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MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PRODEO SERVICES FOR THE UNDERPRIVILEGED AT THE CIREBON CITY RELIGIOUS COURT

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Abstract

Background. Prodeo services are a judicial mechanism designed to ensure that economic constraints do not prevent the public from accessing justice. However, the existence of a legal framework does not necessarily guarantee effective implementation in practice.

Aims. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of prodeo service implementation for the underprivileged at the Cirebon City Religious Court, in accordance with Supreme Court Regulation (PERMA) Number 1 of 2014, and to identify the factors that facilitate or hinder its implementation.

Methods. An empirical-juridical research method was employed, combining statutory and empirical approaches. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with service



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providers (including Legal Aid Post/Posbakum officers) and direct observation of service processes at the Cirebon City Religious Court. Secondary data were derived from document studies and relevant laws and regulations. Data were analyzed qualitatively by comparing the normative standards of PERMA Number 1 of 2014 with actual service practices in the field.

Conclusion. The study results are expected to map the effectiveness of prodeo services in terms of procedural compliance and ease of access to justice, as well as outline the socio-bureaucratic obstacles and supporting factors influencing the fulfillment of the legal rights of the underprivileged at the Cirebon City Religious Court.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Prodeo Services, Access to Justice, Underprivileged Community, Cirebon City Religious Court.

INTRODUCTION

Access to justice is an important element in the administration of justice because everyone has the same right to obtain legal protection and services. However, these equal rights do not always match the community's ability to access the judicial process. For people with economic limitations, case costs can be an obstacle to resolving cases through judicial institutions. This shows that access to justice is not only about the availability of judicial institutions, but also about the community's ability to use the judicial mechanism in practice.

In the Indonesian judicial system, these problems are accommodated through the principles of simple, fast, and low-cost justice as affirmed in Law Number 48 of 2009 concerning Judicial Power. The principle shows that costs should not be an obstacle that causes a person to lose the opportunity to obtain justice. In the context of the Religious Court, efforts to provide access to the underprivileged are also carried out through case fee exemption services, or prodeo.

Normatively, prodeo services have a legal basis that regulates the provision of legal services for the underprivileged in court. Supreme Court Regulation Number 1 of 2014 concerning Guidelines for the Provision of Legal Services for Underprivileged People in Court provides guidelines regarding the provision of legal services, including exemption from case fees for people who meet the requirements. Under this provision, people in economic hardship can access the courts without being burdened by litigation costs, in accordance with the predetermined mechanism. Therefore, normatively, prodeo is understood not only as an administrative policy of eliminating costs, but as an instrument to ensure that economic limitations do not hinder a person from accessing justice.

However, the existence of a legal basis and a prodeo mechanism has not by itself shown that access to justice for the underprivileged has been effectively implemented. The

effectiveness of the service must be assessed by comparing the provisions set out with their implementation in practice. People who have the right to obtain prodeo may not be able to make optimal use of this right if obstacles prevent them from understanding information, fulfilling requirements, following submission procedures, or accessing services during the case process. Thus, the key issue is not only whether prodeo services are available, but whether the target recipient can actually use them.

The Cirebon City Religious Court is one relevant place to examine this problem empirically. In practice, prodeo services involve administrative and service processes that bring together legal provisions with the real conditions of justice seekers. At this point, it can be seen whether the established procedures have run as they should, whether the community is unable to know and understand the existence of the service, and whether there are obstacles in its implementation. This condition is important to study because the success of prodeo services cannot be measured by the existence of rules or the availability of facilities, but by the extent to which the service provides real benefits to people in need.

Previous research on prodeo has discussed the exemption of case fees as a way to fulfill access to justice for the underprivileged. However, empirical research that specifically measures the effectiveness of this service by comparing normative standards and service practices in the Cirebon City Religious Court remains very limited. Based on this description, this empirical juridical research aims to analyze the effectiveness of prodeo services in providing access to justice for the underprivileged. Specifically, this study focuses on answering two main problems: (1) How is the effectiveness of the implementation of prodeo services for the underprivileged in the Cirebon City Religious Court reviewed from the Supreme Court Regulation Number 1 of 2014; and (2) What factors support and hinder the effectiveness of the implementation of prodeo services at the Cirebon City Religious Court. Through this analysis, the research results are expected to provide a clear picture of the achievement of the legal goals of prodeo services in the field.

METHODS

This research uses an empirical juridical method, which examines legal provisions regarding prodeo services and their application in practice at the Cirebon City Religious Court. The juridical approach examines the provisions that form the basis for implementing prodeo services, especially Law Number 48 of 2009 concerning Judicial Power and Supreme Court Regulation Number 1 of 2014 concerning Guidelines for the Provision of Legal Services for

Underprivileged People in Court. PERMA is one of the main foundations because it regulates guidelines for providing legal services for underprivileged people in court.

This study uses an empirical approach to provide an overview of the implementation of prodeo services in the Cirebon City Religious Court, focusing on the service mechanism, fulfillment of requirements, access to information, and obstacles in implementation. This study not only assesses the administrative existence of prodeo services but also examines the extent to which the targeted community of service recipients can use them.

The research data consists of primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through observation of service implementation and interviews with parties involved in implementing pro deo services at the Cirebon City Religious Court. Secondary data were obtained through literature studies in the form of laws and regulations, books, scientific journals, court documents, and other legal sources relevant to prodeo services and access to justice for the underprivileged. Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, documentation, and literature studies. Interviews are used to obtain information about the implementation of prodeo services and the obstacles faced in practice. Observations were made to see firsthand the service process and the mechanism applied. Documentation was used to obtain supporting data related to prodeo services, while literature studies were used to identify the legal provisions that form the basis for implementing these services.

The data obtained was analyzed qualitatively by comparing the normative provisions regarding prodeo services with their implementation at the Cirebon City Religious Court. The effectiveness of the service is analyzed based on the implementation of the procedure, ease of access for the underprivileged, the fulfillment of the right to exemption from case fees, and factors that support and hinder its implementation. Thus, the research aims to determine whether prodeo services have been implemented in accordance with legal objectives and can provide real access to justice for the underprivileged.

DISCUSSION

The Effectiveness of the Implementation of Prodeo Services at the Cirebon City Religious Court Reviewed from PERMA Number 1 of 2014.

The implementation of case fee waiver services (prodeo) in the judiciary is an embodiment of the mandate of Article 2 paragraph (4) of Law Number 48 of 2009 concerning Judicial Power, emphasizing that justice is carried out simply, quickly, and at a low cost. Within the Religious Court, this principle is technically derived through Supreme Court Regulation (PERMA) Number 1 of 2014 concerning Guidelines for the Provision of Legal Services for the

Underprivileged in Court. Normatively, this instrument is present to ensure that economic limitations do not become a *financial barrier* for citizens in obtaining legal protection and access to justice.

To measure the extent to which the provisions in PERMA Number 1 of 2014 are useful in the social reality in the Cirebon City Religious Court, this study uses Soerjono Soekanto's Legal Effectiveness Theory. According to Soekanto, the effectiveness of a law is influenced by five interacting factors: the existence of the legal factor itself (Law); law enforcement factors; supporting facilities or facilities; community factors; and cultural factors.

Conformity of Formal Service Procedures (*Procedural Compliance*)

Based on legal and law enforcement factors, the implementation of the prodeo submission procedure at the Cirebon City Religious Court generally runs in accordance with the mechanism stipulated in Chapter II of PERMA Number 1 of 2014. The process begins with receiving files at the One-Stop Integrated Service (PTSP) counter. Applicants or plaintiffs from underprivileged communities must submit administrative documents, such as a Certificate of Incapacity (SKTM) from the local Village Head/Village Head or a Social Protection Card (KKS, PKH, or Jamkesmas).

At this stage, law enforcement and service officers (PTSP and Legal Aid Posts or Posbakum) are effective. The Posbakum officer at the Cirebon City Religious Court assists applicants or plaintiffs with legal illiteracy or limited literacy skills in preparing a draft prodeo application combined with a lawsuit or main application. Furthermore, the Clerk processes the documents to verify their completeness before submitting them to the Panel of Judges. The Panel of Judges will conduct a substantive examination through an incidental trial to issue a Prodeo Service Determination. From an operational and procedural perspective, the



prosecution of PERMA Number 1 of 2014 has been implemented in an accountable and transparent manner.

Figure 1 : Interview with the Posbakum Unit of the Cirebon City Religious Court

DIPA Quota Management Policy and "Prodeo Murni" Safety Valve

In contrast to the condition of previous years, which was marked by the uncertainty of the amount of budget allocation, in 2026 the Cirebon City Religious Court will receive certainty of a quota for exemption from DIPA case fees of as many as 66 cases, with a tendency to increase the allocation trend from period to period. To optimize the effectiveness of the limited budget, the Registrar of the Cirebon City Religious Court applies a discretionary policy by distributing quota absorption time allocations from January 2026 to August 2026. This policy is based on a predictive analysis of the situation, conditions, and trends of the arrival rate of poor justice seekers visiting the courts. Based on empirical data obtained from the Cirebon City Religious Court, the number of prodeo case quotas allocated has decreased and fluctuated from year to year:

Year 2025	The Cirebon City Religious Court received a quota allocation of approximately 50 prodeo cases.
Year 2026	The Cirebon City Religious Court experienced an increase in quota allocation to 66 prodeo cases



Figure 2 : Interview with the Registrar of Applications for the Cirebon City Religious Court

Increasing the quota in 2025 to 66 cases in 2026 has direct implications for the level of effectiveness of prodeo services. Judging from Soerjono Soekanto's Theory, the dynamics of quota management give birth to two theoretical and practical implications:

Budget Plan Management (Law Enforcement Factors & Means):

The Registrar's move to limit the DIPA distribution period to August is a strategy to mitigate the risk of premature budget absorption. This step ensures that the poor who come in the first half to the middle of the year can be optimally served through the state financing scheme.

Integration of Sustainability of Access to Justice through "Pure Prodeo":

Potential problems arise when the quota of 66 DIPA cases is absorbed in August 2026. To prevent delayed justice in the remaining months (September-December), the Cirebon City Religious Court activated the Prodeo Murni scheme. In this scheme, applicants who cannot afford the costs of the court process are granted an exemption, even though the state DIPA budget allocation has been exhausted. The presence of the Prodeo Murni mechanism is an important empirical finding: obstacles to DIPA facilities/budgets do not necessarily stop the poor's right to participate for free. This shows that law enforcement factors in the Cirebon City Religious Court can make functional adjustments so the law's effectiveness does not stop because of the formal budget ceiling.

Factors that Support and Hinder the Effectiveness of the Implementation of Prodeo Services at the Cirebon City Religious Court.

Based on field findings, the effectiveness of implementing prodeo services at the Cirebon City Religious Court is influenced by internal factors within the judicial institution and external factors in the community.

Enabling Factors

Clarity of Regulatory Certainty (Legal Factors):

PERMA Number 1 of 2014 provides standard and parametric references that minimize the potential for abuse of power by court officials in testing the feasibility of prodeo applicants.

Institutional Synergy of Posbakum and PTSP (Law Enforcement Factors and Facilities):

Free consultations, Posbakum's drafting of lawsuits, and the centralization of registration lines at PTSP counters cut the bureaucratic chain and unexpected costs for the poor.

Strategic Discretion of the Clerk (Law Enforcement Factors):

The Registrar's policy of mapping the distribution of quotas for 66 cases (January-August 2026) based on projected public arrivals, as well as providing the Pure Prodeo mechanism, is the main driver of service sustainability.

Inhibiting Factors

Limitations of the DIPA Budget Ceiling (Facilities/Facilities Factor):

Although the 2026 quota is confirmed at 66 cases and is expected to increase, the determination of this quota has not yet implemented an open-budgeting system that fully adjusts to the actual needs of underprivileged people in Cirebon City.

Information Asymmetry and Legal Awareness (Community Factors):

There is still an inequality of legal knowledge among the public. The stereotype that appearing in court requires a lot of money makes some poor people reluctant to apply in the first place.

Local Bureaucratic Administrative Constraints (Cultural/Bureaucratic Factors):

The process of issuing SKTM at the RT/RW and village levels often faces time-consuming, tiered administrative obstacles, which can slow down applicants who need urgent case handling.

Synthesis of Analysis

Referring to the five variables of Soerjono Soekanto's Theory, the implementation of prodeo services at the Cirebon City Religious Court is classified as procedurally and substantively effective. The certainty of the quota of 66 cases in 2026, supported by time allocation managed at the Registrar's discretion (January-August 2026), shows the responsiveness of law enforcement. Moreover, the Prodeo Murni mechanism, introduced after the DIPA quota expired, has helped bridge the budget gap, ensuring that the principle of equal access to justice for the underprivileged in Cirebon City continues to be implemented throughout the year.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the implementation of prodeo services for the underprivileged at the Cirebon City Religious Court has generally been carried out in accordance with PERMA Number 1 of 2014, especially in the form of exemptions from case fees, out-of-court hearings, and legal aid posts. However, its effectiveness is not fully optimal because a gap remains between normative provisions and implementation in the field; therefore, this service is considered quite effective from a juridical and procedural perspective but still needs strengthening in socialization and accessibility. Effectiveness is influenced by

several supporting factors, namely the existence of clear legal provisions, the availability of the DIPA budget, and the commitment of the court apparatus and cooperation with related institutions in providing incapacity certificates. On the other hand, inhibiting factors include a lack of community socialization, limited budget quotas, administrative obstacles in managing SKTM, and low community legal literacy, so not all entitled parties can fully take advantage of prodeo services.

Advice

Based on the above conclusion, the author provides the following recommendations:

For agencies (Cirebon City Religious Court): Make official SOPs and Service Standards for the "Prodeo Murni" scheme. This step is most crucial because research findings show that the DIPA quota often runs out before the end of the year. Clear internal regulations for Prodeo Murni will ensure legal certainty so that the rights of poor justice seekers do not stop in the second half of the year.

For faculty (Faculty of Law, Swadaya Gunung Jati University Cirebon): Integrating Prodeo Literacy into the Thematic PkM / KKN Program. This suggestion is most apt because it directly answers the root of the main problem found in the research, namely information asymmetry and the low level of legal literacy of the poor regarding the right to free litigation.

For the next researcher: Developing Research with a Mixed Methods Approach (Qualitative-Quantitative) with a Community Satisfaction Index: This suggestion provides the highest academic added value because it can measure the effectiveness of the product not only from the suitability of the procedure, but also test the level of satisfaction and real benefit felt by the service recipients.

For policymakers (Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia): Incorporating the Technical Guidelines of "Pure Prodeo" and the Open-Budgeting System into the Strengthening of PERMA No. 1 of 2014. This is the most widely impactful policy contribution. This rule update will provide a strong national legal umbrella for courts across Indonesia not to hesitate to serve the poor when the formal DIPA budget has been absorbed

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