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The Islamic Court Resilience and Digital Disruption: A Prospective Review of The Indonesian Religious Courts

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Abstract. The background of this research stems from the urgent need to ensure the adaptability and institutional resilience of religious courts amid digital disruption. The purpose of this research is to develop a theory of prospective resilience of religious court institutions by tracing the historical foundations and legal frameworks that shape institutional resilience in the face of technological transformation. This research is qualitative in nature with a legal-historical and juridical-normative approach. Data were collected through a document study of regulations on the institutionalization of religious courts and legal literature on judicial institutions, then analyzed using content analysis and interpretivehistorical methods. The results of the study show that the prospective resilience of religious courts is built on three dimensions: continuity of Islamic legal values, the recontextualization of justice norms within the digital system, and the integration of ethical responsibility principles into the use of AI. The novelty of this research lies in the development of institutional resilience theory rooted in legal-historical methodology, which places institutional history as the conceptual foundation for the resilience and legitimacy of religious courts in the era of digital disruption.

Keywords: Islamic Court, Resiliency, Digital Disruption.

1 Introduction

Since Since colonial times, religious courts in Indonesia have had a long history as symbols of Islamic justice and forums for resolving disputes among the people, particularly in matters of family and property (inheritance and waqf). However, since

the Dutch colonial government abolished the authority of religious courts over property and execution, the institutional legitimacy of Islamic courts began to erode.¹

Normatively (das sollen), the Religious Court should be an autonomous institution that is responsive to the values of Islamic justice that are alive in society. However, empirically (das sein), this court still faces a crisis of adaptability to digital transformation and the artificial intelligence (AI) revolution, as seen from the low implementation of e-Court and e-Litigation systems in various regions.²

A number of studies have highlighted problems with the legal system and judicial ethics in the digital context. Eti Yusnita et al. (2024) emphasize that e-Court innovation is an effort towards public interest (maṣlaḥah mursalah), but it have not discussed institutional resilience and the resilience of Islamic legal values amid technological disruption.³ Similarly, Dian Latifiani et al. examine the legal culture of advocates in the modern judicial system, but do not explore the historical and normative dimensions that shape the resilience of religious judicial institutions. This means there is a theoretical gap between the efficiency of judicial digitization and the resilience of Islamic values that underpin the legitimacy of religious courts.⁴

According to Lawrence M. Friedman's review of legal system theory, research by Hasanudin et al. (2024) shows that the imbalance between legal structure, substance, and culture continues to hinder the effectiveness of Sharia courts.⁵ However, this research has not addressed how institutional history and Islamic legal heritage can be integrated into the foundation of a resilience framework in the era of artificial intelligence. On the other hand, Solehudin et al. (2024) highlight the ethical and utility dimensions of sharia economic courts but do not explore the continuity of historical values in the face of digital transformation.⁶ This gap prompted this study to propose a prospective resilience theory for religious court institutions rooted in a legal-historical approach.

This study stems from the urgency of ensuring that the Religious Courts are not only adaptive to digital systems such as e-Court but also resilient to the epistemological changes brought about by artificial intelligence. Based on historical research on the structure of the judiciary in Samudera Pasai, Demak, and the establishment of the High

¹ Dahlan Zaini, "Direktorat Jenderal Badan Peradilan Agama Mahkamah Agung RI," *MA RI Press*, 2012, 305–306.

² Hasyim Sofyan Lahilote et al., "Judicial Digitalization in Central Indonesia: A Study of E-Court and E-Litigation Implementation in Courts," *Syariah: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pemikiran* 24, no. 2 (2024): 315–32, https://doi.org/10.18592/SJHP.V24I2.13879.

³ Eti Yusnita, Yuswalina, and Muhammad Toriq, "Embracing E-Court Innovation: Advancing Maslahah Mursalah in Indonesia's Religious Courts," *Nurani: Jurnal Kajian Syari'ah Dan Masyarakat* 24, no. 2 (December 2024): 506–23, https://doi.org/10.19109/nurani.v24i2.24744.

⁴ Dian Latifiani et al., "Can Advocates' Legal Culture in Civil Law Enforcement Drive Reform in Indonesia's Modern Justice System?," *Journal of Law and Legal Reform* 5, no. 3 (October 2024): 913–42, https://doi.org/10.15294/jllr.v5i3.12988.

⁵ Hasanudin, Kamsi, and Ahmad Yani Anshori, "The Contestation of Legal Foundations in the Resolution of Islamic Economic Disputes in Religious Courts," *Al-Manahij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam*, September 19, 2024, 271–88, https://doi.org/10.24090/mnh.v18i2.11934.

⁶ Miftakhul Huda and Hisam Ahyani, "Normative Justice and Implementation Related to Sharia Economic Law Disputes in Realizing Legal Certainty and Justice in Indonesia," *Al-Risalah: Forum Kajian Hukum Dan Sosial Kemasyarakatan* 24, no. 1 (June 2024): 103–19, https://doi.org/10.30631/alrisalah.v24i1.1467.

Islamic Court, it can be seen that the resilience of Islamic judicial institutions has always depended on their ability to integrate religious values with contextual and modern governance. In this context, prospective resilience is defined as the ability of institutions to not only survive but also anticipate systemic changes through the preservation of values, structural adaptation, and ethical innovation.⁸

Using a legal-historical and juridical-normative approach, this study attempts to conceptualize the institutional resilience of religious courts as comprising various elements. This conceptualization will help the academic world develop a theory of resilience for judicial institutions in the era of AI and other digital disruptions, one that cannot be built solely on technology but must be grounded in the revitalization of the historical memory of Islamic courts as guardians of substantive and social justice. ¹⁰ The novelty of this research lies in the development of a prospective legal-historical theory of resilience that treats the institutional history of Islamic courts not merely as a normative archive, but also as an epistemic source for building legal resilience in the era of digital disruption and the artificial intelligence revolution. 11

Literatur Review 2

A study of Islamic courts, resilience, and digital disruption shows a dynamic relationship between the transformation of Islamic legal institutions and their adaptive capacity to social and technological changes in the era of digital disruption. In the Indonesian context, legal pluralism is the main theoretical foundation for understanding the position of Islamic courts within the national legal system.¹²

Asserts that Indonesian legal pluralism places state law, customary law, and Islamic law within a single ecosystem in which they interact, compete, and adapt. 13 This theory not only highlights the diversity of legal systems but also forms the basis for institutional resilience, namely the ability of the Islamic judicial system to survive and evolve in the face of external pressures, both political and digital. 14

⁷ Huda and Ahyani.

⁸ S Abbas, I Ismail, and I Jauhari, "Reinterpreting Islamic Inheritance: Supreme Court Jurisprudence And Gender Justice In Indonesia," Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun 13, no. 3 (2025): 2339-64, https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v13i3.1593.

⁹ Jasser Auda, "A Maqāṣidī Approach to Contemporary Application of the Sharī'Ah," Intellectual Discourse 19, no. 2 (December 2011): 193-217, https://doi.org/10.31436/id.v19i2.231.

¹⁰ Latifiani et al., "Can Advocates' Legal Culture in Civil Law Enforcement Drive Reform in Indonesia's Modern Justice System?"

N. Kizilkaya, Legal Maxims in Islamic Law: Concept, History and Application of Axioms of Juristic Accumulation, Brill S Arab and Islamic Laws Series, vol. 15, 2021.

¹² Lahilote et al., "Judicial Digitalization in Central Indonesia: A Study of E-Court and E-Litigation Implementation in Courts."

Agus Moh Najib, "Reestablishing Indonesian Madhhab: 'Urf and the Contribution of Intellectualism," Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies 58, no. 1 (July 31, 2020): 171-208, https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2020.581.171-208.

¹⁴ Anang Sugeng Cahyono et al., "Government Power in Property Law: Control, Conflict, and Contestation in Indonesia and Nepal," Jurnal Hukum Bisnis Bonum Commune, February 27, 2025, 174–93, https://doi.org/10.30996/jhbbc.v8i1.12864.

The concept of resilience in the context of Islamic courts is rooted in the principles of legal gradualism and contextualism, which emphasize that the application of Sharia law must take into account a society's social, political, and cultural conditions. Resilience here does not only mean the structural resilience of judicial institutions, but also normative flexibility in facing legal modernization. ¹⁵ The gradualism model shows that the Islamization of law is not revolutionary but incremental, adjusting to society's capacity and social legitimacy. This is important in anticipating digital disruption that demands institutional innovation without losing the normative integrity of Sharia. ¹⁶

From a socio-cultural perspective, studies of Acehnese society show that the success of the Islamic judicial system depends heavily on the social resilience of the communities that support it.¹⁷ This highlights the importance of social structures such as the relationship between keuchik and teungku in maintaining harmony between adat and sharia.¹⁸ Social values such as *hadih maja* serve as a moral system that supports customary based restorative justice, which is now relevant again in the context of legal digitization. Thus, resilience does not only mean surviving external shocks, but also the ability to transform while remaining grounded in Islamic normative and cultural identity.

The development of Islamic Courts in Aceh demonstrates a model of legal harmonization between state law and Islamic law through the qanun mechanism. ¹⁹ This shows that following the implementation of the Qanun Jinayat and Qanun Acara Jinayat, the Sharia courts have shown high adaptability in balancing local authority and national regulations. ²⁰ This harmonization signifies institutional resilience, combining Sharia norms with positive legal standards. However, new challenges have emerged with the implementation of digitalization in judicial administration, requiring the Islamic judicial system to adopt technology without compromising its ethical values. ²¹

In the context of digital disruption, the transformation of the global legal system has prompted judicial institutions to adapt to digital technology, whether through elitigation, AI-assisted decision-making, or digital evidence. However, few studies have

¹⁵ Patrick R. Hughes, "A Critical Analysis Of Hans Kelsen's Pure Theory Of Law From The Point Of View Of Aristotelian-Scholasticism," *Engineering* (2009).

Hadi Sucipto et al., "Transformation of Public Trust in Restorative Justice by the Prosecutor's Office: An Islamic and Social Law Approach in the Contemporary Era," MILRev: Metro Islamic Law Review 3, no. 2 (December 30, 2024): 364–87, https://doi.org/10.32332/milrev.v3i2.9938.

¹⁷ A Bedner, "Forum-Shopping in Criminal Law: Power and Pragmatism in Gayo, Aceh, Indonesia," *Legal Pluralism and Critical Social Analysis* 56, no. 3 (2024): 479–96, https://doi.org/10.1080/27706869.2024.2385233.

¹⁸ M A Abdullah et al., "Robbery, Bullying: Protection Through Pageu Gampong Customary Law and Islamic Law," *Samarah* 8, no. 3 (2024): 1691–1711, https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v8i3.22713.

¹⁹ Ihdi Karim Makinara et al., "Negotiating Sharia and Power: Political Dynamics behind the Drafting of the Qanun on Ahwal Al-Syakhsiyyah in Aceh," *Samarah* 9, no. 2 (2025): 1154–72, https://doi.org/10.22373/k97hy420.

M Djawas et al., "Harmonization of State, Custom, and Islamic Law in Aceh: Perspective of Legal Pluralism," *Hasanuddin Law Review* 10, no. 1 (2024): 64–82, https://doi.org/10.20956/halrev.v10i1.4824.

²¹ Makinara et al., "Negotiating Sharia and Power: Political Dynamics behind the Drafting of the Qanun on Ahwal Al-Syakhsiyyah in Aceh."

thoroughly examined the readiness of Islamic courts for this transformation. Previous research has focused more on legal legitimacy and structural harmonization than on digital integration. In fact, digital transformation requires a redefinition of resilience from normative resilience to digital resilience, namely the ability of Islamic legal institutions to manage technological risks, maintain data integrity, and ensure algorithmic-based justice in accordance with *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*.²²

The research gap appears at three levels. First, from a theoretical perspective, there has been no comprehensive integration between the theories of legal pluralism, institutional resilience, and digital disruption.²³ Second, methodologically, previous studies have been descriptive-normative, without developing empirical models to measure the resilience of Islamic courts to digital technology. Third, contextually, the majority of studies stop at the level of qanun regulation, without exploring how digital transformation affects the practice of Sharia courts in Aceh, including its efficiency, legitimacy, and ethics.

Thus, future theoretical development should focus on constructing an Integrative Resilience Model for Islamic Courts in the Digital Era that combines legal pluralism, normative gradualism, and the theory of technological disruption. This model can explain how Islamic judicial institutions can navigate technological change while maintaining Islamic values and local wisdom.

A new contribution is the formulation of a theoretical framework for Islamic Judicial Digital Resilience, namely the adaptive capacity of Islamic courts to utilize digital technology in an ethical, inclusive manner in accordance with $maq\bar{a}sid$ al- $shar\bar{\iota}$ 'ah. This framework not only enriches contemporary Islamic legal literature but also provides a policy basis for strengthening the digital governance of Islamic judicial institutions in Indonesia.

Contemporary literature on Islamic courts, resilience, and digital disruption shows that the direction of Islamic legal theory development in Indonesia has shifted significantly from a normative paradigm to a transcendental-adaptive paradigm. The essence of legal reform is to ensure substantive justice and social efficiency through dignified and just laws. This approach is expanded upon by Isman et al. (2024), who propose the concept of transcendental law to bridge the moral, spiritual, and technological dimensions in the digital legal system.²⁴ The main variables used in these studies include normative legitimacy, institutional resilience, and the effectiveness of digital law, which are operationalized through studies of institutional transformation, the judiciary's response to technology, and the legal system's ability to uphold the values of justice and public interest in an era of disruption.

O Rozikin et al., "Contextualizing Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah in Indigenous Legal Practices: A Comparative Study of Family Resilience in Kasepuhan Ciptagelar and Kampung Naga," Nurani 25, no. 2 (2025): 344–62, https://doi.org/10.19109/nurani.v25i2.27760.

²³ Abbas, Ismail, and Jauhari, "Reinterpreting Islamic Inheritance: Supreme Court Jurisprudence And Gender Justice In Indonesia."

²⁴ Isman, A I Hambali, and A B Eldeen, "Transcendental Law and Legal Reform in the Digital Era," *AI in Business: Opportunities and ...*, 2024, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-49544-1 44.

This trend is reinforced by Riyanto (2020), who emphasizes the need to redefine national law to be adaptive to developments in the digital society,²⁵ as well as by Ambarwati (2022), who introduces the concept of progressive law in the metaverse to emphasize the role of law in responding to the speed of technological change.²⁶ In the context of Islamic law, the renewal of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) has become the focus of recent research, such as Isman et al. (2024),²⁷ and Auda (2011), which emphasize *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as an open system of thinking capable of accommodating new social realities, such as online marriage, electronic signatures, and the concept of digital assets. The variables of *maqāṣid*-based adaptability and legal responsiveness are used to measure the extent to which Islamic law maintains its substance while adapting to the digital ecosystem.

However, there is a noticeable research gap. Most studies focus on normative dimensions and digital transformation, but have not integrated institutional resilience theory in the context of Islamic courts. There is no theoretical model that explains how religious courts have historically survived and transformed amid technological disruption. Therefore, further research is needed to develop a legal-historical resilience theory framework that combines the continuity of Islamic legal values, institutional legitimacy, and responses to digital disruption. This approach not only enriches the body of modern Islamic legal theory but also offers a new paradigm for how Islamic courts can become resilient and forward-looking institutions in the era of the artificial intelligence revolution.

3 Method

This research is qualitative in nature, using legal-historical and juridical-normative approaches. Data was obtained through library research, tracing primary and secondary sources related to the institutionalization of Religious Courts in Indonesia.²⁸

Primary sources include legal documents such as the colonial-era Staatsblad regulating the authority of the Religious Courts, Law No. 7 of 1989 on Religious Courts and its amendments, as well as Supreme Court regulations and the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI).²⁹ These documents were obtained through access to the digital archives of the Supreme Court, the National Library, and the official government portal (peraturan.go.id). These sources are important because they illustrate the continuity and changes in the institutional functions of the Religious Courts over time, while also

²⁵ H.R. Benny Riyanto, "Pembaruan Hukum Nasional Era 4.0," *Jurnal Rechts Vinding: Media Pembinaan Hukum Nasional* 9, no. 2 (August 2020): 161, https://doi.org/10.33331/rechtsvinding.v9i2.455.

²⁶ Dewi Ambarwati, "Urgensi Pembaharuan Hukum Di Era'Metaverse' Dalam Perspektif Hukum Progresif," *Dialektika: Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Ilmu Sosial* 7, no. 2 (September 2022): 151–67, https://doi.org/10.36636/dialektika.v7i2.1306.

²⁷ Isman, Hambali, and Eldeen, "Transcendental Law and Legal Reform in the Digital Era."

²⁸ P. Ishwara Bhat, "Qualitative Legal Research," in *Idea and Methods of Legal Research* (Oxford University PressDelhi, 2020), 359–82, https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780199493098.003.0012.

²⁹ Bhat.

providing an empirical basis for assessing the resilience of Islamic law in the face of social and technological change.³⁰

The above literature is used to construct a theoretical framework regarding the prospective resilience of religious courts, namely the ability of judicial institutions to balance Islamic values and technological adaptation. The legal literature analysis also includes recent research on the digitization of the judiciary, the ethics of artificial intelligence in law, and the integration of e-Court systems in the religious court environment, in order to highlight the challenges and opportunities of digital transformation for institutional legitimacy.³¹

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis and an interpretive-historical approach. Content analysis was used to trace patterns, principles, and values contained in regulations and legal literature related to religious courts, while the historical approach was used to interpret the dynamics of institutional change from the Islamic sultanate period to the era of modern court digitalization. The research discussion focused on three main areas: (1) tracing the historical roots of the resilience of religious courts in the context of legal and political change; (2) analyzing the legal framework that supports institutional resilience in the era of artificial intelligence; and (3) developing a prospective resilience theory that explains how religious courts can survive and transform in the face of digital disruption without losing their normative and spiritual legitimacy.³²

4 Result and Discussion

4.1 Result

The presence of the High Islamic Council (MIT) in the historical context of religious courts in Indonesia demonstrates a long and complex process of institutional resilience. During the Dutch colonial period, the establishment of the MIT was a response to the concerns of the Islamic community regarding colonial policies that systematically weakened the authority of religious courts. The appointment of incompetent qadis by the colonial government led to widespread dissatisfaction among those seeking justice, prompting the MIT to emerge as a forum for appealing religious court decisions deemed unfair. In this context, the MIT functioned not only as a legal institution, but also as a symbol of resistance against the subordination of Islamic law under the colonial system.

Furthermore, from an Islamic perspective, the existence of MIT is not merely an administrative reaction, but part of the historical continuity of Islam in upholding

³⁰ Isman, Hambali, and Eldeen, "Transcendental Law and Legal Reform in the Digital Era."

³¹ I Isman and Ahmad Zainul Muttaqin, "Innovative Legal Modeling for Interdisciplinary Studies on Law and Economic Behavior," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Economic Law* 1, no. 1 (December 7, 2023): 60–71, https://doi.org/10.23917/ijoel.v1i1.3437.

³² Latifiani et al., "Can Advocates' Legal Culture in Civil Law Enforcement Drive Reform in Indonesia's Modern Justice System?"

³³ H. Zulkarnain, "Mahkamah Islam Tinggi Antara Perspektif Dan Prospektif," in *Seminar Nasional, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta* (Indonesia, 2025), 3.

justice. Zulkarnain (2025) notes that the Islamic judicial system implemented by MIT reflects the sunnah of the Prophet and the judicial traditions of the Khulafaur Rasyidin, as exemplified by Imam Ali bin Abi Thalib when he was qadhi in Yemen. The model of dispute resolution based on the principles of openness, testing of justice, and involvement of the highest authority (the Prophet Muhammad SAW) became the basic pattern adopted by MIT in upholding the principles of moral and procedural resilience of religious courts in Indonesia.³⁴

In the context of colonial politics, MIT also served as a socio-religious buffer, especially after the abolition of the Religious Court's authority in property matters (inheritance, waqf, and execution). MIT became a means of political compromise to maintain the social stability of Muslims while preserving the existence of religious courts in a minimalist form.³⁵ Although limited, the presence of MIT demonstrates strong institutional resilience in maintaining the spirit of Islamic law under colonial pressure.

The transformation of MIT from a colonial institution to a national institution marked the second phase of institutional resilience. The establishment of MIT Jakarta on March 7, 1937 (S.1937 No.610) was the starting point for a more structured modernization of religious courts. Then, the establishment of MIT Solo on January 2, 1946, through the Decree of the Minister of Justice No. T2, showed the political dynamics after independence, where there was a dualism of jurisdiction between MIT Surabaya and MIT Solo.³⁶ This situation illustrates efforts to reposition the religious court as an institution independent of colonial and federal political control, while also expanding its authority within the national legal system.

The institutional consolidation phase occurred after the issuance of the Minister of Religious Affairs Decree No. 71 of 1976, which established MIT branches in Bandung and Surabaya. This policy not only strengthened the institutional network of religious courts, but also marked a shift in the orientation of the MIT towards a systemic and integrated model, similar to the structure of the Supreme Court.³⁷ This shows that institutional resilience is not only measured by the ability to withstand external pressures, but also by the ability to adapt to modern legal systems and the evolving needs of society.

Within a legal-historical framework, the resilience of MIT is also evident in the separation of the functions of the hulu and the judiciary through Minister of Religious Affairs Decree No. 6 of 1947, as well as the establishment of Provincial Sharia Courts in various regions based on Minister of Religious Affairs Decree No. 58 of 1957. This policy emphasizes the professionalization and specialization of the role of Sharia judges in the Islamic judicial system. ³⁸ Prospectively, this pattern of decentralization becomes the foundation for a modern religious court system that is hierarchical but remains responsive to the local context.

Historically, MIT is a metamorphosis of the Surambi and Balemangu judicial structures during the Islamic sultanates, such as in Demak and Aceh. In this system, the king or sultan acted as the protector of the law (sayidin panatagama), while the

³⁴ Zulkarnain, "Mahkamah Islam Tinggi Antara Perspektif Dan Prospektif," 4.

³⁵ Zulkarnain, 5.

³⁶ Zulkarnain, 6.

³⁷ Zulkarnain, 7.

³⁸ Zulkarnain, 8.

penghulu and ulama served as the executors of justice at the community level.³⁹ The continuity between the sultanate tradition and the MIT structure demonstrates a continuity of normativity that strengthens the resilience of Islamic institutions against drastic socio-political changes.

The prospective presence of institutions such as MIT in the modern era can be interpreted as an effort to develop a prospective resilience theory in religious courts. Resilience here does not only mean survival, but also the ability of institutions to transform in the face of digital disruption and the artificial intelligence revolution. Zulkarnain (2025) suggests that the historical foundations of MIT can be used as a model for the formation of a contemporary "High Council of Islam" that integrates Islamic values, technology, and ethics into an AI-based judicial ecosystem.⁴⁰

This direction of development requires religious courts to not only rely on normative authority, but also to strengthen adaptive resilience, namely the ability to respond to digital changes while maintaining $maq\bar{a}sid$ $al-syar\bar{\iota}'ah$. From a historical-juridical perspective, the theory of prospective resilience rooted in MIT asserts that the strength of religious courts lies in the balance between normative legitimacy, social acceptability, and institutional innovation.⁴¹

The historical roots of the resilience of the Religious Courts in Indonesia lie in the long-standing tension between Islamic legal authority and colonial political intervention, which sought to subjugate the local legal system under the supremacy of Western law. During the Dutch East Indies period, colonial policies based on the principles of concordantie and the theory of receptie resulted in the marginalization of the Islamic court system. The Religious Courts were downgraded to quasi-judicial status, placed under the Landraad, and some of their powers particularly in property matters such as inheritance and waqf -were taken over by the colonial courts. However, in this situation, institutional resilience emerged: Muslims maintained their religious structure through the Qadhi and local institutions, demonstrating that resilience was not only structural but also normative, rooted in the belief that Islamic law remained alive amid colonial pressure.

The establishment of the High Islamic Council (MIT) in 1937 marked the beginning of the restoration of the institutional resilience of religious courts. From the Dutch perspective, the MIT was formed as an administrative solution to quell Muslim dissatisfaction with the decisions of the Religious Court due to the large number of Qadis who were considered incompetent, as well as a political tool to calm the anger of the people after the abolition of the Religious Court's authority over property cases. ⁴³ However, substantively, the MIT actually became a form of official recognition of the existence of the Islamic legal system that was already rooted in the social structure of the archipelago. This recognition created a new legal basis that affirmed that the existence of the Religious Court was not the result of colonial political engineering, but a historical continuation of the Islamic legal system that had existed since the era of Islamic kingdoms such as Samudera Pasai, Demak, and the Sultanate of Aceh. ⁴⁴

³⁹ Samir Aliyah, "Sistem Pemerintahan Peradilan Dan Adat Dalam Islam," Khalifa Press, 1997, 478.

⁴⁰ Zulkarnain, "Mahkamah Islam Tinggi Antara Perspektif Dan Prospektif," 9.

⁴¹ Zulkarnain, 10.

⁴² Zulkarnain, 3.

⁴³ Zulkarnain, 4.

⁴⁴ Aliyah, "Sistem Pemerintahan Peradilan Dan Adat Dalam Islam," 478.

Juridically and historically, the institutional resilience of the Religious Courts has grown stronger since independence through legal policies that separate religious and judicial functions. The Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs No. 6 of 1947 was an important milestone that confirmed the difference between the duties of the Penghulu as a Marriage Registrar and as a Qadhi Sharia Judge. This reform was continued with the establishment of Provincial Sharia Courts in various regions based on the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs No. 58 of 1957, which demonstrated the state's efforts to restructure the religious courts within the framework of national law. In this context, the resilience of the Religious Courts not only meant resisting colonial domination, but also the ability to adapt to post-independence legal and political changes through formalization and integration into the national legal system without losing their Sharia roots.

4.2 **Discussion**

Since the Dutch colonial period, religious courts have internalized an adaptive nature towards a complex legal system characterized by normative pluralism between Shafi'i fiqh, adat, and colonial law. The establishment of the Priesterraad (1882) in Java and Madura, which handled cases of marriage, divorce, and inheritance, shows that the legal legitimacy of religious courts was based on their ability to articulate Islamic norms into the colonial legal system without losing their sharia character. This pattern of resilience did not arise from political power, but rather from the epistemic ability of the qadis to manage legal transitions through contextual ijtihad that was in harmony with the living law of Muslim society.

After independence, this resilience manifested itself through partial codification that reinforced the position of religious courts in the national legal system, such as Law No. 7 of 1989 on Religious Courts and its subsequent amendment through Law No. 3 of 2006. Historical legitimacy, which was once socio-religious in nature, transformed into constitutional legitimacy. However, the power of religious courts lies not only in their formal existence, but also in their internal resilience in navigating the duality of national law and Islamic law. The codification of the Compilation of Islamic Law (1991) became an instrument of normative resilience that connected classical fiqh with modern legal needs.

Entering the era of digital disruption, this historical root of resilience serves as institutional capital for adapting to technological transformation. Just as the past has shown the ability of religious courts to integrate classical texts and positive law, in the digital age, a similar ability is needed to integrate Sharia principles with electronic systems such as e-courts, e-litigation, and AI-based automation. Thus, the historical continuity of religious courts is not merely an institutional chronology, but rather a pattern of epistemological adaptation to changes in the legal and technological ecosystem.

The resilience of religious courts to digital disruption is supported by constitutional and legal foundations that provide room for administrative innovation without abandoning the principles of Sharia justice. Article 24 of the 1945 Constitution affirms the independence of the judiciary, while Law No. 48 of 2009 on Judicial Power mandates that the judiciary must use information technology to achieve efficiency and

⁴⁵ Zulkarnain, "Mahkamah Islam Tinggi Antara Perspektif Dan Prospektif," 8.

transparency. This norm is then operationalized through Supreme Court Regulation (Perma) No. 1 of 2019 concerning Electronic Case Administration and Court Proceedings. In it, the space for AI-assisted decision-making can be developed as long as it does not violate the principles of justice and judicial independence.

The substantive legal basis that supports the resilience of religious courts in the digital era is found in the evolution of sectoral regulations such as Perma No. 14 of 2016 concerning Procedures for Settling Sharia Economic Cases. This regulation is an important instrument because it legitimizes the application of the electronic case management system (SIPP) in the realm of sharia economic disputes. Adaptation to big data jurisprudence and the digitization of case archives is not merely a technical change, but a manifestation of legal resilience in maintaining the continuity of substantive law through digital means.

The Islamic legal framework that forms the epistemological basis of religious courts remains intact through non-codified instruments such as DSN-MUI fatwas and KHES. Both serve as soft law that supports the morality of digital law. In the context of AI, this role is increasingly important because legal algorithms require value parameters. By making KHES and fatwas ethical data sets, religious courts can ensure that digital transformation does not diminish the *maqāsid al-syarī'ah* dimension in their decisions.

The formal legal dimension shows that religious courts still face procedural legacies from colonial law (HIR/RBg). However, the implementation of e-courts and e-litigation has opened up space for formal reforms towards digital procedural law based on substantive justice. The resilience of formal law marks the institutional ability to combine traditional structures (judicial hierarchy) with digital mechanisms (integrated case management). As a result, a hybrid procedural law model has emerged that strengthens the legitimacy of sharia law as well as bureaucratic efficiency.

According to the international legal framework review, artificial intelligence requires trustworthy governance. The principles of the OECD AI Ethics and UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI can be internalized by the Supreme Court through the strengthening of the digital judge code of ethics. The integration of AI ethics into the governance of religious courts will strengthen institutional resilience by emphasizing that technology is only an instrument, not a substitute for judicial discretion. This is the meeting point between formal legality, Sharia morality, and technological adaptability.

Prospective resilience theory positions religious courts as open systems that continuously adapt to changes in the social and technological ecosystem without losing their Sharia identity. In this paradigm, *qadhā'ī ijtihad* is not only understood as a method of legal discovery, but also as a mechanism of institutional learning in response to digital disruption. Judges act as knowledge processors who ethically combine human intelligence (wisdom) with artificial intelligence (algorithms).

Religious courts in the AI era must transform from courts of decision to courts of cognition, i.e., institutions that use jurisprudential data analysis to strengthen legal predictions and consistency without violating the principle of judicial independence. This model is in line with the concept of Regtech–Suptech judiciary, where religious courts not only resolve disputes but also manage legal risks based on digital analytics. Resilience here means the ability to make technology an enabler for *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, not a substitute for Islamic legal morality.

Sharia legitimacy amid digitalization must be built through three dimensions: epistemic (sustainability of ijtihad), normative (fidelity to Islamic legal sources), and

procedural (digital justice). Prospective resilience theory asserts that as long as these three dimensions work in tandem, digitalization will not negate the spirituality of law, but rather expand the reach of *rahmatan lil-'ālamīn* in judicial governance.

Literature data shows that the resilience of religious courts will depend on the integration of the AI Governance Framework with Maqāṣid al-Syarīʿah. The development of an AI-assisted ijtihad system that adheres to the principles of hifz al-'aql, hifz al-dīn, and hifz al-māl will ensure that digital transformation actually strengthens the objectives of Islamic law. Religious courts in the era of disruption will not only survive as legal institutions, but evolve into centers of ethical innovation that affirm the continuity between classical fiqh and future technology.

Based on literature data, there appears to be an evolution in theory in understanding the adaptability and resilience of religious court institutions in Indonesia, particularly amid digital disruption. The Supreme Court and Religious Courts face the dominance of formal legal sources such as KHES, HIR, and DSN-MUI fatwas. ⁴⁶ In this context, institutional adaptability is evident in the ability of judges to perform ijtihad, combining classical Islamic legal principles with contemporary formal norms, despite digital disruption, which demands not only procedural transformation and the strengthening of judges' digital competencies. ⁴⁷ This indicates that traditional theories of institutional resilience, which emphasize only survival or normative compliance, must now be expanded to include adaptive dimensions toward technology and procedural innovation.

Through the High Islamic Council (MIT), which has been a symbol of institutional resilience from the colonial era to the modern era. ⁴⁸ MIT shows that the resilience of religious courts is not merely about surviving external pressures, but also about undergoing internal transformations that preserve *maqāṣid al-syarīʿah* while adapting to structural and political changes in law. The evolution of the MIT from a colonial institution to a national integrated system shows that institutional adaptability is prospective, including the ability to respond to digital disruption and the AI revolution, without losing normative legitimacy and social acceptability. ⁴⁹ Thus, the theory of religious court resilience now involves a balance between historical normative continuity, institutional innovation, and adaptive capacity to technology.

Another comparison from the literature data is the paradigm shift in institutional resilience theory, namely from the initial focus on survival and normative legal compliance (historical, MIT) to a hybrid understanding that includes active adaptability to the modern context, including the digitization of judicial procedures and the integration of sharia principles with contemporary formal regulations (KHES, DSN-MUI, HIR).⁵⁰ Research literature highlights that effective institutional resilience now combines three pillars, namely adaptive legal structures, legal substance that is relevant

⁴⁶ Huda and Ahyani, "Normative Justice and Implementation Related to Sharia Economic Law Disputes in Realizing Legal Certainty and Justice in Indonesia."

⁴⁷ Dian Latifiani, "Human Attitude and Technology: Analyzing a Legal Culture on Electronic Court System in Indonesia (Case of Religious Court)," *Journal of Indonesian Legal Studies* 6, no. 1 (May 2021): 157–84, https://doi.org/10.15294/jils.v6i1.44450.

⁴⁸ Zulkarnain, "Mahkamah Islam Tinggi Antara Perspektif Dan Prospektif."

⁴⁹ Zulkarnain, 9-10.

⁵⁰ Joseph Dainow, "The Civil Law and the Common Law: Some Points of Comparison," *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 15, no. 3 (1966): 419, https://doi.org/10.2307/838275.

to community needs, and a legal culture that supports innovation and digitization.⁵¹ This means that the adaptability of religious courts in the era of digital disruption is not only about their continued existence, but also their ability to transform normatively, structurally, and technologically as a model of ideal and integral institutional resilience.

From the perspective of institutional adaptability and resilience theory, religious courts have undergone a significant conceptual shift in relation to digital disruption. In Muslim-majority countries, including Indonesia, institutional adaptability occurs through a combination of formal and informal mechanisms. ⁵² Formal mechanisms are reflected in constitutional amendments and legislation, while informal mechanisms arise from judicial interpretations, political practices, and social consensus that enable the legal system to remain responsive to change without requiring textual revisions. ⁵³ In the context of religious courts, this informal flexibility is in line with the role of MIT in balancing normative legitimacy with social acceptability, so that legal institutions remain adaptive to political or social pressures.

Reviewed from a historical and prospective dimension in understanding the resilience of religious courts in Indonesia. The presence of MIT from the colonial period to post-independence shows that institutional resilience is not only related to the ability to survive but also the ability to transform. The MIT did not merely respond to colonial subordination, but also reorganized the structure of religious courts to align with the national legal system, integrated the professionalization of Sharia judges, and built a structured institutional network.⁵⁴ This shows the emergence of a "prospective resilience" paradigm, namely that religious court institutions need to prepare themselves to face modern disruptions, including digital transformation and AI integration, while still maintaining *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*.

A comparison of these two metadata shows an expansion of the theory of institutional resilience. Whereas previously the focus was more on adaptation to political, social, or religious pressures (metadata 1), MIT's historical-prospective perspective (metadata 2) introduces the idea that resilience also includes the ability of institutions to innovate through structural and digital transformation. Thus, the adaptability of religious courts is now understood not only as a passive response to change, but as a proactive capacity to harmonize Islamic values, the demands of modernization, and information technology. Relevant literature supports this, including Gustav Brown's (2019) study emphasizing the logic of organizational consensus in Islam in Indonesia⁵⁵ and Lavie (2021) on constitutionalization as a process of normative

⁵¹ Latifiani, "Human Attitude and Technology: Analyzing a Legal Culture on Electronic Court System in Indonesia (Case of Religious Court)."

⁵² Imran Ahmed and Howard Brasted, "Recognition and Dissent: Constitutional Design and Religious Conflict in Pakistan," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 51, no. 2 (March 2021): 351–67, https://doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2020.1719538.

⁵³ Limor Lavie, "The Constitutionalization of the Civil State: The Self-Definition of Egypt, Tunisia and Yemen Following the Arab Uprisings," *Religions* 12, no. 4 (April 2021): 269, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12040269.

⁵⁴ Zulkarnain, "Mahkamah Islam Tinggi Antara Perspektif Dan Prospektif."

⁵⁵ Gustav Brown, "Civic Islam: Muhammadiyah, NU and the Organisational Logic of Consensus-Making in Indonesia," *Asian Studies Review* 43, no. 3 (July 2019): 397–414, https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2019.1626802;SUBPAGE:STRING:ACCESS.

adaptation within the framework of legal modernization.⁵⁶ This paradigm forms the foundation of a new theory that places institutional resilience as a balance between normative legitimacy, social flexibility, and digital innovation.

When linking the literature review with institutional adaptation theory, it can be concluded that MIT functions as a means of institutional resilience that not only survives colonial pressure but also transforms into a modern institution that is responsive to community needs and integrates into the national legal system. MIT demonstrates adaptive resilience, namely the ability of institutions to adapt to new contexts without sacrificing *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, while also building a foundation to face the challenges of digital disruption and the integration of AI-based technology in religious courts.⁵⁷ This is parallel to previous findings that informal constitutional mechanisms allow for legal continuity and institutional flexibility in the face of political instability or social pressure, as occurred in Pakistan and Egypt, although the risk of abuse of informal change remains.

This means that the adaptability and resilience of Indonesia's religious court system has not collapsed despite facing digital disruption, but has instead been strengthened through a combination of formal and informal mechanisms. MIT as a historical institution demonstrates a model of prospective resilience: the ability to survive, adapt, and transform in the face of external pressures, including colonialism, post-independence politics, and technological disruption. This concept emphasizes that the resilience of Islamic legal institutions depends on a balance between normative legitimacy, social acceptability, and institutional innovation --an approach that is in line with constitutional evolution theory in a global context.⁵⁸

5 Conclusion

This study concludes that religious courts ensure their institutional adaptability and resilience through a combination of historical, normative, and technological strategies. The transformation of the High Islamic Council (MIT) from the colonial period to the modern era shows a pattern of "prospective resilience" that includes three dimensions, namely survival by maintaining normative and social legitimacy; adaptation, which is the ability to adjust structures and procedures to the national legal context; and transformation, which is the integration of digital technology such as e-court and elitigation. The theoretical implication of these findings is that institutional adaptation can be navigated by strengthening judges' digital capacity, integrating formal regulations (KHES, Law No. 7/1989, Perma 1/2019) with Sharia principles, and establishing AI governance mechanisms aligned with maqāṣid al-syarī'ah. In developing the theory, this paper expands the traditional focus on survival and normative compliance to include adaptive resilience, encompassing institutional innovation and digital transformation. The conventional concept of institutional resilience is now less relevant, so it must emphasize a balance between normative legitimacy, social acceptability, and technological adaptation..

⁵⁶ Lavie, "The Constitutionalization of the Civil State: The Self-Definition of Egypt, Tunisia and Yemen Following the Arab Uprisings."

⁵⁷ Zulkarnain, "Mahkamah Islam Tinggi Antara Perspektif Dan Prospektif," 9-10.

⁵⁸ Brown, "Civic Islam: Muhammadiyah, NU and the Organisational Logic of Consensus-Making in Indonesia."

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