

The Effectiveness of E-Court and E-Litigation Implementation in the Religious Court System as an Instrument of Access to Justice (An Empirical Study at the Pemalang Religious Court)

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Abstract. *The implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation has become an important strategy for improving judicial efficiency and expanding access to justice in Indonesia. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of E-Court and E-Litigation at the Pemalang Religious Court, examine their legal implications for justice seekers, and formulate an ideal model of judicial digitalization based on the maqāṣid al- syarī'ah approach. This research employed an empirical legal method with a socio-juridical approach. Primary data were obtained through interviews with judges, court clerks, E-Court officers, legal aid personnel, advocates, and litigants, while secondary data were collected from legislation, court reports, and legal literature. The data were analyzed qualitatively using Soerjono Soekanto's theory of legal effectiveness, Satjipto Rahardjo's progressive legal theory, and Jasser Auda's maqāṣid al- syarī'ah framework. The findings indicate that the implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation at the Pemalang Religious Court has generally been effective, as reflected in the significant increase in electronic judicial services between 2019 and 2025. The system has improved administrative efficiency, reduced litigation costs, enhanced procedural flexibility, and expanded access to justice. However, challenges related to internet connectivity, system disruptions, and digital literacy remain. This study proposes an ideal judicial digitalization model based on hifz al- māl, hifz al- nafs, hifz al- ' aql, and hifz al- ' adl through the integration of a Hybrid Justice Model, Digital Legal Aid, and Digital Literacy Enhancement. The model offers a framework for developing inclusive, human-centered, and substantively just digital justice within the Indonesian Religious Court system.*

Keywords: E-Court; E-Litigation; Justice; Progressive; Religious.

1. Introduction

Digital transformation has become an integral component of judicial reform in many jurisdictions. Previous studies indicate that the implementation of electronic

court systems contributes significantly to improving judicial efficiency, procedural transparency, and accessibility of legal services (Rahmat et al., 2025: 70–77; Rahmad et al., 2025: 527–533). The development of information technology has encouraged courts worldwide to adopt digital-based services to meet public demands for a justice system that is more effective, accessible, and responsive. As a result, judicial digitalization is no longer perceived merely as a technological innovation but as a strategic instrument for strengthening access to justice and enhancing the quality of public legal services.

The Indonesian judiciary has responded to this global trend through the implementation of the E-Court and E-Litigation systems regulated under Supreme Court Regulation (PERMA) No. 1 of 2019, as amended by Supreme Court Regulation No. 7 of 2022 concerning Electronic Case Administration and Court Proceedings. These regulations facilitate electronic case registration, online payment of court fees, electronic summons, and virtual court proceedings. The implementation of these systems is expected to support the realization of the principles of simple, speedy, and low-cost justice as mandated by Law No. 48 of 2009 concerning Judicial Power.

Religious Courts occupy a strategic position in the implementation of judicial digitalization because they handle disputes directly related to family law, including divorce, child custody, maintenance, inheritance, and Islamic economic disputes. Such cases involve not only legal dimensions but also social, psychological, and economic considerations affecting litigants. Therefore, the success of judicial digitalization should not merely be assessed based on technological adoption but also on its ability to improve access to justice for communities seeking legal remedies, particularly vulnerable groups facing economic and technological limitations.

The concept of access to justice emphasizes that justice should not be understood solely as formal access to judicial institutions but also as the practical ability of individuals to obtain fair, effective, and affordable legal remedies (Cappelletti & Garth, 1978: 6–10). In the context of judicial digitalization, this concept becomes increasingly relevant because technological transformation may simultaneously create opportunities and barriers. While digital platforms can reduce costs and procedural delays, they may also generate exclusion for individuals with limited digital literacy and inadequate access to technological infrastructure.

The implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation at the Pemalang Religious Court provides an important empirical context for examining these issues. Statistical data demonstrate a substantial increase in the utilization of electronic judicial services. The percentage of cases registered through E-Court increased from only 2.07% in 2019 to 99.07% in 2025. Likewise, the number of cases processed through E-Litigation reached 4,213 cases in 2025. These figures indicate that the

institutional adoption of digital justice has been highly successful from an administrative perspective.

Despite this achievement, field conditions reveal several challenges affecting the effectiveness of judicial digitalization. The geographical characteristics of Pemalang Regency, which encompass both coastal and mountainous areas, contribute to disparities in internet accessibility and technological infrastructure. Interviews conducted during this research indicate that a significant portion of court users still experience difficulties in using electronic systems independently due to limited digital literacy, inadequate internet connectivity, and insufficient familiarity with information technology. As a result, many litigants continue to rely on advocates or court officers to access electronic judicial services.

Several previous studies have examined the implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation from various perspectives. Rahmat et al. (2025: 70–77) concluded that E-Court significantly improves administrative efficiency within the judiciary. Rahmad et al. (2025: 527–533) found that electronic court services contribute positively to procedural effectiveness and legal certainty. Nevertheless, most existing studies focus primarily on institutional efficiency and administrative modernization. Limited attention has been given to the socio-legal implications of judicial digitalization, particularly concerning access to justice among vulnerable communities within the Religious Court system.

This research addresses that gap by examining the effectiveness of E-Court and E-Litigation through the perspective of legal effectiveness theory proposed by Soerjono Soekanto, progressive legal theory developed by Satjipto Rahardjo, and the *maqāṣid al- syarī'ah* framework introduced by Jasser Auda. The novelty of this study lies in its integration of legal, socio-legal, and Islamic legal perspectives to evaluate judicial digitalization within the Religious Court environment. Accordingly, this research aims to analyze the effectiveness of E-Court and E-Litigation implementation in the Religious Court system, examine its legal implications for justice seekers, and formulate an ideal model for judicial digitalization that promotes substantive justice and public welfare.

2. Research Methods

This study employed an empirical legal research method with a socio-juridical approach. The socio-juridical approach was used to examine the implementation of legal norms and their application in society, particularly regarding the implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation within the Religious Court system (Soekanto, 2012: 51; Suratman & Dillah, 2014: 88). The research was conducted at the Pemalang Religious Court, Central Java, Indonesia. A descriptive-analytical research specification was used to analyze the effectiveness of electronic judicial services in providing access to justice for court users (Sunggono, 2013: 38). The data consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through

interviews with judges, court clerks, E-Court officers, advocates, and litigants who had experience using electronic judicial services. Secondary data were collected from statutory regulations, legal literature, scientific journals, official reports, and other relevant documents concerning digitalization and Religious Court administration. Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, and document studies (Moleong, 2017: 186; Sugiyono, 2019: 296). The collected data were analyzed qualitatively through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014: 12). The analysis employed Soerjono Soekanto's theory of legal effectiveness to assess the effectiveness of E-Court and E-Litigation implementation (Soekanto, 2010: 8–9), Satjipto Rahardjo's progressive legal theory to examine its legal implications (Rahardjo, 2009: 5–7), and Jasser Auda's *maqāṣid al- syarī'ah* approach to formulate an ideal model of judicial digitalization oriented toward substantive justice and public welfare (Auda, 2008: 2–5).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. E-Court and E-Litigation in the Indonesian Religious Court System

The rapid development of information technology has encouraged judicial institutions worldwide to adopt digital-based service systems as part of judicial reform. Digital transformation within the judiciary is intended to improve efficiency, transparency, accountability, and accessibility of legal services. In Indonesia, judicial digitalization has become one of the strategic policies implemented by the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia to realize the principles of simple, speedy, and low-cost justice (Susskind, 2019: 12–15). The implementation of electronic judicial services reflects the judiciary's commitment to adapting to technological developments while enhancing public access to legal remedies and court services (Rahmat et al., 2025: 70–77).

E-Court is an electronic court administration system developed by the Supreme Court to facilitate case administration through digital platforms. The system enables court users to conduct electronic case registration (*e-filing*), online payment of court fees (*e-payment*), electronic summons (*e-summons*), and access to case information through an integrated platform (Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019). The introduction of E-Court represents a significant shift from conventional judicial court administration toward a technology-based service model. Through this system, litigants can access judicial services more efficiently without being physically present at the courthouse during the administrative stages of litigation.

The implementation of E-Court also extends broader efforts to modernize judicial administration. Traditional court procedures often require litigants to visit court offices repeatedly for registration, fee payment, and document submission. Such procedures frequently result in additional costs and delays, particularly for

litigants living in remote areas. The E-Court system seeks to address these challenges by simplifying procedural requirements and reducing administrative burdens through electronic services (Rahmad et al., 2025: 527–533).

E-Litigation constitutes a further development of judicial digitalization by extending electronic services beyond administrative processes into the litigation stage. Through E-Litigation, parties may submit statements of claims, answers, replications, duplications, and conclusions electronically. Court proceedings can also be conducted through electronic platforms in accordance with procedural requirements established by the Supreme Court (Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019). The introduction of E-Litigation has transformed conventional litigation practices by enabling greater procedural flexibility while maintaining legal certainty and procedural fairness.

The emergence of E-Court and E-Litigation forms part of a broader judicial digitalization agenda. Judicial digitalization refers to the integration of information and communication technology into court administration and adjudication processes. This transformation aims not only to improve institutional efficiency but also to strengthen transparency, accountability, and public trust in judicial institutions. The use of digital technology enables courts to provide faster services, improve document management, and facilitate access to information for court users (Susskind, 2019: 17–21). As a result, digitalization has become an important instrument for enhancing the quality of judicial services in contemporary legal systems.

The legal foundation for E-Court and E-Litigation is primarily established through Supreme Court Regulation (PERMA) No. 1 of 2019 concerning Electronic Case Administration and Court Proceedings. This regulation introduced a comprehensive framework governing electronic case registration, electronic fee payments, electronic summons, and electronic litigation procedures (Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019). PERMA No. 1 of 2019 marked a significant milestone in Indonesian judicial reform because it formally recognized electronic administration and proceedings as integral components of the judicial process.

Further development of the electronic judicial system was reinforced through Supreme Court Regulation (PERMA) No. 7 of 2022, which amended several provisions of PERMA No. 1 of 2019. The amendment aimed to strengthen the implementation of electronic judicial services, expand access for court users, and improve procedural effectiveness. The revised regulation also accommodates broader participation by non-advocate litigants, thereby supporting the principle of equal access to justice (Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022). The regulatory framework demonstrates the Supreme Court's commitment to continuously improving digital judicial services in response to technological developments and societal needs.

The establishment of E-Court and E-Litigation is intended to achieve several objectives. First, the system seeks to enhance efficiency in court administration and litigation processes. Second, it aims to reduce litigation costs and procedural delays experienced by litigants. Third, it supports transparency and accountability by ensuring that procedural activities are recorded electronically. Fourth, the system promotes broader access to justice by enabling court users to access judicial services regardless of geographical limitations (Cappelletti & Garth, 1978: 6–10). These objectives indicate that judicial digitalization is not merely a technological innovation but also a legal policy designed to improve the quality of judicial services and strengthen public access to justice.

Within the Religious Court system, E-Court and E-Litigation play a particularly important role because Religious Courts handle a high volume of family law disputes, including divorce, maintenance, child custody, inheritance, and Islamic economic matters. The implementation of electronic judicial services is therefore expected to facilitate dispute resolution while reducing procedural barriers faced by justice seekers. Consequently, E-Court and E-Litigation serve as the conceptual and institutional foundation for evaluating the effectiveness of judicial digitalization at the Pemalang Religious Court, which constitutes the primary focus of this study.

3.2. Implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation at the Pemalang Religious Court

The implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation at the Pemalang Religious Court represents a practical manifestation of judicial digitalization within the Indonesian Religious Court system. Since the enactment of Supreme Court Regulation (PERMA) no. 1 of 2019 and its amendment through PERMA No. 7 of 2022, the Pemalang Religious Court has gradually integrated electronic judicial services into its administrative and litigation processes. The implementation aims to improve service efficiency, reduce procedural delays, and expand access to justice for court users (Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019; Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022).

The E-Court mechanism at the Pemalang Religious Court begins with electronic case registration (*e-filing*), followed by online payment of court fees (*e-payment*), electronic summons (*e-summons*), and electronic access to case information. Through this mechanism, litigants can complete administrative procedures without physically attending the court office. Such a system significantly reduces administrative burdens and transaction costs traditionally associated with litigation processes (Rahmat et al., 2025: 70–77). The implementation of E-Court also supports procedural transparency by enabling court users to monitor case progress electronically.

The E-Litigation mechanism extends digitalization into the adjudication stage. Parties are permitted to submit answers, replications, duplications, and

conclusions electronically through the integrated court platform. Electronic proceedings are conducted according to procedural schedules determined by the panel of judges while maintaining procedural fairness and legal certainty (Rahmad et al., 2025: 527–533). The availability of E-Litigation has provided greater flexibility for litigants, particularly those living far from the courthouse or facing economic constraints that limit their ability to physically attend hearings.

Empirical data indicates a significant increase in the utilization of electronic judicial services at the Pemalang Religious Court between 2019 and 2025. The growth in E-Court usage demonstrates increasing public acceptance of digital judicial services and reflects the institutional commitment of the court to implementing judicial modernization policies. The following table presents the statistics of cases handled by the Pemalang Religious Court during the study period.

Table Case Statistics at the Pemalang Religious Court (2019–2025)

Year	Total Cases	Divorce Cases	Percentage (%)	Other Cases	Percentage (%)
2019	5,021	4,138	82. 41	883	17. 59
2020	5,184	4,296	82. 87	888	17. 13
2021	5,267	4,412	83. 77	855	16. 23
2022	5,341	4,498	84. 21	843	15. 79
2023	5,426	4,612	84. 99	814	15. 01
2024	5,508	4,705	85. 42	803	14. 58
2025	5,587	4,792	85. 77	795	14. 23

Source: Annual Reports of the Pemalang Religious Court (2019–2025).

The data indicates that divorce cases consistently dominated the court's caseload throughout the study period, accounting for more than 80% of all incoming cases. This finding demonstrates the significant role of the Religious Court in resolving family disputes and highlights the importance of effective judicial services in family law adjudication.

The implementation of E-Court also experienced substantial growth during the research period. Initially, electronic registration was utilized primarily by advocates; however, subsequent regulatory developments and institutional socialization efforts expanded its use among non-advocate litigants. As a result, the percentage of electronic case registration increased significantly over time.

Table E-Court Utilization Statistics at the Pemalang Religious Court (2019–2025)

Year	Total Cases	E-Court Cases	Percentage (%)
2019	5,021	104	2. 07
2020	5,184	497	9. 59
2021	5,267	1,248	23. 70
2022	5,341	2,912	54. 52
2023	5,426	4,726	87. 10
2024	5,508	5,332	96. 81
2025	5,587	5,535	99. 07

Source: Annual Reports of the Pemalang Religious Court (2019–2025).

The utilization of E-Litigation also demonstrated a similar trend. Increasing familiarity with electronic proceedings and institutional support contributed to the growing acceptance of digital litigation among court users.

Table E-Litigation Utilization Statistics at the Pemalang Religious Court (2019–2025)

Year	E-Litigation Cases
2019	15
2020	163
2021	754
2022	1,986
2023	3,278
2024	3,895
2025	4,213

Source: Annual Reports of the Pemalang Religious Court (2019–2025).

Field observations and interview findings reveal that the implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation has generally improved procedural efficiency and reduced litigation costs. Judges, court clerks, and E-Court officers acknowledged that electronic administration accelerated case processing and facilitated document management. Advocates and litigants also reported that electronic services reduced travel expenses and waiting times. These findings support previous studies emphasizing the positive contribution of judicial digitalization to administrative effectiveness and service quality (Rahmat et al., 2025: 70–77).

Despite these achievements, several challenges remain. Interview results indicate that unstable internet connections, system maintenance, occasional logout problems, and document upload errors continue to affect the implementation of electronic judicial services. Furthermore, limited digital literacy among certain court users, particularly those living in rural areas, remains a significant obstacle to the full realization of access to justice through digital platforms. These findings suggest that the success of judicial digitalization depends not only on technological infrastructure but also on the capacity of users to engage effectively with electronic systems (APJII, 2024: 22–25).

Overall, the implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation at the Pemalang Religious Court demonstrates substantial progress in judicial modernization. The significant increase in electronic service utilization, combined with positive perceptions among court users, indicates that digital judicial services have become an essential component of contemporary Religious Court administration. Nevertheless, the persistence of technological and socio-cultural challenges underscores the need for continuous institutional improvement to ensure that judicial digitalization contributes effectively to broader access to justice.

3.3. The Effectiveness of E-Court and E-Litigation in the Religious Court System

The effectiveness of E-Court and E-Litigation implementation at the Pemalang Religious Court can be analyzed through Soerjono Soekanto's theory of legal effectiveness. According to Soekanto, the effectiveness of law is influenced by five

interrelated factors, namely legal substance, law enforcement officers, facilities and infrastructure, society, and legal culture (Soekanto, 2010: 8–9). The successful implementation of judicial digitalization depends not only on the existence of regulations but also on the readiness of institutions, technological infrastructure, and community acceptance. Therefore, assessing the effectiveness of E-Court and E-Litigation requires a comprehensive examination of these five factors.

1) Legal Substance

Legal substance constitutes the normative foundation that determines whether a legal system can operate effectively. The implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation in Indonesia is primarily regulated through Supreme Court Regulation (PERMA) No. 1 of 2019 concerning Electronic Case Administration and Court Proceedings, which was subsequently amended by PERMA No. 7 of 2022. These regulations provide a comprehensive legal framework governing electronic case registration, electronic payment, electronic summons, and electronic litigation procedures (Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019; Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022).

Interview findings indicate that judges and court administrators generally perceive the existing regulatory framework as sufficiently clear and supportive of judicial digitalization. The regulations provide legal certainty regarding the validity of electronic documents and online proceedings. The amendments introduced through PERMA No. 7 of 2022 have further strengthened procedural effectiveness by expanding access for non-advocate litigants and improving the technical implementation of electronic services. These findings suggest that the legal substance governing E-Court and E-Litigation has effectively facilitated the modernization of judicial administration.

From the perspective of legal effectiveness theory, a regulation is considered effective when it is understandable, implementable, and capable of achieving its intended objectives (Soekanto, 2010: 11). The increasing utilization of E-Court and E-Litigation at the Pemalang Religious Court demonstrates that the existing regulatory framework has successfully provided a normative basis for electronic judicial services. Consequently, the legal substance factor can be considered one of the strongest supporting elements in the implementation of judicial digitalization.

2) Law Enforcement Officers

The effectiveness of legal norms is closely related to the role of law enforcement officers responsible for implementing them. In the context of judicial digitalization, judges, court clerks, E-Court officers, and legal aid personnel play a central role in ensuring that electronic services operate effectively. Their competence, professionalism, and responsiveness significantly influence the success of E-Court and E-Litigation implementation (Soekanto, 2010: 12).

Interview results with judges reveal that electronic judicial services have accelerated administrative procedures and improved case management efficiency. Judges acknowledged that electronic document submission facilitates the examination process by enabling easier access to case files and reducing administrative delays. Court clerks similarly reported that digital administration has simplified document management and enhanced procedural transparency.

The role of E-Court officers is equally important in assisting litigants during the transition from conventional to electronic procedures. Interview findings indicate that these officers actively provide technical guidance to court users, particularly non-advocate litigants unfamiliar with electronic systems. In addition, legal aid services (Posbakum) contribute significantly to improving access to justice by assisting litigants who encounter difficulties in using E-Court and E-Litigation platforms.

The professionalism demonstrated by judges, court clerks, E-Court officers, and Posbakum personnel reflects a positive institutional response to judicial digitalization. Their active involvement has reduced procedural barriers and facilitated broader public acceptance of electronic judicial services. Therefore, the law enforcement factor can be regarded as a significant contributor to the effectiveness of E-Court and E-Litigation implementation.

3) Facilities and Infrastructure

Facilities and infrastructure constitute essential components of legal effectiveness because legal norms cannot operate effectively without adequate supporting resources (Soekanto, 2010: 13). The implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation relies heavily on internet connectivity, server capacity, software applications, and technological devices available within the court environment.

Field observations indicate that the Pemalang Religious Court has generally provided adequate technological infrastructure to support electronic judicial services. Computer facilities, internet networks, and integrated judicial applications have enabled the implementation of electronic administration and online proceedings. Nevertheless, interview findings reveal several technical challenges that continue to affect system performance.

The most frequently reported problems include unstable internet connections, periodic server maintenance, system logout issues, and document upload errors. Judges and court officers explained that these technical disruptions occasionally delay procedural activities and create inconvenience for litigants. Similar challenges have also been identified in previous studies examining judicial digitalization in Indonesia (Rahmat et al., 2025: 70–77).

Although these obstacles have not significantly hindered the overall implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation, they indicate that technological

infrastructure remains an important area requiring continuous improvement. Consequently, the facilities and infrastructure factor can be considered effective but still requires further strengthening to ensure optimal service delivery.

4) Society and Digital Literacy

The societal factor constitutes one of the most critical determinants of legal effectiveness because legal systems ultimately operate within social environments. The effectiveness of E-Court and E-Litigation depends not only on institutional readiness but also on the ability of court users to utilize electronic services effectively (Soekanto, 2010: 14).

Empirical findings reveal significant variations in digital literacy among court users. Litigants residing in urban areas generally demonstrate greater familiarity with information technology and electronic services. Conversely, many litigants from rural areas continue to experience difficulties in operating digital platforms, uploading documents, and managing electronic correspondence. These limitations frequently require them to seek assistance from advocates, family members, or court officers.

Interview results further indicate that elderly litigants and individuals with limited educational backgrounds encounter greater challenges in adapting to electronic judicial procedures. Such conditions reflect the existence of a digital divide, defined as unequal access to technology and digital capabilities among different social groups (APJII, 2024: 22–25). The digital divide creates potential barriers to access to justice because not all litigants possess the same capacity to utilize electronic judicial services independently.

Despite these challenges, increasing levels of E-Court utilization suggest that public acceptance of judicial digitalization has improved considerably over time. Continuous socialization programs, technical assistance, and legal aid services have positively contributed to enhancing public participation in electronic judicial processes. Therefore, although the societal factor remains a significant challenge, it has shown gradual improvement throughout the implementation period.

5) Legal Culture

Legal culture refers to societal attitudes, values, and behavioral patterns toward law and legal institutions (Soekanto, 2010: 15). The implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation requires not only technological adaptation but also cultural transformation within both judicial institutions and society.

Interview findings indicate that judges, court administrators, advocates, and litigants have increasingly accepted electronic judicial services as part of contemporary court administration. Advocates who initially preferred conventional procedures have gradually adapted to electronic filing and online

proceedings due to their efficiency and convenience. Similarly, many litigants now perceive electronic services as more practical and cost-effective than traditional procedures.

The emergence of a digital legal culture within the Religious Court system demonstrates that judicial digitalization has become increasingly institutionalized. Acceptance of electronic administration and litigation reflects changing perceptions regarding the relationship between technology and justice. The growing willingness of court users to engage with electronic services indicates that digital judicial practices have become a normal component of legal processes.

Based on the five factors proposed by Soerjono Soekanto, the implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation at the Pemalang Religious Court can generally be considered effective. Legal substance provides a strong normative framework, law enforcement officers demonstrate professionalism and responsiveness, technological infrastructure well supports implementation despite technical challenges, public acceptance continues to improve, and legal culture increasingly accommodates digital judicial practices. Nevertheless, persistent challenges related to technological infrastructure and digital literacy indicate that further institutional efforts are required to ensure that digitalization contributes fully to broader access to justice and substantive legal protection.

3.4. Legal Implications of E-Court and E-Litigation for Justice Seekers

The implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation has generated significant legal implications for justice seekers within the Religious Court system. Beyond serving as technological innovations, electronic judicial services have transformed administrative procedures, litigation processes, and access to justice. These transformations can be analyzed through Satjipto Rahardjo's progressive legal theory, which emphasizes that law should function as an instrument for serving human needs and promoting substantive justice rather than merely maintaining procedural formalities (Rahardjo, 2009: 5–7). From this perspective, the success of judicial digitalization should be evaluated based on its ability to facilitate public access to legal remedies and enhance the quality of judicial services.

1) Administrative Efficiency

One of the most significant implications of E-Court and E-Litigation is the improvement of administrative efficiency within the Religious Court system. Electronic case registration, online payment mechanisms, electronic summons, and digital document management have simplified procedural requirements and reduced administrative burdens for both court personnel and litigants. Interview findings indicate that court users no longer need to visit the courthouse repeatedly for administrative purposes, resulting in substantial reductions in travel expenses and procedural costs.

The efficiency generated by electronic administration is also reflected in the reduction of processing time. Court officers reported that digital document management accelerates case administration and minimizes delays associated with conventional filing systems. These findings support previous studies demonstrating that judicial digitalization contributes positively to administrative effectiveness and procedural efficiency (Rahmat et al., 2025: 70–77). As a result, E-Court and E-Litigation have transformed court administration into a more responsive and efficient system capable of meeting contemporary societal expectations.

2) Electronic Proceedings

The implementation of E-Litigation has significantly altered the procedural dynamics of court proceedings. Electronic submission of answers, replications, duplications, and conclusions enables litigants to participate in judicial processes without being physically present in court. This procedural flexibility has become particularly beneficial for litigants living in distant locations or facing economic constraints that limit their ability to attend hearings regularly.

Interview results indicate that electronic proceedings reduce procedural delays and improve case management efficiency. Judges acknowledged that electronic document submission facilitates the examination process and allows for more structured management of litigation schedules. Litigants also reported that E-Litigation reduces transportation costs and minimizes disruptions to their professional and personal responsibilities. These findings suggest that electronic proceedings contribute positively to procedural effectiveness while preserving legal certainty and due process guarantees (Rahmad et al., 2025: 527–533).

The flexibility introduced by E-Litigation reflects the progressive legal principle that legal procedures should adapt to societal developments and technological advancements. According to Rahardjo, legal institutions should continuously evolve to serve social needs rather than rigidly preserving traditional procedural models (Rahardjo, 2009: 89–92). Therefore, the transition toward electronic proceedings represents a practical manifestation of progressive legal reform within the Indonesian judiciary.

3) Access to Justice

The implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation has also expanded access to justice by reducing geographical and economic barriers traditionally associated with court services. Electronic judicial services enable litigants to access legal remedies regardless of their physical distance from court facilities. This development is particularly important in regions where transportation costs and travel time constitute significant obstacles to court access.

Interview findings reveal that many court users perceive electronic judicial services as more accessible and affordable than conventional procedures. Reduced transportation expenses, lower administrative costs, and simplified procedural requirements have enabled greater participation in judicial processes. These findings are consistent with the concept of access to justice, which emphasizes the practical ability of individuals to obtain effective legal remedies without facing excessive financial or procedural burdens (Cappelletti & Garth, 1978: 6–10).

Nevertheless, access to justice remains uneven due to disparities in digital literacy and technological accessibility. Rural communities, elderly litigants, and individuals with limited technological skills continue to encounter difficulties in using electronic judicial services independently. Under such circumstances, legal aid services (Posbakum) play a crucial role in assisting litigants and ensuring equal access to judicial processes. Interview results indicate that Posbakum personnel frequently provide technical assistance related to account registration, document submission, and procedural guidance. Their involvement helps mitigate digital barriers and contributes significantly to the realization of equal access to justice.

4) Substantive Justice

The most important implication of E-Court and E-Litigation concerns their contribution to substantive justice. Progressive legal theory emphasizes that legal institutions should prioritize justice outcomes rather than merely ensuring procedural compliance (Rahardjo, 2009: 112–115). Consequently, the effectiveness of judicial digitalization should be assessed based on its ability to protect the rights and interests of litigants.

Interview findings indicate that electronic judicial services have generally strengthened procedural fairness by improving transparency, facilitating access to information, and ensuring greater predictability in judicial processes. Litigants are able to monitor case developments electronically, access procedural information more easily, and communicate more efficiently with court institutions. These improvements contribute to greater legal certainty and enhanced protection of litigants' procedural rights.

The role of judges remains central in ensuring that technological efficiency does not compromise substantive justice. Electronic procedures should function as tools for improving judicial services rather than replacing judicial discretion and human judgment. Judges continue to exercise their authority in evaluating evidence, assessing legal arguments, and ensuring fair treatment of all parties. Similarly, the involvement of Posbakum and court officers remains essential in assisting vulnerable litigants who face difficulties in navigating electronic systems.

From the perspective of progressive legal theory, the implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation demonstrates a significant shift toward a more responsive and

people-oriented judicial system. The reduction of procedural costs, improvement of service efficiency, flexibility of court proceedings, enhancement of access to justice, and protection of litigants' rights collectively indicate that judicial digitalization has generated positive legal implications for justice seekers. Although challenges related to digital inequality remain, the overall implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation reflects an important step toward a judicial system that is more accessible, efficient, and substantively just.

3.5. An Ideal Model of Judicial Digitalization in the Perspective of *Maqāṣid al-Syarī'ah*

The implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation within the Religious Court system demonstrates that judicial digitalization has become an unavoidable aspect of contemporary legal development. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of digital justice should not be evaluated solely through administrative efficiency and technological advancement. A broader assessment requires consideration of the extent to which digitalization promotes public welfare, protects fundamental rights, and contributes to substantive justice. In this regard, Jasser Auda's *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* approach provides a comprehensive analytical framework because it emphasizes the realization of human welfare (*maslahah*) as the ultimate objective of legal systems (Auda, 2008: 2–5). According to it, an ideal model of judicial digitalization should be designed not only to enhance procedural efficiency but also to achieve broader social and legal benefits.

1) Hifz al- Māl (Protection of Property)

One of the most visible benefits of E-Court and E-Litigation is the reduction of litigation costs incurred by justice seekers. Electronic case registration, online payment systems, and virtual proceedings significantly decrease transportation expenses, accommodation costs, and other procedural expenditures traditionally associated with litigation. Interview findings indicate that litigants perceive electronic judicial services as more economical than conventional procedures because they eliminate the need for repeated visits to court facilities.

From the perspective of *hifz al- māl*, judicial digitalization contributes directly to the protection of individual property rights by minimizing unnecessary financial burdens during legal proceedings. Auda argues that contemporary legal systems should promote economic welfare and prevent avoidable financial hardship whenever possible (Auda, 2008: 245–248). Consequently, the cost-efficiency generated by E-Court and E-Litigation reflects an important realization of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* within the judicial context.

2) Hifz al- Nafs (Protection of Human Well-Being)

Judicial proceedings often generate psychological stress and emotional pressure for litigants, particularly in family law disputes involving divorce, child custody, and

maintenance claims. The implementation of E-Litigation provides greater procedural flexibility, enabling litigants to participate in judicial processes without the need for frequent physical attendance at court facilities. Such flexibility reduces logistical difficulties and psychological burdens associated with litigation.

Interview results indicate that many litigants appreciate the convenience provided by electronic proceedings because they can participate in judicial processes while maintaining their daily activities and professional responsibilities. These findings demonstrate that judicial digitalization contributes to the protection of human well-being by reducing procedural stress and facilitating a more humane litigation environment. From the *maqāṣid* perspective, this reflects the realization of *hifẓ al-nafs*, which seeks to preserve human dignity, security, and well-being (Auda, 2008: 250–252).

3) *Hifẓ al-' Aql* (Protection and Development of Human Intellect)

The success of judicial digitalization depends significantly on the ability of society to understand and utilize technological systems. The increasing use of E-Court and E-Litigation has encouraged litigants, advocates, and court personnel to develop digital competencies and technological literacy. Such developments contribute not only to procedural efficiency but also to the broader enhancement of human intellectual capacity.

Nevertheless, empirical findings reveal that disparities in digital literacy remain a significant challenge. Rural communities, elderly litigants, and individuals with limited educational backgrounds continue to face difficulties in accessing electronic judicial services. These conditions highlight the importance of continuous digital literacy programs aimed at improving public understanding of judicial technology.

Within the *maqāṣid* framework, *hifẓ al-' aql* extends beyond the protection of intellect and includes the promotion of education, knowledge, and intellectual development (Auda, 2008: 255–258). Consequently, efforts to improve digital literacy among court users constitute an essential component of an ideal judicial digitalization model.

4) *Hifẓ al-' Adl* (Protection of Justice)

Justice represents the central objective of every legal system. Judicial digitalization should therefore be evaluated according to its capacity to enhance fairness, transparency, and equal treatment before the law. The implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation has increased procedural transparency by enabling litigants to monitor case developments electronically and access judicial information more efficiently.

Interview findings further indicate that electronic judicial services contribute to greater procedural predictability and legal certainty. However, technological innovation alone cannot guarantee substantive justice. Judicial discretion, legal aid services, and institutional responsiveness remain essential in ensuring that vulnerable groups are not excluded from access to legal remedies.

Auda emphasizes that justice constitutes one of the most important objectives of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* and should serve as a guiding principle in legal development (Auda, 2008: 263–266). Therefore, judicial digitalization must be designed to ensure that technological efficiency strengthens rather than diminishes substantive justice.

5) Hybrid Justice Model

The empirical findings of this study indicate that full digitalization may not be equally accessible to all segments of society. While many litigants have successfully adapted to electronic services, others continue to face technological barriers arising from limited digital literacy and inadequate internet access. Consequently, an ideal model of judicial digitalization should incorporate a *hybrid justice* approach that combines electronic services with conventional judicial mechanisms.

The hybrid justice model allows litigants who are technologically capable to utilize E-Court and E-Litigation fully, while simultaneously preserving conventional service options for individuals facing technological limitations. Such flexibility ensures that judicial digitalization remains inclusive and responsive to diverse social conditions. This approach is consistent with both progressive legal theory and *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* because it prioritizes human needs rather than imposing rigid procedural requirements.

6) Digital Legal Aid

The findings of this research demonstrate that legal aid services play a crucial role in supporting access to electronic judicial services. Posbakum personnel frequently assist litigants in account registration, document submission, and procedural navigation. Their contribution helps reduce technological barriers and promotes equal participation in judicial processes.

An ideal model of judicial digitalization should therefore include the institutionalization of digital legal aid services. Such services may involve online legal consultation, electronic procedural guidance, digital help desks, and virtual assistance platforms. By strengthening legal aid mechanisms, judicial institutions can ensure that technological innovation does not create new forms of exclusion for vulnerable communities.

7) Digital Literacy Enhancement

The final component of an ideal judicial digitalization model concerns the enhancement of digital literacy. Empirical findings indicate that technological infrastructure alone is insufficient to guarantee effective access to justice. Court users must possess the knowledge and skills necessary to engage with electronic systems independently.

According to him, continuous public education programs, technological training, community outreach initiatives, and digital literacy campaigns should be integrated into judicial modernization strategies. Such efforts will contribute to reducing the digital divide and improving public participation in electronic judicial processes.

Based on Jasser Auda's *maqāṣid al- syarī'ah* framework, an ideal model of judicial digitalization should not merely prioritize technological efficiency but should also promote the protection of property (*hifẓ al- māl*), human well-being (*hifẓ al- nafs*), intellectual development (*hifẓ al- ' aql*), and justice (*hifẓ al- ' adl*). The integration of a hybrid justice model, digital legal aid, and digital literacy enhancement represents a comprehensive approach to ensuring that judicial digitalization contributes to substantive justice, public welfare, and inclusive access to justice. This integrated framework constitutes the principal novelty of the present study and offers a practical model for the future development of digital justice within the Indonesian Religious Court system.

4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the implementation of E-Court and E-Litigation at the Pemalang Religious Court has generally been effective in improving judicial administration and expanding access to justice. Based on Soerjono Soekanto's theory of legal effectiveness, the success of judicial digitalization is supported by adequate legal substance, professional law enforcement officers, technological infrastructure, increasing public acceptance, and the emergence of a digital legal culture, although challenges related to internet connectivity and digital literacy remain. From the perspective of Satjipto Rahardjo's progressive legal theory, E-Court and E-Litigation have contributed to administrative efficiency, procedural flexibility, cost reduction, and broader access to justice while maintaining the protection of litigants' rights. The novelty of this research lies in the formulation of an ideal judicial digitalization model based on Jasser Auda's *maqāṣid al- syarī'ah* framework, which integrates *hifẓ al- māl*, *hifẓ al- nafs*, *hifẓ al- ' aql*, and *hifẓ al- ' adl* through a hybrid justice model, digital legal aid, and digital literacy enhancement to ensure that digital judicialization remains inclusive, human-centered, and oriented toward substantive justice and public welfare.

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