynamics of youth needs in innovating and collaborating. This creates an important research gap to fill, namely an in-depth analysis of the role of law in supporting or inhibiting youth empowerment in the economic context [11].

This study will complement the existing literature by specifically examining how the current legal framework supports or hinders innovation and collaboration initiatives among youth toward Indonesia Emas 2045. Within this framework, this study attempts to integrate a legal perspective with a study of youth innovation and collaboration. This approach aims to identify legal barriers and opportunities that can be utilized to strengthen youth contributions to national economic growth. A normative approach with literature studies was chosen to comprehensively examine the applicable legal and regulatory aspects. The novelty of this study lies in the integration of a legal approach in the analysis of the role of youth innovation and collaboration, which has so far received less special attention in the literature. Thus, this study aims to provide a clear picture of how youth innovation and collaboration can be optimized through existing policies and regulations [11].

This topic is important as it highlights the critical role of youth innovation and collaboration in accelerating Indonesia's economic growth towards the ambitious vision of Golden Indonesia 2045. In an era of digital transformation and global competition, the creative energy and entrepreneurial potential of youth are vital assets. From a legal perspective, this study explores how supportive regulations, policy frameworks, and institutional structures can empower young innovators and foster collaborative ecosystems. The novelty of this theme lies in its integrative approach—linking youth-driven innovation with national economic strategy through the lens of legal analysis—offering fresh insights on how law can serve as a catalyst for sustainable development and inclusive economic progress.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Youth Empowerment Theory

Youth empowerment theory is understood as an approach that places youth as the main actors in the development process, emphasizing the importance of increasing capacity, active participation, and independence. Youth empowerment is not just about providing opportunities, but also creating an environment that allows them to develop their potential and take strategic roles in the social, political, and economic spheres. In this framework, youth are no longer positioned as objects of policy, but as subjects who can initiate change through ideas, creativity, and leadership skills. This theory highlights the unique characteristics of youth who are full of energy, courage to take risks, and a tendency to make breakthroughs [11]. These aspects make youth the driving force of innovation, which in the context of economic development is very much needed to create creative solutions to structural and globalization challenges. In the reality of Indonesia which is heading towards the peak of the demographic bonus, youth empowerment is a strategic element that must be utilized properly to avoid the trap of stagnation and productive unemployment.

In the context of the Golden Indonesia 2045 vision, this theory emphasizes that the development of youth human resources through access to quality education, involvement in

public decision-making processes, and support for entrepreneurship and technology-based initiatives are key factors. Inclusive empowerment will create a generation of youth who are not only economically productive but also socially responsible and actively contribute to achieving national goals.

Innovation-Driven Economy Theory

In today's global economic dynamics, there has been a fundamental shift from a growth model that relies on the exploitation of natural resources to an economy based on knowledge, technology, and innovation. This shift reflects a new paradigm of economic development that places greater emphasis on sustainability, efficiency and added value. In an innovation-based economy, traditional factors such as cheap labor and abundant natural resources are no longer a guarantee of competitiveness, but rather the ability to produce creative solutions, new products, and business models that are adaptive to changes in technology and the global market. Young people are in a strategic position in this context because they naturally can innovate, adapt quickly to digital technology, and tend to be more open to disruptive mindsets. The phenomenon of the growth of digital start-ups, social entrepreneurship, and the creative economy sector pioneered by the younger generation shows that young people have a central role in creating innovations that are not only oriented towards economic profit but also have social and cultural value. This contribution is very important in driving the structural transformation of the national economy to be more resilient and inclusive [9].

The innovation-driven economy theory emphasizes that a country's long-term competitiveness is not determined by how much resources it has, but by how high the quality of its human resources is in developing and applying knowledge to produce innovation [5]. Therefore, investment in education, research, information technology, and innovation ecosystems are the main prerequisites. In this case, state policies need to be directed at creating a conducive environment for the growth of youth innovation, including through business incubation, access to capital, protection of intellectual property rights, and ease of business regulation. Supporting youth innovation is not only economically relevant in the context of increasing growth and employment, but is also a national strategy in building economic independence and sovereignty. Youth-driven innovation can address development disparities, bridge the digital divide, and create locally-based solutions that have a global impact.

National Development Legal Framework

Normative foundations that provide legitimacy and policy direction for youth involvement in development. In this case, laws and regulations such as Law No. 40 of 2009 concerning Youth, Law No. 11 of 2020 concerning Job Creation, and various regulations on the national innovation system and protection of intellectual property rights are the main references. This legal framework is analyzed to assess the extent to which existing regulations can effectively encourage youth innovation and collaboration and provide legal certainty for the initiatives they undertake. By combining these three perspectives, this study not only examines the potential role of youth from a social and economic perspective but also tests the suitability and effectiveness of regulations that serve as the legal umbrella in realizing the vision of Golden Indonesia 2045 comprehensively.

Table 1. Summarizing the Key Points of the Three Frameworks

Theory/Framework	Core Focus	Key Elements	Relevance to Indonesia 2045
Youth Empowerment Theory	Youth as active agents of development	Capacity building, participation, independence,	Prevents stagnation, promotes inclusive growth and national contribution

		creativity, leadership	
Innovation-Driven Economy	Economic growth through knowledge and innovation	Digital adaptation, startups, creative economy, innovation ecosystems	Enhances competitiveness, builds resilient and inclusive economy
National Legal Framework	Legal support for youth innovation and collaboration	Youth Law, Job Creation Law, IPR protection, business regulation	Ensures legal certainty and strategic direction toward Golden Indonesia

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a juridical-normative method, which focuses on the analysis of relevant laws regulations, and legal documents to understand the role of law in supporting youth innovation and collaboration as a driving force for national economic growth [12]. This approach was chosen because the study aims to examine legal norms that regulate, support, or potentially limit the space for youth to move in their contribution to economic development towards Golden Indonesia 2045. The main data sources in this study are secondary data in the form of laws and regulations such as Law Number 40 of 2009 concerning Youth, Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Law Number 11 of 2020 concerning Job Creation, and government policies related to youth empowerment, the creative economy, and digital innovation. Data were also obtained from scientific literature, academic journals, policy reports, and official government documents that discuss strategic issues regarding innovation, collaboration, and the role of youth in economic development.

The data collection technique was carried out through library research by tracing relevant legal sources and scientific references. Furthermore, the data was analyzed qualitatively descriptively through the stages of data condensation, issue categorization, and normative interpretation of the legal substance and its relationship to innovation practices and collaboration carried out by Indonesian youth [13]. In the analysis stage, researchers identify gaps between applicable legal norms and the reality on the ground regarding the role of youth in economic activities. This analysis also includes an interpretation of the relevance of existing regulations to the spirit of inclusive and sustainable economic development [14]. In addition, this study uses a conceptual and comparative approach, namely by comparing national legal instruments and several policy practices of other countries that have successfully empowered youth through legal support for innovation and cross-sector collaboration.

Table 2. Research Method Used in This Study

Aspect	Description
Type of Research	Qualitative research
Approach	Legal-normative method with conceptual and comparative approach
Research Objective	To understand the role of law in supporting youth innovation and collaboration as a driving force for national economic growth towards Golden Indonesia 2045
Rationale for Approach	Because the research aims to examine legal norms that regulate, support, or limit the space for youth to move in their contribution to economic development
Key Figures Analyzed	Law No. 40 of 2009 concerning Youth, Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Law No. 11 of 2020 concerning Job Creation, and government policies related to the creative economy and digital innovation
Main Data Sources	Legislation, academic journals, scientific literature, policy reports, and official government documents
Method of Analysis	Data condensation, issue categorization, normative interpretation of legal

	substance and its relationship to youth innovation and collaboration practices
Theoretical Framework	Youth Empowerment Theory, Innovation-Driven Economy and National development legal framework
Focus of Analysis	The suitability and effectiveness of regulations in supporting youth innovation and collaboration, and the gap between legal norms and practices on the ground
Expected Outcome	Policy recommendations and legal understanding to strengthen youth contribution in innovation and collaboration for inclusive economic growth towards Golden Indonesia 2045

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Youth-Related Policies and Regulations in Indonesia: A Review of Law No. 40 of 2009 on Youth.

Law Number 40 of 2009 concerning Youth is a legal basis designed to guarantee the protection, empowerment, and development of youth potential as part of national development. Youth are defined as Indonesian citizens aged 16 to 30 years, who are in an important transition period in the human life cycle [8]. This regulation places youth not only as objects of development, but as active subjects who have rights, responsibilities, and the capacity to drive social, economic, and political change. From a legal positivist perspective, this law is a concrete form of legal norms that guarantee certainty, order, and legal protection for youth groups in society [15][16].

This law is built on the principles of justice, participation, and independence, which show that the state does not only play a role as a regulator but also as a facilitator and accelerator of human development. This is to the idea of a welfare state in the theory of government, where the state has an active responsibility in providing public services, including the development of the younger generation [17]. In Article 3, the aim of youth development is directed at forming youth who are faithful, pious, have character, healthy, intelligent, and competitive [8]. This goal reflects the principle of substantive justice in the theory of justice by John Rawls, namely how public policy should ensure the distribution of resources and opportunities fairly to all groups, including youth [18].

Law No. 40 of 2009 also reflects the spirit of progressive law as developed by Satjipto Rahardjo, which positions law as a tool for social change [19][20]. This is reflected in the three main functions of youth services: awareness, empowerment, and development, which are regulated in Articles 4 and 5. Youth are encouraged to become agents of change who not only participate in development, but also become pioneers of social, economic, and cultural innovation. The state is tasked with providing access, facilities, training, and affirmative policies to strengthen the position of youth in various areas of life.

On the institutional side, this law assigns the central government, regional governments, and the community to work together in implementing youth services (Articles 9 and 13) [8]. This engagement model is in line with governance theory which emphasizes the importance of multi-party collaboration (government, civil society, and the private sector) in managing public affairs. Government [21], in this case through the Ministry of Youth and Sports (Kemenpora), serves as the driving force of strategic and coordinating policies. Meanwhile, the role of local governments is needed to bring youth programs closer to the local context, by the spirit of decentralization in the Indonesian government system.

The role of youth as a moral force, social control, and agent of change as emphasized in Article 16 is a reflection of the importance of youth integration in the democratization and development process. The state, through various legal instruments, is obliged to provide space for participation and fair recognition for youth. Thus, Law No. 40 of 2009 is not only a

product of administrative law, but also a manifestation of the noble values in the constitution and Pancasila, which place humans as the center of development. However, the implementation of this regulation still faces various challenges, such as weak coordination between institutions, limited budget, and low legal and political literacy among youth.

In Hans Kelsen's perspective, the existence of this law is part of the hierarchy of legal norms that flow from the Grundnorm (1945 Constitution), so that it is formally valid and binding [22]. From the legal system perspective, Kelsen supports the importance of formulating rational and structured norms in the national legal system to regulate the lives of society in an orderly manner. However, this normative approach was criticized by Satjipto Rahardjo, a progressive Indonesian legal figure, who considered that the law should not stop at textual or procedural aspects, but should also be able to become a tool for social empowerment. In this context, Law No. 40/2009 will only be effective if it truly fosters the capacity of youth, provides space for participation, and touches on aspects of social justice in its practice. Satjipto even emphasized that the law should not allow the people (in this case youth) to be left behind in development, but rather must become a vehicle to equalize them with the center of power [19][20].

John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice*, he emphasized the importance of justice as fairness in formulating public policy, namely that everyone should have an equal opportunity to develop their potential [18][23][24]. This is in line with the objectives of the Youth Law, namely to create intelligent, independent, and competitive youth. On the other hand, if the implementation of this law fails to provide equal access, then Rawls' principle of distributive justice is not fulfilled. Therefore, the bias of the budget, education, and access to entrepreneurship are prerequisites for the success of this regulation. From the perspective of Michel Foucault, a post-structuralist philosopher, the state tends to create social discipline through regulation and public policy [25]. The Youth Law, if viewed critically, can also be an instrument of the state in directing and shaping the behavior of the younger generation in a hegemonic manner. Within this framework, there is the potential for the state to use the law to limit the expression of ideologically opposed youth. Foucault warns that every policy always risks bringing bio-power or power over the bodies and minds of citizens so transparency and accountability in the implementation of regulations are important to maintain the civil rights of young people.

Dwight Waldo, a public administration expert, supports the importance of state involvement in the development of the younger generation, as long as it is carried out with the principles of democratic governance [21]. According to Waldo, public bureaucracy should be an ethical and humane tool of democracy, not an instrument of elite power. In the context of the Youth Law, this principle is reflected in Articles 20-21, which provide basic rights to youth, including protection from destructive influences, advocacy, and achievement awards. Robert D. Putnam's theory of social capital is also relevant to analyzing how this law facilitates the formation of youth organizations [26]. According to Putnam, participation in social organizations increases trust, cooperation, and collective capacity in society. Therefore, strengthening the institutionalization of youth organizations as regulated in Articles 40-46 will strengthen social cohesion and participatory democracy, if supported by facilitative and non-discriminatory policies. On the other hand, criticism can arise from the neoliberal approach popularized by figures such as Friedrich Hayek, who saw that too much state intervention could weaken individual independence and market freedom [27]. In this context, some parties may consider that regulations such as Law No. 40/2009 are at risk of over-regulating youth behavior and creating dependency on the state. However, in the context of Indonesia as a developing country with a high inequality index, state intervention is a necessity for the sake of creating social justice as mandated by Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution.

From a political perspective, David Easton states that public policy is the response of the political system to the demands of society [28][29]. With the increasing aspirations of young

people towards participation, justice, and recognition of identity, the presence of the Youth Law can be seen as a product of the dynamics of political input-output. However, the main challenge is to ensure that the feedback loop runs, namely that this policy is reviewed and adjusted based on the effectiveness of its implementation in the field. From the perspective of participatory development theory by Robert Chambers, Law No. 40/2009 has strategic value if it opens up the widest possible space for young people to be involved in decision-making. Awareness and empowerment programs must be bottom-up, not just bureaucratic projects. Otherwise, empowerment will only become a rhetorical symbol without substantive meaning for grassroots youth [30].

Legal Framework on Innovation and Digital Economy

Innovation and the creative economy have become important drivers of Indonesia's economic growth in the digital era. To support this sector, the government has issued several regulations such as Law Number 24 of 2019 concerning the Creative Economy, which explicitly recognizes the role of creative economy actors as subjects of national development. This law strengthens the role of the state in providing an ecosystem that supports creativity, and access to financing, and guarantees intellectual property rights (IPR) [31]. On the other hand, Law No. 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE) and its revisions regulate digital space as a means of transaction and expression of the digital creative economy [32].

In the framework of legal positivism (Hans Kelsen), the existence of this regulation shows that the Indonesian legal system has adopted written rules that provide legitimacy and legal certainty for innovative actors [22][33]. However, in the perspective of Satjipto Rahardjo's progressive law, law is not enough to just create rules but must be a tool that is responsive to social and technological dynamics [19][34]. The Creative Economy Law and the ITE Law have not been fully adaptive to the rapid changes in the digital landscape. Many regulations are reactive, not anticipatory, so they are unable to provide adequate protection for young innovators in practice. For example, technological developments such as AI and blockchain do not yet have a comprehensive legal umbrella in Indonesia, which leaves innovators in a legal gray area (legal vacuum).

One of the vital elements in supporting innovation is the protection of intellectual property rights (IPR). IPR is the main instrument to ensure that the work of young creators is not misused and can be monetized fairly. In the theory of natural rights by John Locke, intellectual property rights are an extension of private property rights that must be protected by the State [35]. Therefore, a legal system that guarantees registration, enforcement, and prosecution of IPR violations is an important element in motivating young people to continue working legally and professionally. However, on the other hand, the IPR protection approach has also received criticism from institutional economists such as Lawrence Lessig, who stated that overly strict intellectual property protection can hinder creativity. In a digital era based on collaboration and open access, the law should not be a tool for monopolizing information, but rather a mechanism that allows for the redistribution of knowledge and innovation. Lessig's criticism points to the importance of balanced regulatory design: protecting individual rights without limiting public access to knowledge resources.

Digital regulations such as the ITE Law also raise ethical and legal debates. On the one hand, this law is important to regulate digital economic and communication activities. However, on the other hand, the rubber articles in the ITE Law have been criticized by many legal experts because they have the potential to silence creative expression and limit freedom of expression in the digital space. Michel Foucault emphasized that law is often a "disciplinary" tool that controls the body and mind of individuals, so the implementation of digital law must be carried out carefully so as not to turn into a tool of state repression [25].

The biggest challenge in regulating the digital economy is the speed of technological innovation that exceeds the speed of legal formation. This concept is known as regulatory lag. According to Gunther Teubner, in the Autopoietic Theory of Law, the legal system has an internal logic that is slow to respond to external changes, including technological innovation [35]. Therefore, a regulatory sandbox or experimental approach is needed in public policy, so that innovation testing can be carried out within a flexible and adaptive legal framework. In the context of modern governance, the governance theory put forward by Rhodes and Stoker emphasizes the importance of collaboration between the government, the private sector, and civil society in formulating public policy. To answer regulatory challenges in the creative economy, a top-down approach from the state is not enough, there must be co-regulation and participation from creative industry players themselves. This is also in line with Philip Selznick's responsive law, which emphasizes the need for laws that are responsive to the changing needs of society [36].

One relevant approach to address regulatory challenges is the use of soft laws or regulations that are not directly binding but provide normative direction, such as guidelines, technical standards, and industry codes of ethics. According to Christine Parker in the responsive regulation framework, a collaborative, flexible, and incentive-based regulatory approach is more effective for innovative sectors compared to a fully coercive approach [37]. This can be seen from the success of various countries in developing regulatory sandboxes for financial technology (fintech) or artificial intelligence, which allow the testing of innovations in a controlled legal space but do not restrict the creativity of the perpetrators. However, the failure of law enforcement against intellectual property violations in Indonesia shows an implementation gap between regulation and practice. Roscoe Pound, a figure in legal sociology, reminded us that law cannot only be seen as written rules (law in books) but must also be studied based on the effectiveness of its implementation (law in action) [38]. In Indonesia, many young innovators face piracy, plagiarism, or exploitation by large platforms without real legal protection. This shows weak law enforcement and an inadequate IPR data system digitally.

In the digital realm, threats to privacy, data security, and digital exclusion must also be taken into account in the regulatory framework. Shoshana Zuboff, in her theory of surveillance capitalism, states that the digital economy tends to exploit personal data for economic interests [38]. Therefore, regulations such as the Personal Data Protection Bill (PDP) are very important to protect innovators and consumers from information misuse. Without strong data protection, creative young people who work in the digital world can become victims of unethical business models. In terms of digital rights and freedom of expression, Tim Wu and Lawrence Lessig remind us that the state must create an architecture of openness of an open and fair digital space, not just controlled by large corporations or censored by the state [39]. Their criticism shows that if regulations such as the ITE Law are too restrictive of the space for criticism and creativity, then it is contrary to the spirit of democracy and academic freedom that is essential for an innovative ecosystem. Therefore, reform of rubber articles and criminalization of expression on the internet is an important part of harmonizing digital law.

Policy Direction and Legal Reform Towards Golden Indonesia 2045

The urgency of regulatory harmonization and bureaucratic simplification

Criticism of regulatory and bureaucratic complexity in encouraging youth innovation has also been voiced by thinkers from the liberal tradition. Friedrich Hayek, in his theory of market spontaneity and the rule of law, warned that excessive state intervention through regulation and administrative procedures tends to stifle individual freedom and creativity. According to Hayek, too many rules create uncertainty and make young economic actors hesitate to take risks [27]. In the Indonesian context, many young people face difficulties when trying to start innovative businesses or projects because they are trapped in multi-layered

licensing procedures and overlapping sectoral regulations. Amid the rapid growth of digital innovation and the creative economy, overlapping regulations and complex bureaucracy are serious obstacles for young people to innovate legally and productively. Indonesia faces the phenomenon of overlapping regulations, where regulations from various sectors such as the creative economy, technology, employment, and education are often uncoordinated and confusing for young people.

For Hayek, liberation from bureaucracy is the first step to creating a dynamic and innovative society. However, the overly free deregulatory approach has also been strongly criticized by thinkers such as John Rawls, who emphasizes the importance of the state's presence in ensuring distributive justice. Rawls, in *A Theory of Justice*, states that freedom is only meaningful when combined with equal access and opportunity. For Rawls, regulatory harmonization is not the elimination of rules, but rather the formulation of fair, consistent policies that favor vulnerable groups such as young people from low-income backgrounds [18][23][24]. In this case, the state is required to be present through an efficient and empathetic bureaucracy, to prevent greater inequality amid a highly competitive era of digital innovation. The theory of responsive regulation from Ian Ayres and John Braithwaite offers a more flexible alternative approach. They suggest that regulation should not be monolithic, but rather pyramidal with a combination of persuasion, incentives, and sanctions [40]. This strategy allows the state to maintain legal order but still provides room for experimentation for innovative actors, including the younger generation.

In practice, this can be realized through regulatory sandboxes, where innovations can be tested in a controlled but not restrictive legal ecosystem. This approach is widely adopted by developed countries in dealing with the dynamics of technology and digital start-ups. In addition, Michel Foucault in his views on power and knowledge, reminds us that state regulations and bureaucracy are not neutral [25]. Laws and administrative procedures are often used as instruments to produce and control social subjects. In the context of youth policy, if not watched out for, bureaucratic simplification can be a way for the state to limit critical space and youth autonomy in the name of efficiency and stability. Therefore, regulatory harmonization must be carried out transparently and participatively, so as not to become a hegemonic tool that regulates without listening to the aspirations of those being regulated.

The need for regulatory harmonization is also closely related to efficiency in public governance in the digital era. In Manuel Castells' network society theory, traditional vertical and hierarchical bureaucracy is no longer able to respond to the dynamics of a horizontal, fast, and interactive networked society [41]. In such a social reality, young people who are globally connected through technology will not be willing to submit to slow and irrelevant legal procedures. Therefore, regulatory harmonization is not only a formal legal matter, but also a transformation of the state's way of thinking in managing public services digitally, openly, and based on collaboration.

Strategy for forming adaptive and inclusive regulations for youth

The formation of adaptive and inclusive regulations for youth is an important strategy in facing social, economic, and technological transformation in the digital era. Youth are not only objects of development, but also the main subjects in encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship, and social change. In the context of national law, various laws and regulations have become the initial foothold to recognize the strategic position of youth. Law Number 40 of 2009 concerning Youth normatively provides a legal basis that recognizes youth as a moral force, social control, and agents of change. The articles in this law contain a mandate for awareness, empowerment, and capacity development of youth through integrated policies across sectors [8]. However, for the regulation to be truly effective and relevant to today's challenges, the strategy for its formation must refer to the principles of adaptability and inclusivity. Adaptability includes the ability of the law to respond to contextual changes, especially in terms of digital technology, the creative economy, and the challenges of globalization. Meanwhile, inclusivity refers to the extent to which young people from diverse

social, geographic, and economic backgrounds can be accommodated in the process of formulating and implementing policies. Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, for example, regulates the rights of young people to quality and equitable education. Education as a foundation for character building and digital skills is an important instrument in shaping the innovative capacity of the younger generation, especially if integrated with cross-sector policies such as digital entrepreneurship training and creative business incubation.

To encourage young people to become strong economic actors, Law Number 11 of 2020 concerning Job Creation is present as a form of structural reform that strengthens the role of the business sector, including start-ups and young creative economy actors. This law provides ease of doing business, protection of intellectual property rights, and incentives for innovators and MSME actors. However, challenges arise in its implementation in the field which is still not entirely youth-friendly, especially in areas with weak legal infrastructure. Therefore, the strategy for forming adaptive regulations needs to prioritize the principle of multi-level governance, where the central government, regional governments, and youth communities work collaboratively to formulate policies that are by regional characteristics and local needs.

Various government policy documents such as the 2020–2024 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN), as well as reports from Bappenas and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, emphasize the importance of strengthening the digital ecosystem, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and youth empowerment in driving innovation. One recommended strategy is to build a collaborative platform between the education sector, industry, and youth communities to produce relevant, participatory, and sustainable policies. The UNESCO and UNDP reports also recommend that countries adopt a youth-responsive policy approach, namely policies that are formulated based on data and direct input from youth as the most affected parties. According to Thiago Freires, youth involvement in the policy-making process increases the effectiveness of public policies and strengthens a sense of ownership of the direction of national development [42].

The strategy of forming adaptive regulations also requires strengthening non-formal legal instruments such as regulatory sandboxes, incentive-based regulations, and legal pilot projects that allow innovation to be tested in a legal but flexible space. This approach has been successfully applied in the financial technology sector in countries such as Singapore and the UK and is now being adopted to a limited extent in Indonesia's digital economy program. As a country with a large young population, Indonesia has the opportunity to make regulations an instrument for youth development, not just a controller of their activities. This is where the importance of law is seen as living law, or law that lives in social reality as expressed by Eugen Ehrlich, not just a rigid normative text.



Figure 1. Indonesia Emas 2024 Roadmap

In Western theory, the formation of adaptive and inclusive regulations can be viewed through the lens of Philip Selznick with his responsive law theory. He argues that effective law is a law that can respond to social dynamics and encourage community involvement in the legal process [43]. This approach is relevant to the needs of young people who live in a highly

fluid and rapidly changing social environment due to the influence of technology. In the context of youth policy-making, unresponsive regulations that are made top-down without youth input risk failing to be accepted by them as legitimate and useful instruments. The theory of deliberative democracy pioneered by Jürgen Habermas also provides a strong normative basis for the importance of youth participation in the legislative process [44]. According to Habermas, public policy will only be legitimate if it is produced through a rational, inclusive, and open discourse process for all affected parties. In practice, this requires the government to involve youth organizations, young innovator communities, and creative industry players in every stage of regulation formation. This procedure ensures that policies are not only 'about youth' but also 'by and for youth'.

In contrast, the neoliberal approach put forward by Friedrich Hayek can be used to criticize excessive state intervention in regulating innovation and the digital economy [27]. Hayek argued that the market system would work more efficiently if it were allowed to run freely without complicated regulatory intervention. He saw regulation as a potential threat to individual freedom and market dynamics. Therefore, from a Hayekian perspective, a strategy for forming regulations that are too detailed and protective of young people can be considered to limit creativity and hinder healthy competition. This criticism is important to be used as evaluation material in designing regulations so that they are not too bureaucratic and provide sufficient space for innovation. However, John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice* provides a counter-argument to Hayek's approach by emphasizing that social justice must be the basis of all public policies [18][24]. For Rawls, adaptive and inclusive regulation is essential to ensure that disadvantaged groups including youth from disadvantaged areas, young women, and the disabled are not marginalized by harsh market competition. This biased regulatory strategy can be realized through affirmative policies in education, job training, and easy access to capital or digital networks.

The theory of experimentalist governance from Charles Sabel and Jonathan Zeitlin provides a conceptual justification for a flexible and learning-based regulatory approach. In this framework, policy formation is not final, but rather adaptive to feedback and periodic evaluation. This approach is suitable for the ever-changing youth innovation ecosystem because it allows policies to be tested on a small scale (pilot projects), refined, and adjusted based on real results [45]. This strategy has begun to be widely applied in the form of regulatory sandboxes in various countries for the fintech, edtech, and digital entrepreneurship sectors. However, criticism of the participatory and adaptive approach also came from Carl Schmitt, a political-legal thinker, who warned that too much deliberation and flexibility in the legal process could obscure authority and cause legal uncertainty [46]. For Schmitt, state authorities must remain firm in making legal decisions, especially in conditions of crisis or uncertainty. This view can be taken into consideration when the state faces an emergency or serious threat, where the participatory regulatory process must be limited to maintain stability.

From a law and development approach, David Trubek and Marc Galanter highlight that laws in developing countries are often ineffective because they import regulatory models from developed countries without considering the local context [47]. In the Indonesian context, adaptive regulatory strategies for youth must take into account socio-economic realities, digital literacy, and infrastructure disparities between regions. Therefore, it is important to design policies that are contextual, participatory, and evidence-based, rather than simply copying international policy models.

Analysis

The strategy for forming adaptive and inclusive regulations for youth, with a systematic and academic approach, includes a practical framework that can be adopted by the government, namely a participatory approach based on data integration across sectors and regulations, simplification of bureaucracy, and digital access, strengthening institutions supporting youth innovation, application of the principles of affirmation and equality of

access, evidence-based legislation and scientific research, protection of intellectual property rights and regulatory transformation as a legal democracy project.

The article explores the strategic role of youth in national economic development, emphasizing the significance of innovation and cross-sector collaboration as Indonesia aims for its Golden Indonesia 2045 vision. Through a qualitative and legal-normative approach, the authors examine how legal frameworks, such as Law No. 40 of 2009 concerning Youth and Law No. 24 of 2019 on the Creative Economy, influence the empowerment of young people to become key economic actors.

Youth are positioned as dynamic agents of change due to their adaptability to digital technology, creativity, and risk-taking behavior. The study underscores their potential in social entrepreneurship, digital innovation, and the creative economy—sectors that directly influence Indonesia's competitiveness and economic resilience. However, while the legal infrastructure exists, its implementation often falls short due to bureaucratic complexity, lack of institutional synergy, and limited access to legal and financial resources.

From a theoretical lens, the authors integrate Youth Empowerment Theory, Innovation-Driven Economy Theory, and Legal Development Theory to highlight the interplay between youth capacity, innovation ecosystems, and the law. They also critically review various regulatory frameworks, using perspectives from thinkers like Hans Kelsen, John Rawls, and Satjipto Rahardjo to assess the responsiveness and inclusiveness of current policies. For example, Rawls' theory of justice is used to argue for equitable access to opportunities for disadvantaged youth, while Foucault's views on power warn against regulations becoming instruments of control.

The article calls for legal reforms that are adaptive, inclusive, and responsive to the rapidly evolving digital economy. Strategies such as regulatory sandboxes, participatory policymaking, and protection of intellectual property rights are recommended to foster a conducive legal environment for innovation. The authors stress the importance of multi-level governance and cross-sector collaboration involving the state, private sector, and youth communities to ensure policy effectiveness and legitimacy. In conclusion, the study provides a holistic framework linking youth innovation with national development through legal analysis. It emphasizes that law should not only regulate but also inspire and empower. To achieve Golden Indonesia 2045, youth must be recognized not only as beneficiaries but as co-creators of the nation's economic future, supported by a legal system that enables rather than hinders their potential.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that innovation and collaboration carried out by youth have a strategic and crucial role in driving national economic growth toward Golden Indonesia 2045. From a legal perspective, the success of youth as agents of change is highly dependent on the existence of a clear, adaptive legal framework that supports their empowerment as a whole. Regulations governing youth, innovation, and collaboration between sectors need to be continuously refined to be able to answer the challenges of the times, especially in the era of a very dynamic digital economy. However, the findings show that there are still several legal obstacles, such as limited access to law, regulations that are not fully responsive to innovation, and bureaucracy that sometimes hinders cross-sector synergy. Therefore, more inclusive and flexible legal policy reform is needed, as well as increasing legal literacy for youth so that they can take maximum advantage of innovation opportunities within a safe and productive legal corridor. Thus, strengthening the legal aspect is an important foundation that not only protects but also inspires youth innovation and collaboration, so that their contribution can be optimal in supporting sustainable and inclusive national economic growth towards the ideals of Golden Indonesia 2045. This study has important significance both academically and practically. Academically, this research contributes to the development of legal science, especially in the

study of youth law and economic innovation, by integrating legal aspects into the discourse on youth empowerment as a driver of national economic growth.

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Author Contribution

All authors contribute equally to the publication of this paper, all authors read and agree to this paper, and all authors declare no conflict of interest.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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