

Student Perceptions, English Reading Needs, and Learning Experiences in Inquiry-Based Blended ESP among Sharia Students

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Public Interest Statement

Students of Islamic law increasingly encounter English-language scholarship, legal terminology and international debates. This study identifies what Sharia students value, what they believe they can currently do, and what kinds of learning methods and materials they desire. The results point to a practical curriculum direction: English reading should be connected to Islamic law content, supported through inquiry and discussion, and developed using current research articles and explicit reading guidance.



Introduction

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has a place in Indonesian higher education because students are expected to use English in academic and professional settings related to their field. Therefore, universities need to connect language instruction with the disciplinary practices that students will encounter after graduation. Studies on ESP in Indonesia have described the difficulty of making English courses useful for non-English departments and emphasized the need for context-sensitive course design (Abduh & Dunakhir, 2020; Rokhyati, 2013; Iswati & Triastuti, 2021). In a Faculty of Sharia, this context includes Islamic legal concepts, Arabic-derived terminology, comparative legal debates, and English-language research through which students may access international scholarship.

Reading is especially important in this setting because students often gain disciplinary knowledge through journal articles, statutes, case discussions, and research reports. Reading such texts requires more than recognition of general vocabulary; students need to identify arguments, follow legal reasoning, distinguish evidence from claims, and connect a text to concepts already studied in Islamic law. These demands make a general English syllabus insufficiently precise

for many Sharia students. Needs analysis provides a way to identify the language practices that learners consider important, the abilities they believe require support, and the professional purposes that give the course meaning (Medrea & Rus, 2012; Richards, 2001; West, 1994).

The value of needs analysis lies in the distinction between necessities, lacks, and wants. Necessities concern the language practices required by academic or professional contexts; lacks concern the distance between current ability and those requirements; wants concern the learning directions that students themselves prefer (West, 1994). Recent ESP research has used this perspective to align language curricula with workplace demands and to identify areas in which students need additional support (Gil & Dueñas, 2023; Mohamed et al., 2024; Raharjo et al., 2020). Therefore, the relationship between perceived value, self-assessed ability, and career aspirations is an important empirical issue for Islamic law students.

Needs analysis also has implications for pedagogical design. Inquiry-based learning can make language instruction more meaningful when students formulate questions, search for evidence, and discuss problems connected with their field of study (Cheng, 2022; Huang et al., 2024; Nicolaou, 2022). Digital and blended resources can widen access to current materials, although online learning requires attention to accessibility, guidance, and students' digital literacy (Bielousova, 2017; Makruf et al., 2022; Ošmjanski, 2022). In this study, preferences for inquiry-based methods and journal-based materials are treated as design evidence. They are not treated as evidence that an intervention has already improved learning.

This study responds to this problem by re-examining a survey of Sharia students as a needs analysis dataset. The analysis asks how students perceive the value of English reading for their studies and careers, how they assess their current reading ability, which pedagogical and material formats they prefer, whether needs differ between English for Islamic Business Law and Digital Literacy classes, and which dimensions are statistically associated with self-assessed reading ability. This framing keeps the interpretation within the evidence supplied by the questionnaire and provides a direct basis for the curriculum development.

Literature Review

English Reading in Islamic Law Education

English reading in legal education is a form of disciplinary literacy rather than general comprehension. Learners must coordinate the linguistic patterns that organize legal discourse with concepts that carry discipline-specific meanings (Hartig, 2016). They also need to recognize how legal researchers frame problems, review prior work, present methods and evidence, and construct claims across sections of an article (Tessuto, 2015). These demands make terminology, rhetorical structure, argumentation, and source interpretation legitimate components of an ESP reading curriculum. For Sharia students, English reading can widen access to international scholarship and comparative legal perspectives, but the materials remain useful only when students are supported in connecting unfamiliar English expressions and research conventions with their developing knowledge of Islamic law.

Evidence from legal English settings identifies concrete barriers that such support must address. A survey at Hanoi Law University found difficulties related to specialized language, legal background knowledge, and psychological factors (Nhac, 2022). A larger mixed-methods study of economic law students reported uneven metacognitive strategy awareness, particularly for planning and purposeful engagement with legal texts (Nguyen et al., 2026). Indonesian evidence is consistent with the need for contextualized materials. Sharia students and alumni identified legal documents, contracts, authentic cases, and written judgments as relevant reading domains (Rohmawati et al., 2025), while an Islamic-values reading-materials study reported persistent challenges with vocabulary, long texts, main ideas, and comprehension among Sharia Faculty learners (Amelia & Putri, 2026). Together, these studies support direct attention to legal-text comprehension; however, their mainly local and self-reported evidence also underlines the importance of separating perceived ability from objectively tested performance.

Needs Analysis as a Basis for ESP Curriculum Design

Needs analysis is a curriculum process rather than a preliminary administrative exercise. It links target-situation demands with learners' present abilities, perceived wants, and the practical conditions of instruction (Richards, 2001; West, 1994). In Legal English course design, this requires attention not only to what legal professionals and academic programs expect but also to learners' current resources and what a particular institution can realistically teach (Cao et al., 2022). Stakeholder evidence is especially important. At an Indonesian university, students, lecturers, administrators, and employers did not always identify the same English needs; for example, journal reading could be

visible to educators and employers without being equally salient in students' accounts ([Poedjiastutie & Oliver, 2017](#)). Student perceptions are therefore essential design data, but they should be interpreted alongside disciplinary expectations rather than treated as a complete curriculum.

Recent Indonesian studies have sharpened the institutional context of this issue. Sharia learners have expressed the need for profession-related language skills and materials across several legal domains ([Rohmawati et al., 2025](#)), and locally developed reading units have attempted to integrate Islamic values with learners' proficiency levels ([Amelia & Putri, 2026](#)). At the broader law school level, however, Legal English provision remains affected by a gap between regulatory or professional expectations and consistent classroom implementation ([Susanti & Putri, 2025](#)). These studies establish the relevance of Legal English and context-sensitive materials, but they leave a need for larger, multidimensional evidence on how perceived value, self-assessed ability, career aspirations, preferred methods, and preferred materials relate to one another. The present study addresses that need with 271 Sharia students and compares whether the resulting profiles differ across two course groups. Its survey design identifies perceived curricular priorities; it does not establish objective proficiency or intervention effects.

Inquiry and Digital Materials as Design Responses

Inquiry-based reading can position English as a means of investigating disciplinary questions rather than as an isolated subject, and empirical law articles are suitable for this purpose because their rhetorical organization makes it possible to trace a legal problem, method, evidence, and conclusion ([Tessuto, 2015](#)). Legal case briefing similarly provides a structured route from identifying facts and issues to evaluating reasoning, with evidence that it can foster critical thinking among legal English students ([La, 2024](#)). In a Sharia ESP context, students have also described research articles as resources for building reading comprehension and critical engagement when tasks include guidance, feedback, and opportunities to explain interpretations ([Triana et al., 2026](#)). Inquiry therefore requires more than assigning an authentic article; questions and reading stages must make the disciplinary work of the text visible.

Digital access does not by itself remove the difficulty of academic reading. A systematic review of second- and foreign-language digital reading found that strategy use and digital features do not automatically translate into stronger comprehension ([Reiber-Kuijpers et al., 2021](#)). Research on L2 academic reading further shows the value of coordinating tasks and feedback to scaffold comprehension and self-regulation ([Mežek et al., 2021](#)). For a blended Sharia ESP course, these findings support a sequence that establishes a reading purpose, previews legal and academic vocabulary, guides students through rhetorical sections, prompts source evaluation, and provides feedback before independent interpretation. Students' preferences for inquiry and online journal materials can justify testing such a design, but only an implemented intervention with objective reading measures could show whether it improves learning.

Materials and Methods

Research Design and Context

This study used a cross-sectional, survey-based needs analysis with a qualitative interview component. The survey was administered through Google Forms in 2025 to students of the Faculty of Shariah at Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta. Its wording and available records support associative descriptions rather than pretest-posttest or causal claims. The dataset contained 271 complete responses from six classes: two English for Islamic Business Law classes ($n = 90$) and four Digital Literacy classes ($n = 181$). Most responses (268 of 271) were recorded in June 2025. Following the survey, four purposively selected students participated in semi-structured interviews. Their accounts provided contextual qualitative evidence, while all numerical results were derived from 271 survey responses.

Participants

The respondents were Sharia students aged 18 to 25 years ($M = 19.74$, $SD = 1.81$). The sample included 209 women (77.1%) and 62 men (22.9%). Because two-thirds of the respondents were enrolled in digital literacy rather than English for Islamic Business Law, the population is described in this article as Sharia students rather than a sample drawn only from ESP classes. This distinction is important for interpreting the scope of the findings. Four interviewees were selected purposively from the study participants to provide contextual accounts of their reading experiences and preferences.

Instrument and Operationalization

The questionnaire contained 43 mandatory statements in Indonesian, preceded by questions about class, age, and gender. Every item response was complete, yielding 11,653 item-level observations for the analysis. Responses were rated on a four-point scale from 1 to 4; the value 5 did not occur in the dataset. The wording of the items was predominantly prospective in nature. Statements referring to what students expected, wanted, or needed were interpreted as needs and preferences rather than evaluations of an intervention already experienced.

Five composite dimensions were formed from substantive item blocks. Their structure was examined through exploratory factor analysis with promax rotation, following the established multivariate analysis procedures (Hair et al., 2010). Sampling adequacy was high (KMO = .955), and Bartlett's test was significant ($\chi^2(903) = 12,173.9$, $p < .001$). Five eigenvalues exceeded one (21.37, 4.82, 2.83, 1.83, and 1.08), and the five-factor solution explained 65.4% of the variance in the sample. Items 10 and 31 shifted across the blocks in the exploratory solution. The dimensions were retained because their labels remained faithful to the item-block wording, and each showed strong internal consistency; the alpha values were interpreted as scale-level evidence rather than proof that every response pattern was homogeneous (Vaske et al., 2017). Table 1 summarizes the item groupings and their scale statistics.

Table 1. Measurement dimensions and scale quality

Dimension	Items	Cronbach's α	M	SD	CITC
D1 Perceived value of English reading	1-10	.950	3.16	.572	.70-.86
D2 Self-assessed reading ability	11-20	.956	2.81	.624	.70-.86
D3 Career aspirations	21-30	.968	3.30	.622	.81-.88
D4 Inquiry-method preferences	31-35	.908	3.13	.574	.71-.81
D5 Online journal-material preferences	36-43	.941	3.10	.528	.72-.84

Note. CITC = corrected item-total correlation. Composite scores were the means of the four-point response scale.

Data Analysis

The analysis proceeded in five stages. First, the frequencies described the sample and response completeness of the data. Second, item blocks were summarized as composite means and standard deviations, and internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and corrected item-total correlations. Third, Pearson correlations described the associations among the five dimensions. Fourth, Welch's independent-samples t-tests compared students in English for Islamic Business Law and Digital Literacy classes, with Cohen's d used as an effect-size estimate. Finally, multiple linear regression used D2, self-assessed reading ability, as the dependent variable and D1, D3, D4, and D5 as predictors. Heteroscedasticity was detected by the Breusch-Pagan test ($p = .004$); therefore, the reported standard errors used the HC3 correction. All analyses were interpreted as associations, not causal effects.

The interview material was used interpretively, alongside the survey findings. The four student accounts are presented as an illustrative context for the needs dimensions and are not used to estimate prevalence, replace the survey results, or establish the effectiveness of a teaching intervention.

Results

Profile of Respondents

The dataset contained 271 complete responses. The largest single class was Digital Literacy -B ($n = 47$, 17.3%), followed by English for Islamic Business Law ($n = 46$, 17.00%). Students aged 19 to 24 years represented 82.3% of the sample; 24 respondents were 18 years old or younger, and 24 were 25 years old or older. The distributions are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Sample composition

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Course	English for Islamic Business Law-E	46	17.0
	English for Islamic Business Law-F	44	16.2
	Digital Literacy -A	44	16.2
	Digital Literacy -B	47	17.3
	Digital Literacy -C	45	16.6
	Digital Literacy -D	45	16.6
Gender	Women	209	77.1
	Men	62	22.9
Age	18 years or younger	24	8.9
	19-24 years	223	82.3
	25 years	24	8.9
Total		271	100.0

Patterns of English Reading Needs and Preferences

Career aspirations had the highest composite mean (D3, $M = 3.30$, $SD = .622$), followed by perceived value of English reading (D1, $M = 3.16$, $SD = .572$), inquiry-method preferences (D4, $M = 3.13$, $SD = .574$), and online journal-material preferences (D5, $M = 3.10$, $SD = .528$). Self-assessed reading ability was the lowest (D2, $M = 2.81$, $SD = .624$). The .49-point difference between D3 and D2 is substantial relative to the four-point response scale and represents the central needs-analysis finding: students attach high value to English reading and imagine important professional uses for it, while rating their current ability more modestly.

The five dimensions were positively correlated, with coefficients ranging from .422 to .768, and all correlations were significant at $p < .001$. The strongest association was between career aspirations and inquiry-method preferences ($r = .768$), followed by perceived value and career aspirations ($r = .756$). Inquiry-method preferences were also strongly associated with online journal-material preferences ($r = .696$). Self-assessed reading ability was moderately associated with perceived value ($r = .554$), inquiry-method preferences ($r = .537$), and online journal-material preferences ($r = .541$), while its association with career aspirations was weaker ($r = .422$). The complete correlation matrix is presented in [Table 3](#).

Table 3. Pearson correlations among the five needs dimensions

Dimension	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
D1 Perceived value	-				
D2 Self-assessed ability	.554	-			
D3 Career aspirations	.756	.422	-		
D4 Inquiry preferences	.727	.537	.768	-	
D5 Journal-material preferences	.580	.541	.525	.696	-

Note. All coefficients are significant at $p < .001$, two-tailed ($n = 271$).

Shared Patterns across Course Groups

Welch's independent-samples t-tests found no statistically significant difference between the English for Islamic Business Law and Digital Literacy students on any of the five dimensions. The largest observed difference was in self-assessed reading ability, which was slightly higher in the English for Islamic Business Law group ($M = 2.88$) than in the Digital Literacy group ($M = 2.75$); however, the difference was not significant ($p = .082$, $d = .21$). The effect sizes were small, ranging from -.15 to .21 ([Table 4](#)).

Table 4. Welch comparisons between course groups

Dimension	English for Islamic Business Law (n = 90)	Digital Literacy (n = 181)	t	p	d
D1 Perceived value	3.11	3.19	-1.20	.232	-.15
D2 Self-assessed ability	2.88	2.75	1.75	.082	.21
D3 Career aspirations	3.26	3.32	-.83	.405	-.10
D4 Inquiry preferences	3.11	3.14	-.36	.720	-.04
D5 Journal-material preferences	3.06	3.12	-.80	.426	-.10

Dimensions Associated with Self-Assessed Reading Ability

Table 5 shows that the regression model explained 39.2% of the variance in self-assessed reading ability ($R^2 = .392$, adjusted $R^2 = .383$, $F(4, 266) = 42.89$, $p < .001$). With HC3 standard errors, perceived value was positively associated with self-assessed ability ($\beta = .368$, $p = .001$) and journal-material preferences ($\beta = .270$, $p = .029$). Career aspirations had a small negative association ($\beta = -.146$, $p = .044$), while inquiry method preferences were not significant in the conventional HC3 model ($\beta = .194$, $p = .131$). All the VIF values were below 4.

Table 5. Multiple regression predicting self-assessed reading ability

Predictor	B	HC3 SE	β	t	p	95% CI	VIF
Constant	.377	.237	-	1.59	.111	[-.087, .840]	-
D1 Perceived value	.401	.122	.368	3.29	.001	[.162, .640]	2.74
D3 Career aspirations	-.147	.073	-.146	-2.01	.044	[-.290, -.004]	3.08
D4 Inquiry preferences	.211	.140	.194	1.51	.131	[-.063, .485]	3.60
D5 Journal-material preferences	.319	.146	.270	2.18	.029	[.032, .605]	2.00

Note. The dependent variable was D2 self-assessed reading ability. HC3 = heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors.

Students' Learning Experiences

The four semi-structured interviews added contextual details to the survey patterns. Students connected English reading with legal study and professional preparation, described journal articles as relevant sources, and emphasized the role of inquiry and feedback in supporting their responses. One student explained:

"This learning process provides a different experience, as it offers a new way of seeking information about law without having to conduct direct observation, namely by reading research articles."

A second student linked journal reading directly to legal work:

"Research articles in journals are closely related to careers in the legal field. I have found numerous specific terms in law as well as case studies on particular issues."

The interviews also highlighted feedback and close reading as part of an inquiry-oriented study. Students stated:

"We actively seek feedback to strengthen our findings, as it is essential in boosting our confidence in our responses."

Another student described the reading demands of the learning process as follows:

"Distance learning provides an impressive experience as it requires us to prepare answers for the lecturer's questions. We are compelled to read articles thoroughly."

Taken together, these accounts provide a student-level explanation for the high scores on perceived value, career aspirations, inquiry-method preferences, and journal-material preferences. Because they come from four purposively selected students, they are treated as contextual evidence rather than representative estimates for the full sample.

Discussion

The mean scores reveal more than a simple ordering of students' responses, as they reveal the distinction between necessities, lacks, and wants proposed by West (1994). Career aspirations received the highest score ($M = 3.30$), perceived value was rated highly ($M = 3.16$), and self-assessed reading ability occupied the lowest position ($M = 2.81$), which placed professional ambition and present confidence .49 points apart on the four-point scale. Taken together, these results suggest that English reading has acquired clear academic and professional importance for Sharia students, although their confidence in handling English texts has not developed to the same degree. Because the questionnaire measured students' perceptions rather than their demonstrated proficiency, this difference cannot be treated as an objective measure of reading deficiency; its significance lies in identifying a perceived distance between the reading competence students associate with their future roles and the competence they believe they currently possess.

Once the .49-point difference is understood as a perceived distance between future demands and present confidence, the curricular response becomes a matter of disciplinary access rather than general language remediation. Reading in Sharia studies involves legal terminology derived from several linguistic traditions, condensed academic prose, unfamiliar research conventions, and arguments that may move between normative positions, statutory interpretation, case analysis, and empirical evidence. Related legal English research shows that readers must connect discourse structures with legal concepts (Hartig, 2016), manage specialized language and legal background knowledge (Nhac, 2022), and recognize rhetorical moves in empirical law articles (Tessuto, 2015). Richards (2001) places this relationship between target-situation demands and learners' current resources at the center of needs analysis. Instruction could therefore progress from terminology and guided recognition of rhetorical structure to the comparison of claims and evidence in shorter passages, followed by the independent analysis of complete journal articles. Within such a sequence, scaffolding would prepare students to engage with authentic disciplinary texts without simplifying the intellectual and linguistic demands that make those texts valuable.

The correlation structure adds a further dimension to this interpretation because the strongest relationships connected students' professional aims with the way they preferred to learn. Career aspirations were strongly associated with inquiry preferences ($r = .768$), while inquiry preferences were also closely related to journal-material preferences ($r = .696$), indicating that students did not view teaching methods and reading materials as separate curricular choices. Instead, they tended to prefer a learning process in which questions arising from Islamic law gave them a reason to locate, read, and interpret current scholarly sources. This configuration is consistent with inquiry and disciplinary-reading research that combines questioning, evidence seeking, structured analysis, and formative guidance (Huang et al., 2024; La, 2024; Triana et al., 2026). Applied to ESP reading in Sharia studies, such a process could begin with the formulation of a legal question, continue through the selection and evaluation of relevant sources, and culminate in an interpretation that students must explain and defend through discussion or writing. The survey establishes that students are receptive to this form of learning; however, determining whether it improves their reading performance would require evidence from an actual instructional intervention.

Students' accounts help clarify how this relationship among disciplinary questions, journal materials, and guided inquiry may operate in coursework. Journal reading was described as a means of investigating legal issues without direct field observation and as an opportunity to encounter specialized terminology and case studies relevant to legal careers, while the requirement to answer the lecturer's questions encouraged students to read the assigned articles more thoroughly. Their comments concerning feedback are especially important because they show that the autonomy valued in inquiry-based learning did not mean working without academic guidance. Students wanted opportunities to search for evidence and formulate their own responses, yet they also relied on feedback to examine the strength of their findings and develop confidence in presenting them. Although four purposively selected participants cannot represent the range or frequency of experiences across the entire sample, their accounts provide contextual insight into why inquiry preferences, journal-material preferences, perceived value, and career aspirations were closely connected in the survey.

Because the materials preferred by students were predominantly online, the curricular issue extends beyond selecting appropriate texts to organizing the conditions under which those texts are accessed and studied. A systematic review cautions that digital strategy use and platform features do not automatically produce better L2 comprehension (Reiber-Kuijpers et al., 2021), while task-and-feedback research shows how structured support can develop academic reading and self-regulation (Mežek et al., 2021). Research on digital and blended ESP learning likewise emphasizes clear guidance, meaningful interaction, and support suited to learners' readiness (Bielousova, 2017; Makruf et al., 2022; Ošmjanski, 2022). In the present context, a carefully organized repository could group journal articles according to

legal topics and levels of difficulty, provide concise glossaries for specialized terminology, and include prompts that direct students toward research questions, arguments, evidence, and conclusions. Opportunities to compare annotations and discuss interpretations before receiving lecturer feedback would further connect independent reading with collaborative inquiry. Organizing online materials in this way would preserve their relevance and currency while preventing the digital environment from merely relocating the difficulty of dense academic reading from the printed page to the screen.

When the four dimensions were considered simultaneously in the regression model, perceived value ($\beta = .368$, $p = .001$) and journal-material preference ($\beta = .270$, $p = .029$) retained positive associations with self-assessed reading ability. This pattern suggests that students who recognized a clearer purpose for English reading and were more receptive to research-oriented materials also tended to report greater confidence in their reading ability. However, career aspiration showed a small negative coefficient after the other dimensions were held constant ($\beta = -.146$, $p = .044$), even though its bivariate relationship with self-assessed ability was positive. Rather than implying that professional ambition diminishes reading ability, this conditional relationship may indicate that students with demanding career expectations evaluate their current competence against a higher standard and consequently perceive a wider distance between their present skills and their desired professional capacity. Inquiry preference also remained positively related to ability but did not reach conventional significance in the HC3 model ($\beta = .194$, $p = .131$), which may reflect the substantial variance it shared with perceived value, career aspiration, and journal-material preference.

Ultimately, the broadly similar profiles of English for Islamic Business Law and Digital Literacy students indicate that the identified reading needs extend beyond the administrative boundaries of a particular course. As shown in [Table 4](#), none of the five dimensions differed significantly between the two groups, and the small effect sizes suggest that the two groups shared comparable perceptions of the value of English reading, their current ability, their professional aspirations, and their preferred learning arrangements. This result is consistent with studies showing that ESP provision in non-English departments often depends on wider questions of disciplinary alignment, appropriate materials, and institutional support rather than on the designation of a single language course ([Iswati & Triastuti, 2021](#); [Luo & Garner, 2017](#); [Rizal et al., 2025](#)). Therefore, a faculty-wide framework could establish common reading outcomes and provide a graded collection of Islamic law materials, while individual courses could adapt the questions, texts, and activities to their particular academic purposes. Since the sample came from one faculty and the measure of reading ability was based on self-assessment, the findings do not establish that all Sharia students have identical needs; they provide a basis for designing a course whose effects can subsequently be examined through objective reading assessments and longitudinal or pre-test-post-test evidence. In this sense, the present needs analysis identifies the curricular conditions from which an inquiry-based blended ESP course might be developed, while a later evaluation would determine whether that design actually reduces the distance between students' professional aspirations and their English reading competence.

Conclusion

This study shows that English reading occupies an important place in the academic and professional expectations of Sharia students, although their confidence in reading English texts remains below the level of those expectations. The combination of high career aspirations, strong recognition of the value of English reading, and preferences for inquiry-based activities and journal materials suggests that an ESP curriculum for Sharia students should connect language development with authentic legal questions and scholarly sources. The students' accounts further illustrate that journal reading becomes more meaningful when it introduces relevant legal terminology and case-based knowledge and when inquiry activities are accompanied by constructive lecturer feedback. Similar patterns found in the two course groups also indicate that English reading is a shared need across the faculty rather than a concern limited to students enrolled in English for Islamic Business Law.

These conclusions should be considered in light of several limitations of this study. The participants came from six classes within a single faculty at one university, which limits the extent to which the findings can be generalized to Sharia students in other institutions in Indonesia. Reading ability was measured through students' self-assessments rather than an objective proficiency test, while the cross-sectional design captured relationships among perceptions, aspirations, and learning preferences without showing how they developed over time or whether inquiry-based blended instruction improved reading performance. In addition, the accounts of the four purposively selected students provided valuable contextual explanations but did not represent the full range of experiences in the sample. Future studies should therefore involve students from multiple Sharia faculties, combine questionnaires with objective assessments of English reading and legal-text comprehension, and evaluate an implemented inquiry-based blended

ESP course using longitudinal, pretest–posttest or quasi-experimental designs. A broader qualitative component could also examine how students use lecturer feedback, online journal resources, and disciplinary inquiry to develop the confidence and competence required for academic and professional reading in the future.

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