



## Modernization of Religious Courts: An Analysis of the Effectiveness of Mediation Through E-Court in Resolving Divorce Cases in Padang

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### Abstract

This study is important to understand the effectiveness of e-Court in handling divorce cases involving mediation, especially in the Class 1A Religious Court of Padang. Although e-Court has improved administrative efficiency and access, there are gaps in the effectiveness of online mediation, especially in cases involving emotional conflict or domestic violence. These limitations indicate the need for a more in-depth approach to addressing the emotional dimension in the e-Court process as well as improving technical support and staff competence. The object of this study is e-Court as a means of divorce proceedings, with a focus on analyzing the effectiveness of the legal process in cases requiring mediation. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method through in-depth interviews and observations. Primary data were obtained from key informants such as judges, e-Court employees, advocates, and the community, while secondary data were taken from related literature. The findings show that e-Court is effective in terms of ease of access, process efficiency, decision quality, and user satisfaction. Although technological infrastructure supports accessibility, improvements in internet access are still needed. E-Court reduces case handling time, but physical interaction is still needed. User satisfaction is high, although there are complaints about the system sometimes experiencing errors, as well as the need for further training for employees to improve competence.

**Keywords:** Divorce, e-Court, Mediation, Religious Court

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini penting untuk memahami efektivitas e-Court dalam menangani kasus perceraian yang melibatkan mediasi, khususnya di Pengadilan Agama Kelas 1A Padang. Meskipun e-Court telah meningkatkan efisiensi administrasi dan akses, terdapat kesenjangan dalam efektivitas mediasi online, terutama dalam kasus-kasus yang melibatkan



konflik emosional atau kekerasan dalam rumah tangga. Keterbatasan ini menunjukkan perlunya pendekatan yang lebih mendalam untuk mengatasi dimensi emosional dalam proses e-Court serta meningkatkan dukungan teknis dan kompetensi staf. Objek penelitian ini adalah e-Court sebagai sarana proses perceraian, dengan fokus pada analisis efektivitas proses hukum pada kasus-kasus yang membutuhkan mediasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif melalui wawancara mendalam dan observasi. Data primer diperoleh dari informan kunci seperti hakim, pegawai e-Court, advokat, dan masyarakat, sedangkan data sekunder diambil dari literatur terkait. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa e-Court efektif dalam hal kemudahan akses, efisiensi proses, kualitas putusan, dan kepuasan pengguna. Meskipun infrastruktur teknologi mendukung aksesibilitas, peningkatan akses internet masih diperlukan. E-Court mengurangi waktu penanganan perkara, namun interaksi fisik masih diperlukan. Kepuasan pengguna cukup tinggi, meskipun ada keluhan mengenai sistem yang terkadang mengalami error, serta perlunya pelatihan lebih lanjut bagi pegawai untuk meningkatkan kompetensi.

**Kata Kunci:** Perceraian, Pengadilan Melalui Elektronik, Mediasi, Pengadilan Agama

## Introduction

The formation of a family begins with a marriage that begins with a marriage contract, which is a sacred agreement between two people that legally binds them in the eyes of religion and law. This contract reflects the full commitment of the couple to live together in joy and sorrow. After the marriage takes place, the journey of family life depends on cooperation and mutual respect between husband and wife in creating harmony. However, in reality, marriage does not always run smoothly. When existing conflicts cannot be resolved, divorce becomes the final solution chosen by the couple to end the marriage bond. This divorce process involves the arrangement of various important aspects, including child custody and division of property, which are resolved through legal channels according to applicable provisions.<sup>1</sup>

The phenomenon of divorce in Indonesia has increased significantly in recent decades. Especially in the Padang area, divorce cases are increasing every year, reflecting social, economic, and cultural changes that affect household stability.<sup>2</sup> Even sometimes factors such as socio-cultural factors in certain areas such as Padang City which has different views on marriage and divorce also have a strong influence.<sup>3</sup> Divorce is no longer just an individual problem, but also a social problem that requires special attention from various parties, including the judiciary. In the midst of government efforts to reduce the divorce rate, the Religious Court as the institution tasked with handling these cases is required to be more effective in carrying out its functions. One of the innovations implemented to improve the

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<sup>1</sup> Berat Karaagac and Kolade M. Owolabi, "A Numerical Investigation of Marriage Divorce Model: Fractal Fractional Perspective," *Scientific African* 21, no. e01874 (September 1, 2023): 1-15, <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.SCIAF.2023.E01874>.

<sup>2</sup> Rasyidin and Mayang Diwana, "Faktor Perceraian Suami Perantau Dalam Perspektif Hukum Keluarga," *Al-Qadha : Jurnal Hukum Islam Dan Perundang-Undangan* 8, no. 2 (December 31, 2021): 144-59, <https://doi.org/10.32505/Qadha.V8I2.3577>.

<sup>3</sup> Firdaus et al., "Views of Usul Fiqih And Islamic Family Law on Concerned Marriage Cases in Padang City," *Dusturiyah: Jurnal Hukum Islam, Perundang-Undangan Dan Pranata Sosial* 13, no. 2 (2023): 215-33, <https://doi.org/10.22373/dusturiyah.v13i2.20373>.

efficiency and quality of the legal process is the implementation of the e-Court system which makes it easier for justice seekers to file cases online.<sup>4</sup>

Divorce data at the Padang Religious Court shows a significant increase. Based on the author's pre-survey records at PA 1 Padang regarding the implementation of e-Court, it is known that the number of divorce cases filed through e-Court has increased from year to year. In 2021, there were 60 divorce cases filed through this system, with 45 cases resolved in an average of 30 days. Meanwhile, in 2022, the number of cases filed increased to 70 cases, and 65 cases were resolved with a completion time of 28 days. In 2023, there were 90 cases filed and 85 cases resolved, with a shorter completion time, namely an average of 25 days. These figures show that although e-Court has provided easy access, there are still challenges in the effectiveness of handling divorce cases.<sup>5</sup>

The problem of divorce in Padang is not only limited to the increasing number of cases, but also various related legal and social aspects. Many couples file for divorce for economic reasons, disharmony, or failure to reach an agreement through mediation.<sup>6</sup>In this context, mediation is one of the efforts that is expected to reduce the divorce rate, because it allows the disputing parties to reconcile before the case goes to court.<sup>7</sup>However, the effectiveness of mediation in the Padang Religious Court is still questionable. Although judges try to facilitate mediation, many cases end in divorce. One of the obstacles faced is the gap in understanding between the parties regarding the mediation procedure and its benefits.<sup>8</sup>

The implementation of e-Court in the Padang Religious Court is also not free from various obstacles. Based on initial observations, this system is good but there are several things that are considered not yet optimal in its implementation. Many parties still have difficulty in accessing e-Court services, especially those who are less familiar with information technology. In addition, the lack of education regarding e-Court procedures also causes some parties not to utilize it optimally. These obstacles need to be overcome so that the e-Court system can run more effectively in supporting the legal process, especially in handling divorce cases.

According to the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI), a divorce is legally valid if the declaration of divorce is pronounced in court and witnessed by a Religious Court judge, as regulated in Article 115 of the KHI.<sup>9</sup>Divorce pronounced outside the court is considered a

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<sup>4</sup> Desi Asmaret et al., "Peningkatan Pemahaman Siswa SMA Muhammadiyah Satu Padang Tentang Akibat Pernikahan Dini," *Journal Of Human And Education* 3, no. 4 (2023): 307-12.

<sup>5</sup> Pengadilan Agama Negeri Padang, "Laporan Tahunan," pa-padang.co.id, 2024, <https://pa-padang.go.id/laporan-tahunan/>.

<sup>6</sup> Firdaus et al., "The Protection of Islamic Women in Indonesia: Evaluation of Polygamy Sanctions and Its Implications," *KARSA Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 31, no. 1 (2023): 79-108, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v31i1.10611>.

<sup>7</sup> Wirda Hairani and Syawaluddin Ismail, "Problematisasi Mediasi Dalam Kasus Perceraian di Mahkamah Syariah Langsa," *Al-Qadha* 5, no. 1 (July 1, 2019): 38-47, <https://doi.org/10.32505/qadha.v5i1.959>.

<sup>8</sup> Firdaus et al., "Menjelajahi Penerapan Konsep Masalah Mursalah Dalam Hukum Keluarga Islam: Studi Kasus Istri Mencari Nafkah dan Suami Bertanggung Jawab Atas Pekerjaan Rumah Tangga," *Jurnal Darussalam: Jurnal Pendidikan, Komunikasi Dan Pemikiran Hukum Islam* 15, no. 1 (2023): 185-203, <https://doi.org/10.30739/darussalam.v15i1.2545>.

<sup>9</sup> Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, *Kompilasi Hukum Islam Di Indoensia* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama, 2018).

wild divorce and has no legal force. This emphasizes the importance of the proper legal process in divorce, where the Religious Court acts as an institution that regulates and ensures that every divorce takes place in accordance with applicable provisions.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage also regulates that divorce can only be carried out if there is a valid reason, such as disharmony or the inability of the couple to reconcile through mediation.<sup>11</sup>

Article 39 of Law Number 1 of 1974 requires judges to seek peace between disputing couples.<sup>12</sup> This is done by prioritizing mediation as one way to resolve conflict without having to end in divorce. Although mediation is expected to be a solution, in reality many couples still choose divorce as a last resort, especially if mediation fails to reach an agreement.<sup>13</sup> This shows that although mediation is an important part of the divorce process, its success depends largely on the willingness and desire of both parties to reconcile.<sup>14</sup>

In the context of modernizing the legal process, the implementation of e-Court is an important step to improve access to justice. This system not only speeds up the case administration process, but also reduces the costs that must be incurred by justice seekers. The Padang Religious Court as one of the courts that has implemented e-Court is expected to be an example for other courts in terms of efficiency and ease of access. However, in order for e-Court to run optimally, there needs to be increased education and public understanding of this system, as well as adequate technological infrastructure support.<sup>15</sup>

Although e-Court has improved administrative efficiency and access in handling divorce cases, there are still gaps in the effectiveness of online mediation, especially in cases involving emotional conflict or domestic violence. These limitations indicate the need for a more in-depth approach in addressing the emotional dimension through e-Court, as well as improving technical support and staff competence. Djamaludin et al. (2023) highlighted the results of a study showing that the E-Court system significantly improved the efficiency of the judicial process at the Religious Court and the Biak Numfor District Court.<sup>16</sup> Users rated the system as efficient, easy to use, reliable, secure, and satisfactory. This raises questions about the role of mediation in e-Court, especially in the Padang Religious Court due to concerns about the efficiency of the judicial process and other positive outcomes.

In addition, research conducted by Hasyim (2022) focused on the implementation of e-Court which helps the public to resolve cases easily and quickly by assessing the

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<sup>10</sup> Karimuddin, *Problematika Gugatan Perceraian Dalam Masyarakat Islam (Dilengkapi Analisis Putusan Mahkamah Syar'iyah Dengan Pendekatan Fiqh)* (Aceh: Yayasan Penerbit Muhammad Zaini, 2021), 41.

<sup>11</sup> Firdaus et al., "The Principles of the Concept of Maslahah in Islamic Family Law of a Wife Looking for Living Husband Taking Care of Household Work," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 9, no. 1 (May 30, 2024): 259–84, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v9i1.8464>.

<sup>12</sup> Presiden Republik Indonesia, "Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 1 Tahun 1974 Tentang Perkawinan," Pub. L. No. 1 (1974).

<sup>13</sup> Muhammad Dlaifurrahman, *Hukum Islam Perceraian: Analisis Atas Intervensi Mertua* (Banyumas: CV. Amerta Media, 2021).

<sup>14</sup> Firdaus, *Psikologi Hukum Keluarga* (Padang: UMSB Press, 2024).

<sup>15</sup> muhammad Adiguna Bimasakti et al., *Hukum Acara Peradilan Elektronik Pada Peradilan Tata Usaha Negara* (Makassar: Spasi Media Publishing, 2020).

<sup>16</sup> Djamaludin et al., "Assessing the Impact of Electronic Court Systems on the Efficiency of Judicial Processes in the Era of Digital Transformation," *Volksgeist: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Dan Konstitusi* 6, no. 1 (June 27, 2023): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.24090/volksgeist.v6i1.8082>.

performance of judges and advocates who work well, but this study did not examine the readiness of judges and court employees in carrying out divorce cases with online mediation.<sup>17</sup> Human resource readiness is very important in determining the success of mediation. Hakim et al. (2022) studied the effect of e-Court on user satisfaction, but did not link it to mediation results.<sup>18</sup> In fact, satisfaction levels may be closely related to the success of mediation as an alternative solution to divorce.

Research by Alam et al. (2021) discusses e-Court technological innovation and improving the quality of religious courts in general, without highlighting aspects of mediation or user satisfaction.<sup>19</sup> This is different from this study which focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of mediation in the e-Court system at the Padang Religious Court, especially its impact on final decisions and user satisfaction, which have not been widely discussed in previous studies. Then, Putra (2020) highlighted judicial reform in Indonesia through the implementation of e-Court and its challenges, without a specific focus on the mediation aspect or user experience in the legal process.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile, the research to be conducted focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of mediation in the e-Court system at the Padang Religious Court, especially in its influence on the final decision and user satisfaction, which have not been explored in depth before. From Latifani et al. (2024) emphasizes the implementation of the e-Court system at the Kendal and Semarang Religious Courts, with the aim of assessing its effectiveness in meeting the principles of speed, simplicity, and low cost in the legal process.<sup>21</sup> Future research focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of mediation in the e-Court system at the Padang Religious Court, especially its impact on final decisions and user satisfaction, which have not been widely discussed before. Based on these differences, the novelty of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of mediation in the e-Court system at the Padang Religious Court, focusing on the role of mediation in influencing final decisions and user satisfaction, which have not been discussed in depth in previous studies. The purpose of this study is to analyze and examine the effectiveness of the legal process in divorce cases that require mediation through e-Court at the Padang Class 1 Court.

The object of this study is to discuss e-Court as a means of divorce proceedings. While the subjects of this study are sources who provide information about e-Court services in handling divorce cases with mediation. This study applies a qualitative descriptive method in the form of field research. Data sources are divided into primary data and

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<sup>17</sup> Fuad Hasyim, "Implementasi Asas Peradilan Sederhana, Cepat Dan Biaya Murah Melalui E-Court," *Syariati: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an Dan Hukum* 8, no. 2 (2022): 255–68, <https://doi.org/10.32699/syariati.v8i2.4069>.

<sup>18</sup> Sholihul Hakim et al., "Analisis Ketidakefektifan Pelaksanaan E-Court Dalam Sistem Beracara Di Pengadilan Negeri Mungkid Kelas IB," *Indonesian Research Journal on Education* 4, no. 3 (July 9, 2024): 665–71, <https://doi.org/10.31004/irje.v4i3.831>.

<sup>19</sup> Syariful Alam, Nu'man Aunuh, and Muhammad Luthfi, "E-Court Effectiveness of Religious Courts in Indonesia," in *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Law Reform (INCLAR 2021)*, vol. 590 (Atlantis Press, 2021), 92–97, <https://doi.org/10.2991/ASSEHR.K.211102.174>.

<sup>20</sup> Dedi Putra, "A Modern Judicial System in Indonesia: Legal Breakthrough of E-Court And E-Legal Proceeding," *Jurnal Hukum Dan Peradilan* 9, no. 2 (July 30, 2020): 275–97, <https://doi.org/10.25216/jhp.9.2.2020.275-297>.

<sup>21</sup> Dian Latifani et al., "The Revitalizing Indonesia's Religious Courts System: The Modernization Impacts and Potentials of E-Court," *Jurnal Hukum Unissula* 40, no. 1 (June 4, 2024): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.26532/jh.v40i1.32279>.

secondary data. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews using purposive sampling techniques because they used key informants, including judges, e-Court employees, advocates, and the community involved in the judicial process. Observations were also used to evaluate the implementation of e-Court directly in the trial process. Secondary data were obtained from literature, books, and journal articles related to the modernization of law and technology in the judicial system. Data analysis was carried out using an inductive approach, which allows researchers to draw conclusions from certain findings and summarize them in an existing theoretical framework.

### **E-Court Service for Case Handling**

Electronic court or e-Court is an important breakthrough in the modernization of the justice system in Indonesia. Introduced to support speed, efficiency, and transparency in handling cases, e-Court utilizes information technology to facilitate access to justice. Electronic services aim to shorten the administrative process and reduce court costs, especially for people who live far from the court.<sup>22</sup> Services in e-Court consist of several main features designed to make it easier for the public to access court services, from registration to trial. Each of these features plays an important role in increasing the efficiency of the legal process.

*First*, e-Filing allows online case registration. Plaintiffs or applicants do not need to come to court, simply by uploading the required documents through the e-Court platform. This speeds up the registration process which usually takes a long time. This e-Filing service is based on Supreme Court Regulation (PERMA) Number 3 of 2018 concerning Electronic Case Administration in Court. This system covers all stages from registration, file verification, to registration approval.<sup>23</sup>

*Second*, e-SKUM is a service to estimate court costs. Through this feature, users can calculate the estimated court costs online before proceeding to the next stage. With full transparency, e-SKUM reduces uncertainty and allows the parties to the case to prepare the costs needed. The cost estimate from e-SKUM is used as a reference in the payment process via e-Payment.

*Third*, e-Payment allows online payment of court fees. After the court fees are calculated through e-SKUM, the parties to the case can pay through the e-Payment system without having to come to court. This feature works with banks or electronic payment systems that have been integrated with the court, thus speeding up and securing the process of paying administrative fees.

*Fourth*, e-Summons allows electronic summons to the parties in a case. This feature replaces the manual summons method usually carried out by court bailiffs. Through e-Summons, notification to the parties in a case can be sent via email or legally valid electronic messages. The use of e-Summons is based on Articles 11 and 12 of PERMA Number 3 of 2018 which regulates the procedures for summoning parties through an electronic system.

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<sup>22</sup> Joanna Maria Studzinska, "Electronic Bailiff Files as a Tool for Computerization the Administration of Justice in the Polish Legal System," in *Procedia Computer Science*, vol. 192 (Elsevier, 2021), 2943–51, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2021.09.066>.

<sup>23</sup> Ketua Mahkamah Agung Republik Indonesia, "Peraturan Mahkamah Agung Republik Indonesia Nomor 3 Tahun 2018 Tentang Administrasi Perkara Di Pengadilan Secara Elektronik," Pub. L. No. 3 (2019).

*Fifth*, e-Litigation is a feature that facilitates electronic trials. This process allows disputing parties to resolve their cases through online trials. All stages of the trial, from submission of documents, responses, to decisions, are carried out electronically. This is based on PERMA Number 1 of 2019 concerning Electronic Case Administration and Trials in Court. The e-Litigation process includes registration via e-Filing, payment via e-Payment, summoning of parties via e-Summons, and trials via video conference or other electronic communication systems.<sup>24</sup>

### **Analysis of the Effectiveness of the Legal Process of Divorce Cases with Mediation Through e-Court**

Divorce cases require mediation in their resolution, both online and offline. The innovation of online resolution through e-Court is certainly an effective solution for several parties. Through the results of the author's analysis of Judges, e-Court Employees, Advocates, and the disputing community, the author found out their responses to this innovation. From the responses given by judges so far in the study, e-Court can help handle divorce cases with mediation effectively. This is known as follows:

**Table 1.** Results of Data Reduction of Interviews with Judges in Divorce Cases at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang<sup>25</sup>

Source person	Indicator	Data Reduction Results
Judge	Ease of Access	The E-Court infrastructure at the Padang Religious Court is quite good, but still needs to be improved in terms of internet access and system integration. Mediation is still carried out face-to-face after an official summons from the court.
	Process Efficiency	E-Court speeds up the resolution of divorce cases by reducing the administrative burden, especially in complex cases, because data can be submitted without having to appear in court in person.
	Decision Quality	E-Court does not reduce the depth of the judge's legal considerations, but online interactions limit the understanding of the emotional aspects that are usually seen in face-to-face trials.
	User Satisfaction	Users are satisfied with the efficiency of E-Court, although the judge still assesses the case thoroughly in the courtroom based on the complaint and trial files.
	Acceptance and competence	The main challenge is to train staff to master E-Court technology and create an effective mediation atmosphere, especially in complex divorce cases.

The technological infrastructure at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang is quite supportive of e-Court, although it is still necessary to improve internet access and system

<sup>24</sup> Edwin Ligasetiawan and Febby Mutiara Nelson, "Prinsip Kehadiran Terdakwa Pada Persidangan Pidana Elektronik Di Masa Pandemi Covid-19: Perbandingan Indonesia Dan Belanda," *Undang: Jurnal Hukum* 5, no. 1 (July 11, 2022): 69–103, <https://doi.org/10.22437/UJH.5.1.69-103>.

<sup>25</sup> Syahrial Anas, "Wawancara Hakim Perceraian Pengadilan Agama Kelas 1A Kota Padang" (2024).

integration to optimize services. E-Court has been proven to improve the efficiency of the divorce process by reducing the administrative burden, although its success in complex cases still depends on the complexity of each case. The use of e-Court does not affect the quality of the decision, but limited personal interaction can reduce the judge's understanding of the emotions of the parties in the case. Users are satisfied with the efficiency and convenience provided by e-Court, although the emotional aspect is still a challenge in online mediation. Training employees to master technology and manage mediation effectively is still a major challenge in ensuring the success of e-Court in handling divorce cases.

Relevant research that supports the implementation of e-Court in divorce cases includes research by Custers (2024) which revealed that the results of this study indicate that courts and judges often have difficulty understanding complex technology, which can affect the right to a fair trial.<sup>26</sup> To address this issue, the study recommends the need for alternative solutions, such as involving technology experts in trials, as not all judges can be trained in depth in technology. In comparison, Wilson-Evered & Zeleznikow's (2021) study found that face-to-face mediation was more effective in dealing with emotional conflicts than online mediation through e-courts, as mediators could more easily understand emotional dynamics directly.<sup>27</sup>

**Table 2.** Data Reduction Results of e-Court  
Employee Interviews at Class 1A Religious Court Padang<sup>28</sup>

Source person	Indicator	Data Reduction Results
Electronic Court Officer	Ease of Access	The Court provides step-by-step guides and special facilities to help less tech-savvy people access e-Court, including video tutorials and a hotline.
	Process Efficiency	E-Court speeds up the divorce process, especially in online document submission and mediation, although some cases still require a face-to-face meeting for final agreement.
	Decision Quality	The quality of case handling through e-Court is more structured and faster, although in complex cases it sometimes feels less personal but still maintains the accuracy and integrity of the decision.
	User Satisfaction	Most users are satisfied with the speed and ease of e-Court services, although there are technical complaints, especially in more complicated cases that require additional explanation.
	Acceptance and competence	Court staff have undergone technical and legal training to ensure all stages of e-Court are carried out correctly, while continuously updating their digital legal skills and understanding.

<sup>26</sup> Bart Custers, "A Fair Trial in Complex Technology Cases: Why Courts and Judges Need a Basic Understanding of Complex Technologies," *Computer Law & Security Review* 52, no. 105935 (April 1, 2024): 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.CLSR.2024.105935>.

<sup>27</sup> Elisabeth Wilson-Evered and John Zeleznikow, "The Evolution of Family Dispute Resolution and the Need for Online Family Dispute Resolution in Australia," in *Law, Governance and Technology Series*, vol. 45 (Cham: Springer, 2021), 1–16, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-64645-5\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-64645-5_1).

<sup>28</sup> Ulfa and Tunnafisa, "Wawancara Pegawai E-Court Pengadilan Agama Kelas 1A Kota Padang" (2024).



The use of e-Court facilitates access for people who are less tech-savvy through step-by-step guidance and the provision of supporting facilities. The efficiency of the divorce process is increased with online filing and processing of documents, although some final stages still require face-to-face meetings. The quality of decisions is more structured and faster with digital documentation, although in complex cases the “personal touch” may be reduced. User satisfaction is generally high due to the fast and easy service, although technical challenges and the need for additional explanations still arise in more complex cases. Court staff are also well-prepared through technical and legal training, ensuring their competence in carrying out the e-Court process accurately and informatively.

Research relevant to the use of e-Court is research by Custers (2024) with research results showing that to ensure a fair trial in cases involving complex technology, judges need to have an adequate understanding of the technology.<sup>29</sup> However, not all judges can be trained to master technology in depth. As a comparison, Yus's (2023) research discusses the conventional justice system in implementing *islah* and *tahkim* in mediating marital disputes, it is necessary to present a mediator who must be effective in achieving peace with the principles of simplicity, speed, and low cost.<sup>30</sup>

**Table 3.** Interview Data Reduction Results with Advocates at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang<sup>31</sup>

Source person	Indicator	Data Reduction Results
Recommend	Ease of Access	Clients who are less familiar with technology often have difficulty using E-Court, while younger, tech-savvy clients find the system more accessible.
	Process Efficiency	E-Court speeds up divorce administration, but cases involving emotional conflict or violence still await court summons, and victims of violence often feel safer with the conventional process.
	Decision Quality	The quality of decisions in E-Court still depends on the judge's thoroughness and the evidence presented, but the online process sometimes limits the depth of complex cases, requiring a physical hearing.
	User Satisfaction	Client satisfaction varies; some appreciate the efficiency of E-Court, but others are uncomfortable with the technology and find the process less personal.
	Acceptance and competence	The competence of court staff in E-Court is growing, but additional training is still needed, especially for less trained staff and in complex divorce cases.

<sup>29</sup> Custers, “A Fair Trial in Complex Technology Cases: Why Courts and Judges Need a Basic Understanding of Complex Technologies.”

<sup>30</sup> Zulkifli Yus, “Mediasi Dalam Penyelesaian Sengketa Perkawinan Pada Mahkamah Syar’iyah Di Aceh,” *El-Usrah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 5, no. 2 (May 12, 2023): 196–223, <https://doi.org/10.22373/UJHK.V5I2.17893>.

<sup>31</sup> Nelvi Sudirianti, “Wawancara Advokat Pengadilan Agama Kelas 1A Kota Padang” (2024).

Clients who are less familiar with technology often face challenges in using E-Court, while younger clients are more comfortable with digital access. Although E-Court speeds up the administrative process of divorce, cases involving emotional conflict or domestic violence often still require traditional court proceedings for safety. The quality of decisions still depends on the judge's thoroughness and the evidence, but complex cases sometimes require a physical hearing for more in-depth examination. User satisfaction varies, with some clients appreciating its efficiency, while others find the technology less personal. Court staff's competence in using E-Court continues to improve, but additional training is needed to ensure more efficient handling, especially in complex divorce cases.

Research relevant to the results of this study is research conducted by Shodikin et al. (2021) who studied the application of E-Court in divorce cases at the Cirebon City Religious Court. The results of their study showed that E-Court was able to increase the efficiency of the administrative process, but there were obstacles in technical aspects for users who were not familiar with technology.<sup>32</sup>

This result is contrary to the research of Arifin et al. (2024) which shows that all forms of online case resolution services in complex divorce cases are known to be effective. Because e-Court has been running in accordance with PERMA No. 1 of 2019 which is quite fast and effective in handling it at the Parepare Religious Court.<sup>33</sup>

**Table 4.** Results of Data Reduction of Interviews with Disputing Parties at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang<sup>34</sup>

Source person	Indicator	Data Reduction Results
A community that likes to litigate	Ease of Access	Easy administrative access and fast application process because it is done online. Up to the ease of accessing the information needed and also the ease of completing the files because there is no need to come to court.
	Process Efficiency	Administrative facilities such as filing files, scheduling, and court summons are done quite quickly. Although when accessing sometimes the server is down so that it slows down the information.
	Decision Quality	In cases involving the division of joint property and no children, the decision is in accordance with the rules of law, but not entirely satisfactory. Because it feels that the judge's decision is very rigid and only refers to the draft uploaded to e-Court.

<sup>32</sup> Akhmad Shodikin, Asep Saepullah, and Imas Indah Lestari, "Efektivitas Penerapan Sistem E-Court Pengadilan Agama Dalam Perkara Perceraian," *Jurnal Mediasas : Media Ilmu Syari'ah Dan Ahwal Al-Syakhsiiyyah* 4, no. 2 (2021): 135–48, <https://doi.org/10.58824/mediasas.v4i2.290>.

<sup>33</sup> H Arifin et al., "Efektivitas Penerapan E-Court Perkara Perceraian Di Pengadilan Agama Parepare," *UNES Law Review* 6, no. 3 (2024): 8490–8502, <https://doi.org/10.31933/unesrev.v6i3>.

<sup>34</sup> Nisfu Agustina, "Wawancara Pihak Berperka Cerai Pengadilan Agama 1A Kota Padang" (2024).

User Satisfaction	E-Court service helps in terms of administrative efficiency and cheaper financing. For divorce cases that are quite complicated and require mediation, this service is also quite helpful because the trial runs quickly with the lawsuit files that have been submitted completely beforehand.
Acceptance and competence	During the divorce process through E-Court, the assistance received from court officials is quite adequate. Because the work is quite fast and just waiting for a call.

The use of E-Court facilitates access for clients who are already familiar with technology, although it will be difficult for clients who are not familiar with technology. In terms of efficiency, E-Court speeds up the administrative process, but cases involving emotional conflict or violence require more attention, and victims of violence often feel more comfortable with conventional processes. The quality of decisions is not greatly affected by E-Court, but in complex cases, physical hearings are often needed for more in-depth examinations. User satisfaction varies, depending on their ability to use technology and emotional involvement in the case. Although the competence of court staff in operating E-Court is increasing, additional training is still needed to improve effectiveness in handling more complex cases.

Research relevant to the results of this study can refer to the research of Sundusiyah & Hariyanto (2022) which examined the use of E-Court at the Surabaya Religious Court. In their study, they found that E-Court facilitates access for users who are familiar with technology and speeds up the administrative process, similar to the results of this study.<sup>35</sup> In contrast to the research of Hidayat et al. (2020) which stated that conventional trials are more supportive or more important for case participants than online trials. Although the online administrative process still prioritizes the conventional trial process.<sup>36</sup>

### **The Effectiveness of e-Court in Handling Divorce Cases with Mediation at the Religious Court 1A Padang**

The effectiveness of e-Court itself can be seen through the response and movement in the court. Observations on the performance of e-Court have yielded good results, more details as follows:

<sup>35</sup> Sundusiyah Sundusiyah and Erie Hariyanto, "Implementasi Peraturan Mahkamah Agung Tentang E-Court Untuk Mewujudkan Asas Sederhana, Cepat dan Biaya Ringan di Pengadilan Agama Pamekasan," *Arena Hukum* 15, no. 3 (December 27, 2022): 471–98, <https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.arenahukum.2022.01503.2>.

<sup>36</sup> Khotib Iqbal Hidayat, Aris Priyadi, and Elly Kristiani Purwendah, "Kajian Kritis Terhadap Dualisme Pengadilan Elektronik (E-Court) Dan Konvensional," *Batulis Civil Law Review* 1, no. 1 (October 30, 2020): 14–23, <https://doi.org/10.47268/ballrev.v1i1.421>.

**Table 5.** Observation of e-Court Performance at Class 1A Religious Court Padang<sup>37</sup>

Indicator	Observation Guidelines	Observation results
Ease of Access	Community Interaction with the E-Court System	After the e-Court, the parties to the case do not need to be present to register. Meanwhile, in terms of information, the parties to the case can access it online.
Process Efficiency	Case Handling Time with E-cout	The comparison of time before and after e-Court has a difference of 3-6 months. While the handling of cases from the level of satisfaction after e-Court has a higher level of satisfaction.
Decision Quality	Consistency of Court Decisions	The quality of the case decision, even though the draft was sent via E-Court, is generally accurate and consistent, although it is still influenced by the completeness of the electronic documents. Supervision is still needed to maintain justice.
User Satisfaction	User and Advocate Response	Currently, the use of e-Court is quite satisfactory in the administrative and financing categories, but there are still many complaints because the system sometimes still has errors and the people involved in the case are less able to explain their case expressively.
Acceptance and competence	Employee Competence in E-Court Operation	The employees of the Class 1A Padang Religious Court are generally competent in operating E-Court, although some still need further training to optimize system performance. Technical support also helps maintain the smooth running of the operational process.

Based on the results of observations at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang, several important things can be concluded regarding ease of access, process efficiency, decision quality, user satisfaction, and employee acceptance and competence in operating e-Court. The results of observations show that the e-Court system facilitates access for people in litigation, reduces the need for physical presence, and speeds up the divorce administration process. The time for resolving cases is significantly reduced, and the costs incurred are also lower compared to conventional methods.

However, observations also show that in divorce cases involving emotional conflict or violence, e-Court cannot always replace conventional court proceedings. The quality of decisions remains accurate, but some parties feel the lack of personal interaction needed in complex cases. The level of user satisfaction is generally high, although some technical obstacles still arise, especially for users who are less familiar with technology.

Therefore, according to research by Fikri et al. (2024), there are several results of divorce mediation in religious courts, including written peace agreements, partially successful mediation, and unsuccessful mediation when the husband and wife remain

<sup>37</sup> Penulis, "Observasi Kinerja E-Court Di Pengadilan Agama Kelas 1A Kota Padang" (Padang, 2024).

committed to divorce.<sup>38</sup> Transformation of maqāṣṣharia law is the judge's main consideration in efforts to save a household that is almost collapsing, so that maqā'ah can be realized. Sid syari'ah is considered important to be included in PERMA No.1 of 2016. Revitalization of Bugis-Mandar customs, through values such as sirondo-rondoi and sibaliparri, also plays a role in strengthening mediation by reviving the principles of conventional life in society. The emphasis of this mediation itself is fast, easy, and cheap. If adjusted to the author's observations, e-Court used for divorce cases actually requires operations that allow all parties in the mediation process itself to feel fair and fulfill the aspects of fast, easy, and cheap.

Divorce processes often involve complex emotions and require a fast but fair resolution mechanism. Through the implementation of e-Court, efforts to modernize the legal process are reflected through the integration of technology at every stage of the trial, from registration to verdict. In this discussion, the effectiveness of e-Court in handling divorce cases will be explained from various perspectives, including important indicators such as ease of access, process efficiency, decision quality, user satisfaction, acceptance, and competence.

*First*, ease of access is one of the main advantages of e-Court, especially in the context of divorce at the Class 1A Padang Religious Court. Based on interviews with e-Court employees, the use of this system makes it easier for people who are less familiar with technology through gradual coaching and provision of supporting facilities. Plaintiffs and defendants do not need to be present in person in court to register cases, which previously required a lot of time and money. This provides great benefits, especially for those who are far from the court or who have difficulty physically accessing the court. People who are in litigation can upload documents online, check the status of the case, and access the necessary information through the e-Court portal. Based on observations, after the implementation of e-Court, access to court services increased significantly, although some people who are not yet familiar with technology still experience difficulties. According to judge sources, the technological infrastructure at the Class 1A Padang Religious Court is sufficient to support e-Court, although it still requires improvements in terms of internet access and system integration for further optimization.

E-Court at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang has made it easier for the public to access legal processes, especially divorce cases. People who previously had to be physically present at the court can now register, upload documents, and monitor the progress of the case online. This is very helpful for parties who are far from the court location or have limited mobility. However, the use of e-Court is not always smooth for all users, especially those who are not familiar with technology. Although there are supporting facilities and gradual coaching from officers, challenges for those who are less technologically literate

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<sup>38</sup> Fikri Fikri et al., "Transformation of Maqāsid Shari'ah in Divorce Mediation in Religious Courts: Revitalization of the Bugis-Mandar Customs, Indonesia," *Samarah* 7, no. 1 (March 31, 2023): 431-54, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjkh.v7i1.9141>.

remain. In this case, e-Court increases legal accessibility in general, but is not yet fully inclusive for all groups, especially those with technological limitations.<sup>39</sup>

*Second*, process efficiency is one of the main benefits of e-Court. Reducing administrative burdens and speeding up digital document processing are key factors in increasing the efficiency of divorce case handling. Before e-Court, the divorce process could take a long time because it still relied on manual processes and face-to-face meetings in court. With e-Filing, plaintiffs can register cases online, which are then processed faster by the electronic system. Based on observations, a comparison of case handling times before and after e-Court showed a significant difference, with a time difference of three to six months faster after e-Court was implemented. Interviews with judges also revealed that although e-Court has been shown to increase efficiency in simpler divorce cases, more complex cases often still require direct handling in court, especially those involving emotional aspects or domestic violence. The efficiency of divorce handling with e-Court provides great benefits to society, but the application of this technology has not been fully able to handle all types of cases optimally.

The use of e-Court significantly accelerates the process of handling divorce cases at the Class 1A Padang Religious Court, especially in terms of administrative management and reducing the burden of bureaucracy. Before this system, the administrative process was often hampered by physical factors, such as trial schedules and completeness of files that had to be collected manually. With e-Court, the time for handling cases is shorter, with a time difference of 3-6 months faster than the conventional method. However, in complex cases, this efficiency can be reduced due to the need for direct interaction in resolving more emotional conflicts or requiring more in-depth physical evidence. The efficiency of e-Court provides many benefits, but does not completely replace the need for conventional courts in more complex situations.<sup>40</sup>

*Third*, the quality of divorce decisions through e-Court at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang is considered to be still maintained. Although the administrative process is carried out digitally, judges still carefully assess the evidence and arguments submitted before making a decision. Based on interviews with judges, the use of e-Court does not affect the quality of decisions, because this system functions more as an administrative tool, while the final decision still depends on the interpretation of the law and the assessment of the available evidence. Even so, there are challenges in understanding the emotions and psychological conditions of the parties to the case. Judges admit that limited personal interaction in online trials can reduce their understanding of the emotional aspects that are sometimes important in divorce mediation. This is also acknowledged by advocates, who state that in cases involving emotional conflict or violence, conventional court processes are considered more effective in digging deeper into the problems that occur. The results of

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<sup>39</sup> Hengki Irawan et al., "Dampak Teknologi Terhadap Strategi Litigasi Dan Bantuan Hukum : Tren Dan Inovasi Di Era Digital," *Innovative: Journal Of Social Science Research* 4, no. 2 (March 30, 2024): 4600-4613, <https://doi.org/10.31004/INNOVATIVE.V4I2.9735>.

<sup>40</sup> Siti Nur Intihani, Arifudin Arifudin, and Juliani Juliani, "Efektivitas Persidangan Berbasis E-Court Pada Masa Pandemi Covid 19 Pada Pengadilan Negeri Bekasi," *VERITAS* 8, no. 1 (2022): 67-81, <https://doi.org/10.34005/veritas.v8i1.1804>.

observations show that the quality of e-Court decisions remains consistent with decisions made conventionally, but still requires complete and accurate electronic documents.

The quality of divorce decisions handled through e-Court at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang is relatively consistent and has not decreased even though the administrative process is carried out digitally. Judges continue to carry out their duties by evaluating evidence and carefully considering all aspects submitted by the parties. However, the limitations in direct interaction between judges and the disputing parties can pose challenges in capturing important emotional aspects, especially in divorce mediation. Nevertheless, more structured documentation and the digitalization process help maintain the quality and consistency of decisions. The accuracy of decisions still depends on the completeness of the documents sent electronically, although further supervision is still needed to maintain justice in more complex cases.<sup>41</sup>

*Fourth*, user satisfaction with e-Court services varies, depending on individual experience with the technology and the nature of the case being handled. Based on the results of interviews, user satisfaction, both from the plaintiff and the advocate, tends to be high in the administrative and financing categories. E-Court staff stated that this service speeds up the divorce process and makes it easier to access for people who have a good understanding of technology. However, user satisfaction tends to be lower in divorce cases involving intense emotional aspects, where the online process is considered less able to capture the complexity of the situation. Users who are less familiar with technology also reported that they often find it difficult to operate the system, even after being given directions by court staff. The results of observations showed that most users appreciated the ease of administration and cost savings offered by e-Court, but there were still complaints related to technical glitches and the system's inability to handle situations that require more detailed explanations expressively.

User satisfaction with the e-Court system at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang varies, depending on their ability to use technology and the nature of the divorce case they are facing. Tech-savvy users are generally satisfied with the ease and speed of the administrative process offered by e-Court. On the other hand, users who are not familiar with digital systems often experience difficulties, especially in understanding how to operate the system. In addition, in divorce cases involving emotional conflict, some users feel that this technology reduces the "personal touch" needed to resolve the conflict effectively. However, e-Court provides high satisfaction in terms of time and cost savings, although there are some technical obstacles that still need to be fixed.<sup>42</sup>

*Fifth*, the acceptance and competence of employees in operating e-Court are also important factors in the success of this system. Based on interviews with judges, e-Court employees at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang generally have good basic competence

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<sup>41</sup> Nur Syarifah and Mohammad Kemal Dermawan, "Efektivitas Sistem Kamar Sebagai Model Pencegahan Viktimisasi Struktural Dalam Pemeriksaan Kasasi Pidana," *Journal of Education, Humaniora and Social Sciences (JEHSS)* 4, no. 4 (2022): 2181–90, <https://doi.org/10.34007/jehss.v4i4.1028>.

<sup>42</sup> Abdul Rachmat Ariwijaya and Palupi Lindiasari Samputra, "Evaluasi Kebijakan Peradilan Elektronik (E-Court) Mahkamah Agung Republik Indonesia," *Jurnal Hukum & Pembangunan* 51, no. 4 (2022): 1104–22, <https://doi.org/10.21143/jhp.vol51.no4.3303>.

in using technology that is integrated with the legal process. E-Court employees stated that they have received special training related to the use of this system, both in terms of technical and legal aspects. However, there are still challenges in terms of further training to improve competence in handling more complex cases. Court employees involved in operating e-Court also acknowledged that although basic competence has been mastered, improving technical skills is still needed to optimize services, especially when facing technical constraints or system disruptions. Additional training is also needed so that employees can help people who are not familiar with technology in using e-Court more efficiently.

The observation results show that the e-Court system at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang has brought many positive changes, especially in terms of ease of access and efficiency of the process. However, there are still several challenges, especially in terms of personal interaction, acceptance of technology by people who are less familiar with digital systems, and employee competence in handling technical problems. Further training and improvement of the technology infrastructure are still needed so that e-Court can function optimally in handling various types of divorce cases, including those involving mediation and complex emotional situations. Although this system has been effective in many ways, it still needs improvement in order to achieve its maximum potential in providing fast and fair justice for all parties to the case.

The reception of e-Court at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang was mostly positive, both from the case participants and from the court staff. The e-Court management staff have received sufficient technical and legal training to ensure the smooth running of the system. However, additional training is still needed, especially in handling complex divorce cases involving emotional conflicts. The staff's competence in operating the system continues to increase, but some staff admit that infrastructure improvements and system integration are still needed for optimization. Further training and better technical support are essential to ensure that e-Court can continue to function well and provide maximum results, especially in more complex cases.<sup>43</sup>

## Conclusion

This study reveals the effectiveness of e-Court in handling divorce cases at the Class 1A Religious Court in Padang with a focus on indicators of ease of access, process efficiency, decision quality, user satisfaction, and employee acceptance and competence. Ease of access is indicated by adequate technological infrastructure, although improved internet access is still needed. E-Court has been proven to be able to improve process efficiency by reducing case handling time by 3-6 months compared to conventional methods, although some stages still require physical interaction. The quality of decisions is generally consistent and accurate, but limited personal interaction can reduce the judge's understanding of the emotions of the parties in the case. User satisfaction tends to be high, but there are still complaints about the system that sometimes experiences errors and the lack of user ability to express problems

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<sup>43</sup> Ryan Alan Firnanda and Zaidah Nur Rosidah, "Efektivitas E-Court Dalam Penyelesaian Sengketa Ekonomi Syariah Di Pengadilan Agama Surakarta," *Jurnal Supremasi* 14, no. 1 (2024): 28-42, <https://doi.org/10.35457/supremasi.v14i1.3400>.



emotionally through uploaded drafts. On the other hand, employee competence in operating e-Court shows good development, although further training is still needed to improve case handling efficiency, especially complex cases. Recommendations from this study include improving technological infrastructure and internet access, strengthening employee training, and developing a system that is responsive to user needs. In addition, it is important to integrate a more personal approach in mediation to address the emotional aspects of divorce cases. E-Court is expected to continue to increase its effectiveness in providing better legal services and being responsive to the needs of the community.

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