

Position of a Single Judge in a Small Claim Court: Role and Responsibilities

Henny Saida Flora¹⁾, Ning Adiasih²⁾, Selamat Lumban Gaol³⁾, Indriyana Dwi Mustikarini⁴⁾, Johannes Johny Koynja⁵⁾

¹ Universitas Katolik Santo Thomas Medan, Indonesia

² Universitas Trisakti, Indonesia

³ Universitas Dirgantara Marsekal Suryadarma, Indonesia

⁴ Universitas PGRI Madiun, Indonesia

⁵ Universitas Mataram, Indonesia

e-mail: hennysaida@yahoo.com, ning.a@trisakti.ac.id, selamatgaol@unsurya.ac.id, indriyanadwimustikarini@unipma.ac.id, johnykoynja@unram.ac.id

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Abstract

In the context of litigation, a simple lawsuit is one that has no legal recourse. It is an objection that is heard by judges who are senior in the field. This type of lawsuit is convenient for the community at large, encompassing companies, People's banks, and other banks whose proof is simple. The data collection methods employed in this research are observation, interview, and documentation. The subject of this research is the application of a straightforward lawsuit in the Jakarta District Court, specifically, the types of cases that may be resolved by such a suit. This is a qualitative study employing an empirical juridical approach, employing a descriptive methodology. This research provides a conclusion that a simple lawsuit based on Supreme Court Regulation Number 4 of 2019 represents a significant advancement over Supreme Court Regulation Number 2 of 2015. However, it was subsequently amended by Supreme Court Regulation Number 4 of 2019. The value of the lawsuit is set at IDR 500,000,000.000, with a case subscription period of 25 days. The categories of this simple lawsuit are default (breach of promise) and tort, with the exception of those concerning land issues. The application of this simple lawsuit at the Pekanbaru District Court is commendable, although a few obstacles remain. However, these do not impede the resolution of existing cases. With regard to the obstacles for judges in this simple lawsuit, namely the District Court, it is necessary to implement a more extensive socialization program to educate the public about this simple lawsuit. This will help to prevent any errors when filing a case resolved through a simple lawsuit.

Keywords: judge, court, role, responsibilities

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a unitary state in the form of a republic, as confirmed by the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. This constitution also emphasizes that the Indonesian state is a state of law that is sovereign to the people. Thus, the Indonesian state is a constitutional state, based on democracy, and in the form of a unitary republic, which is an independent state.

The regional government system in Indonesia, as outlined in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, clearly delineates the division of regions and the autonomous

governmental structures that are established by law. This autonomous term allows for the regions to regulate, manage, and organize their own governmental affairs in accordance with the principles of decentralization, deconcentration, and assistance tasks. This is underscored by the imperative for accelerating the realization of community welfare through improved services, empowerment, and participation. In doing so, it is essential to take into account the principles of democracy, equity, justice, specialty and specificity, as well as the potential and diversity of regions within the constitutional framework of the unitary state, the Republic of Indonesia. It bears noting that Indonesia adheres to a democratic system.

In this contemporary era, the law is undergoing development and continues to be built. It stands to reason, then, that legal development cannot be far from people's lives. Consequently, Islamic law plays a pivotal role in the Indonesian state, given that the majority of its population adheres to Islam. There has been a notable increase in the knowledge and awareness of the law, including the awareness to claim and defend one's rights before the court. This has led to the perception that the existing procedures and mechanisms are inefficient and no longer logical.

The Basic Law on Judicial Power (Law No. 14 of 1970) stipulates that the judiciary in Indonesia is to be carried out quickly, simply, and at low cost. However, in reality, the principle of the speedy administration of justice has not been realized. To identify the root cause, it is necessary to consider factors beyond the legal sector. Economic factors, for instance, include the lack of adequate facilities for judicial institutions. Political factors include the absence of a government policy to increase the budget for judicial bodies, such as the number of Supreme Court judges. Cultural factors include the "prestige culture" among citizens, which may influence the willingness of justice seekers to accept the outcome of their cases. The Supreme Court judges and other judges, as well as cultural factors, such as the "prestige culture" among citizens, are also contributing to the problem. This "prestige culture" is causing justice seekers in the courts to resist giving in, even though they know they are actually guilty. Most of them appeal and file cassation at the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia for the sake of "prestige."

The concept of judicial power is one that is distinct from other forms of power. In the classic division as stated by Montesquieu, power is separated into three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. In Indonesia, the judicial branch of power is known as the judicial power. The 1945 Constitution expressly states that the judicial power is an independent power.

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The straightforward lawsuit mechanism, colloquially known as the Small Claims Court, represents a significant advancement in the field of civil procedural law. This development was made possible by the Supreme Court's landmark decision in Perma 2/2015, as amended by Perma 4/2019. This ruling introduced several legal updates, including limitations on the value of lawsuits, the duration of case subscriptions, and the stages of trial. Additionally, it established the exclusive jurisdiction of a single court for certain legal remedies. These amendments have greatly benefited litigants by reducing the time and costs associated with litigation.

Nevertheless, in practice, numerous obstacles persist, both due to the concept of panoramic and a lack of comprehension of the procedural procedures outlined in simple lawsuits. Consequently, there is a necessity for a technical description that can serve as a reference for judges, clerks, and parties involved in cases in simple lawsuits.

Civil disputes represent a prominent example of disputes that frequently arise in society. Civil disputes are the result of an imbalance in the obligations and rights of the parties involved in an agreement, which gives rise to one party suffering real losses or the loss of benefits expected from the agreement. This is known as breach of promise (or breach of contract). In this context, it is evident that a significant proportion of individuals opt for litigation as a means of dispute resolution, encompassing both minor and substantial disputes. These disputes represent a significant contributing factor to the accumulation of cases in the initial court, appellate court, and even the cassation court (Supreme Court). The accumulation of cases described above represents one of the most significant challenges currently facing the judiciary. This accumulation has the potential to undermine the effectiveness of justice, which is guided by the principles of the Trilogy of Justice, which include the delivery of fast, simple, and low-cost justice. In order to address the issue, the Supreme Court has implemented a strategic policy

which involves the introduction of a simplified lawsuit system, based on the experience of small claim courts in several countries, including the United States and Australia. In 2015, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia formalized the procedure in Supreme Court Regulation (Perma) No. 2 of 2015, which was promulgated on August 7, 2015. This regulation concerns the settlement of simple lawsuits, and it was enacted in conjunction with the promulgation of Perma No. 4 of 2019 on August 20, 2019. This subsequent amendment modifies and expands upon the preceding regulation. The two most recent efforts to optimize the settlement of small claims court are the Perma Number 2 of 2015 and the Perma Number 4 of 2019. These efforts aim to simplify, accelerate, and reduce the cost of the settlement process.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research methodology employed in this study adheres to the qualitative paradigm, wherein the researcher's objective is to describe the phenomenon under investigation in a detailed manner. Qualitative research tends to employ analytical techniques, with an emphasis on the interconnections between process and meaning, or the subjective experience of a phenomenon and the objective context within which it occurs.

The theoretical foundation provides a framework that guides the research process, ensuring that its focus is aligned with the existing evidence in the field. In this study, the empirical juridical approach has been employed, which is a deductive methodology that begins with an in-depth analysis of the pertinent legal and regulatory documents. The empirical juridical approach entails referencing existing literature studies or secondary data, as well as legal norms enshrined in laws and court decisions and those that exist in society. Its objective is to obtain authentic, first-hand knowledge.

The research location that is the subject of the study is the Jakarta District Court Office, located at Jl. Dr. Sumarno No.1, Penggilingan, Cakung, East Jakarta, 13940. The researcher selected the location for several reasons. Primarily, the researcher resided in the area and was therefore familiar with the conditions and developments regarding the problems to be studied. Secondly, the subjects of this research were judges and parties from the Jakarta District Court agency. The object of this research was the thing, matter, or person that was the subject of discussion. Another meaning of the object is objects, things, and so on that were used as targets for research, attention, and so on. The object of this research is to examine the application of simple lawsuits in case settlement, as well as the obstacles in conducting simple lawsuits and the types of lawsuits included in the implementation of these simple lawsuits.

The research population represents the entire object of study. This may be a single case or a group of cases that exhibit similar characteristics. The sample is a portion of the research population that is representative of it. In this study, we employed the purposive method, which involves the researcher using their expertise to determine the sample. The purposive method is also known as the judgment method because it involves the researcher's judgment in selecting the sample. The purposive method yields qualitatively more detailed data. This method is typically employed when the population under study is small and specific. A purposive sample is more effective if it has clear criteria for inclusion.

The data collection technique employed is direct field research. To obtain the necessary data, researchers utilize data collection techniques such as observation, selective interviews, and documentation.

A data analysis technique represents a method and way to process data into information in a manner that facilitates its interpretation and understanding, as well as its utility in identifying potential solutions to research problems, particularly those related to the research in question. The interpretation of analysis techniques as a process for transforming data and information into the research process itself, with the data subsequently serving as research results or new information, is similarly valid. In order to ensure the reliability of the data obtained and facilitate subsequent processing, a rigorous data analysis process must be undertaken. In this case, the author employs qualitative research methods—including conceptualization, categorization, and description—developed based on data and events collected through field activities. The analysis of facts and data related to the role of judges in adjudicating simple lawsuits in accordance with Supreme Court Regulation Number 4 of 2019, in conjunction with existing theories and rules, will facilitate the formulation of a final conclusion.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

Application of Small Claim Court for case settlement in the Jakarta District Court.

In accordance with the civil law system, law enforcement is initiated through legal administration, which commences with the formulation of legal regulations and sanctions, among other legal instruments, in accordance with established juridical patterns. One of the most common patterns of law enforcement is to apply procedural law, which when combined with material law that is enforced, becomes either civil procedural law or criminal procedural law. In essence, judges act in accordance with procedural law to ascertain the reality of a given process. They then issue punishments and verdicts based on material law.

The examination of reality up to the verdict represents the first two stages of a very formal legal process. The legalistic and formal orientation of procedural law emphasizes how the procedural law runs in an orderly manner, which can result in the neglect of justice as a legal goal. Furthermore, the failure to achieve legal objectives is also attributable to the use of the inquisitorial system in the judiciary, a system that grants judges a significant role in directing and determining cases. A straightforward lawsuit does not afford the litigant any legal recourse; it merely allows for objections to be raised. Objections are heard by a judge. The judges presiding over such cases are those who have gained the most experience in this field. This straightforward lawsuit is a convenient and expedient process for the community, including companies, banks, and other financial institutions where the evidence is relatively straightforward.

The presence of the Supreme Court Regulation on Simple Lawsuits provides a solution to the aforementioned problems because simple lawsuits are regulated by a faster process mechanism and are limited to examination only at the first level court. This, in turn, can provide convenience and speed in resolving community disputes of small value.

In order for the plaintiff to submit the lawsuit, they must provide evidence in support of their case; the second letter will then be taken care of by the clerk, who will determine whether or not it meets the requirements of the simple lawsuit. The cost is 500 million, the examination is simple, the evidence is simple, and the case does not involve land, the domicile of the plaintiff and the defendant must be in the area itself, and the party must be present at the trial itself, whether accompanied or not.

This simple lawsuit is not yet well-known, so it is necessary to socialize it. In this district court, socialization about this simple lawsuit is conducted on an ongoing basis. This straightforward lawsuit is designed to streamline the data management process within the court system, reducing the time and complexity associated with traditional litigation. The settlement period is limited to 25 working days, and there is no opportunity for appeal. This lawsuit is intended to be a simple and accessible alternative for advocates and other parties involved in legal proceedings. Furthermore, it is recommended that each submission of a lawsuit be conducted in accordance with the conditions set forth in the submission of a simple lawsuit. This process should also be in alignment with the issues that can be resolved through a simple lawsuit and in accordance with Permanent Number 4 of 2019.

This simple lawsuit can also be defined as a type of lawsuit whose resolution is through a simple process and does not burden the community. The aforementioned lawsuit is included in a civil lawsuit whose claim value is at most IDR 500 million. The lawsuit is completed with simple procedures and proof.

Types of Lawsuits Including Small Claim Court in the Jakarta District Court

In accordance with Perma No. 4 of 2019, the following lawsuits can be classified as simple lawsuits:

- 1. Disputes that do not pertain to land rights.
- 2. Matters that are within the purview of a specialized court.
- 3. Cases involving a breach of promise, default, or tort with a maximum material value of 500 million rupiah.
- 4. A maximum of one plaintiff and a defendant each, except in instances where they share the same legal interest.
- 5. Both the plaintiff and defendant must reside within the same judicial district.
- 6. The defendant's residence must be known.

What types of lawsuits are included in the small claim court in the Jakarta District Court in this case?

The category of simple lawsuits included in this context is default (breach of promise) and tort. However, it should be noted that these cases do not involve land issues. The application of this simple lawsuit in the Jakarta district court is already satisfactory; however, a few minor obstacles still exist, but they do not impede the resolution of existing cases. This simple lawsuit is highly beneficial because it greatly facilitates the community in the resolution of cases. Furthermore, the conditions that must be met before making this simple lawsuit are not lengthy and do not burden the community.

This simple lawsuit is not limited to a specific social class; it is accessible to all individuals. The process of resolving cases through simple lawsuits is available to anyone who meets the conditions set forth in the relevant provisions. This is one of the innovative approaches of the Supreme Court to streamline lengthy legal proceedings. In contrast to ordinary lawsuits, which have a period of six months for the resolution of cases, simple lawsuits have a much shorter period of 25 days. There is no repetition of duplicated processes, and thus the procedural law is relatively concise, comprising the lawsuit, answer, proof, and direct decision.

The number of simple lawsuits that have been initiated in this court this year is considerable, as the community finds the process of case settlement to be straightforward. The data indicates that 40 simple lawsuits have been initiated this year, with a significant number pertaining to defaults in loan agreements. In the previous year, there were 67 simple lawsuits.

The introduction of simple lawsuits has made it easier for the community to resolve cases that previously required a six-month period. The ordinary lawsuit may be appealed if the simple lawsuit is insufficient to address the objection, and even then, at the district court level.

In Indonesia, a lawsuit with a maximum value of IDR 500 million is considered a "simple lawsuit." Such cases are resolved through straightforward procedures and proof. The aforementioned value is the upper limit for a lawsuit that can be resolved through this process. This value applies to cases of "breach of promise" or "unlawful acts."

A clear distinction can be made between a simple lawsuit and a lawsuit in general. The former is defined by a material loss with a value that is specifically determined and is limited to a maximum of IDR 500 million. In contrast, in a lawsuit in ordinary civil cases, the material loss value is not subject to a limit. Additionally, the examination of and decision in a simple lawsuit is made by a single judge within the scope of their general judicial authority.

All legal subjects, whether individuals or legal entities, are eligible to file a simple lawsuit. However, in cases where there are multiple plaintiffs or defendants, the lawsuit must meet certain criteria to be considered for the simple lawsuit mechanism. In the context of a simple lawsuit, a plaintiff or defendant cannot be more than one individual or legal entity, unless they share a common interest. This is defined as an interest that is interrelated between the plaintiffs or defendants involved in the lawsuit. As an illustrative example, a husband who signs an agreement for credit on his wife's behalf could be considered a party with the same legal interest as his wife in the context of a civil dispute.

Individuals or legal entities may be sued as defendants in simple lawsuits. The party being sued is referred to as the defendant. In order for a defendant to be sued in the settlement of a simple lawsuit, it is necessary for them to have a known domicile and to be in the same jurisdiction. The jurisdiction in question is the district or city where the plaintiff and defendant are domiciled.

The court officer (bailiff) will summon the parties (plaintiff and defendant) based on the data provided in the Simple Lawsuit Form. It is important to ensure that the data, which includes the name, age and address of the defendant, is filled in completely.

Evidence is any information that can be used to support or refute the arguments presented in a lawsuit. It is presented during the proof stage of a legal proceeding. The evidence presented in court must prove or disprove the statements made by the opposing party. This may include, but is not limited to, written evidence, witness testimony, suspicion, confessions, and oaths.

The Role of the Single Judge in Simple Lawsuits

The role of judges in small claims is of great importance in maintaining justice, upholding the law, and ensuring the smooth functioning of the legal process. The following are some key points in the discussion of the role of judges in small claims, accompanied by relevant references.

Fair Law Enforcement. It is the responsibility of judges to ensure that the judicial process is fair to all parties involved. This entails affording both parties an equal opportunity to present their arguments, considering the evidence presented, and rendering a fair decision based on the applicable law. A profound comprehension of the legal framework is essential. A judge must possess a comprehensive understanding of the legal principles and precedents pertinent to the case at hand. This encompasses a thorough grasp of the statutes, legal precedents, and legal principles that are relevant to the case in question.

The act of thoughtful decision-making is a crucial aspect of judicial responsibility. The judge must be able to make a thoughtful decision based on the evidence and arguments presented in court. The decision must be based on the law and the facts, without any influence from external factors or personal bias. Compliance with Legal Procedures, the meaning is the responsibility of judges to ensure that all applicable legal procedures are properly followed throughout the judicial process. This encompasses the duty to ensure that all documents filed are complete and comply with legal requirements, as well as to ensure that all parties obtain their rights in accordance with applicable laws.

It is imperative that judges maintain their neutrality and independence throughout the course of their duties. They must not be unduly influenced by external pressures, whether from specific parties or by political or social considerations. The impartiality and independence of judges are of paramount importance in ensuring the integrity of the justice system. The facilitation of peaceful settlements is a crucial aspect of judicial responsibility. In certain instances, judges may be able to facilitate an amicable settlement between the two parties without the necessity of a lengthy trial. This could result in a reduction in the time, costs, and resources typically associated with the legal process.

The Responsibilities of the Single Judge in Simple Lawsuits

The role of judges presiding over small claims cases is of significant import to the integrity and fairness of the judicial process. This section presents a discussion of the responsibilities of judges in small claims, with accompanying references.

A profound comprehension of the case at hand. It is the duty of the judge to ensure that they have acquired a profound comprehension of all aspects of the case in question. This includes a thorough understanding of the factual evidence presented, the arguments advanced by both parties, and the applicable legal principles in the context of the case.

The application of applicable law is of paramount importance. It is the responsibility of judges to ensure that the applicable law is properly applied in the cases they hear. This entails considering relevant legal precedents, an accurate interpretation of the law, and fairness in the application of the law to the facts of the case.

Avoiding Conflicts of Interest. It is imperative that judges maintain their independence and neutrality, and avoid conflicts of interest that could compromise their objectivity in reaching a decision. This ensures that the judge's decision is based solely on the relevant facts and law. It is imperative that judges maintain an atmosphere of openness and transparency. It is the duty of judges to maintain openness and transparency in the execution of their duties. This encompasses the obligation to provide clear and open explanations of the rationale behind their decisions, as well as to ensure that the judicial process is accessible to the public in a fair and transparent manner.

The objective of ensuring the fairness of the process is to guarantee that all parties involved in the case are treated equally and that their rights are respected. In addition to the aforementioned duties, judges are responsible for ensuring that all parties involved in a case receive fair and equal treatment under the law. This entails providing equal opportunities for both sides to present their arguments and ensuring equal access to the judicial process.

CONCLUSION

This lawsuit may be categorized as a default suit, or breach-of-promise claim. However, the case does not concern land issues. Its application in the Jakarta District Court is promising, though there remain a few obstacles that could impede the resolution of an existing case. Nevertheless, this lawsuit offers a useful tool that can streamline the process of resolving disputes. Furthermore, the requirements for initiating a simple lawsuit are relatively straightforward and do not impose undue burdens on the community. This type of lawsuit is sufficient for challenging decisions at the district court level.

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