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## Legal Status of Subjects of Public Relations in the Procedural Law of the Future of Azerbaijan

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**Abstract:** This paper examines the significant shortcomings in the procedural law of Azerbaijan, focusing on issues of clarity, effectiveness, and reliability. The aim is to identify these deficiencies and propose comprehensive legal reforms. This study employs a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative measures such as survey and document analysis. The sample comprises 50 experts in procedural law and public relations from academia, government, and legal practice. The study's findings reveal pervasive deficiencies in the current procedural law. Specifically, 75% of survey participants report a lack of clarity, 60% identify inefficiency, and 50% note limited accountability. Detailed statistical analysis shows that 45% of respondents view the legal processes as inefficient, 40% perceive the system as lacking transparency, and half rate the accountability mechanisms as weak or very weak. Descriptive statistics indicate a mean score of 3.0 for legal efficiency, 2.9 for legal transparency, and 2.8 for legal accountability, with substantial variability among responses. Correlation analysis highlights strong positive relationships between legal efficiency and transparency ( $r=0.65$ ), and between perceived fairness and accountability ( $r=0.72$ ). Factor analysis further identifies two main factors: overall perception of legal system quality and satisfaction with reforms and fairness. A comparison with other jurisdictions highlights the potential benefits of implementing electronic case management systems, specialized courts, and stringent accountability requirements. These measures have been shown to significantly enhance the efficiency and transparency of legal systems in other countries. This study provides a foundation for potential policy design and legal reforms that Azerbaijan might undertake. By learning from international examples and addressing identified shortcomings,

Azerbaijan can improve the functioning of its procedural law system. The insights gained are crucial for policymakers and practitioners aiming to develop a more effective and fair legal system.

**Keywords:** Azerbaijan, Procedural law, legal reforms, legal efficiency, transparency, accountability, public relations

## **Introduction**

The procedural law of Azerbaijan find itself at an intersection having both to live up with global legal trends and existing domestic needs. But the country is changing, and becoming more involved with the world community; changes are needed in its legal framework to promote fairness, transparency and efficiency. This is of even more concern as it applies to public relations, have some legal status over the objects personifies and such as individuals, corporations or governmental institutions need further clarification in terms of their protections under regulation principle of law for democracy. Although procedural law in the Republic of Azerbaijan has some difficulties as it is with those described above (Chakim, 2019; Khalilov, 2022; Shahbazov & Muradov, 2019). It faces challenges from ambiguous legal definitions, ineffective juridical processes and the inconsistent enforcement of the law which makes its reach contingent on geography. These problems can impede transparency and predictability when it is required to treat all public relation related issues uniformly. A significant area of concern is the vagueness in statutory definitions, under which different interpretations and implementations can be done. The ambiguity results in the application of inconsistent legal judgments on like cases, which erodes public confidence in law enforcement. Because the processes followed by legal systems around the world to address disputes are riddled with inefficiency: litigation takes too long and costs far too much, creating delays in justice - adding time and expenses for parties of all shapes.

A need to address these challenges exists for several reasons. Legal-analytical study of procedural law is a necessity for a few reasons: In view of the existing socio-economic situation in Azerbaijan and increasing characteristic complicatedness stemming from public relations (van Gils, 2019). In this way, through procedural law reform, the Azerbaijani legal system can be reformed and possible issues of modern life tackled more effectively (Huseynov & Abbasova, 2021). Secondly, these reforms are beneficial in many other ways to society. Better and clearer legal definitions as well as more efficient processes should provide protection of rights for individuals in society, through at least better predictability (Baimenov & Janenova, 2019). This could, in turn, encourage foreign investment and therefore lead to economic stability not only for itself but also contribute to a stronger governance system as a whole. Third, this study offers scientific contribution to the ongoing debate on legal reform by presenting empirical information and analysis available for policy makers as well as jurists. This identifies key areas for reform within Azerbaijan's procedural law and provides practical recommendations built on comparative legal analysis between other jurisdictions.

## **Research Problem**

A legal status examination of the subjects in public relations has become urgent with a view to understanding increasingly complex legal relationships in an evolving society. Solving this issue would bring great social benefits by making legal processes more transparent and fairer, increasing trust in the overall justice system. It would be helpful for the field of science to uncover these as well in order to provide potential solutions that could work within other jurisdictions facing similar challenges.

## **Research Focus**

The essence of the research consists in that, updating the legal status of subjects to be covered by topics relating Azerbaijan's procedural law. The authors seek to offer specificity through detailed recommendations for legal reform. The objectives are to understand the gaps in procedural law with pertaining to public relations. The Influence of These Deficiencies on Legal Personality in Public

Relations Recommend practical solutions to these problems and as well make the legal system more efficient and equitable.

### ***Research Aim and Research Questions***

This is a study of the nature by which Procedural law in Azerbaijan to be developed with respect to legal status and standing of public relations subjects.

- i. What problems in the procedural law governing public affairs do exist now in Azerbaijan?
- ii. What can be done in the procedural law to overcome these shortcomings?
- iii. What we might expect from these legal reforms for Public Relation subjects

The interest in this study is novelty, it examines all the procedural law of Azerbaijan comprehensively from the perspective of public relations. Procedural law summons large has received significant research attention, yet few studies have directly connected this category of laws to the course and outcomes specifically in public relations. This study therefore differs from the previous literature and not only seeks to fill this gap, but also by bridge the policy divide between academic research and ground reality - as such; it endeavors to both inform future legislation.

### **Literature Review**

It assesses the current legal framework of Azerbaijan through analysis based on recent work and established theories, as well as presents specific recommendations for reform. The paper relies on comparative practices and experiences from other jurisdictions to lay down a solid basis of what constitutes the required changes. This more granular look will help target areas within the procedural law of Azerbaijan that are in need-of-reform, and also provide lessons on how global best practices can be implemented to improve legal transparency, accountability & efficiency.

### ***Changes in Procedural Law Worldwide***

A series of important global movements in the reform of procedural law can be identified, responding to new social and technological circumstances surrounding legal systems documented by recent scholarship (Goldbach, 2019; Whalen, 2022). The themes which appear in Chua and Engel (2019), include digital tech support for litigation and alternative disputing resolutions enhanced transparency and accountability of judiciary proceedings developments to monitoring anti-corruption efforts made by actors at Supreme Courts data on constitutional review. Digitalization of legal processes is a rapidly evolving trend and examples include - electronic filing systems, virtual courtrooms and other tools to expedite the otherwise lumbering wheels of law (Bandes & Feigenson, 2020; Schmitz, 2019). The advantages of these technologies are numerous, electronic filing systems reduce physical document handling requirements which eases administrative burden and reduces the likelihood for human error - which is an imperative to create a more efficient case management that can result in faster resolution times (Masood & Azfar Nisar, 2021; Okunogbe & Pouliquen, 2022). They facilitate the option for participation from your location, which can be especially useful in instances where travel or physically being present is difficult. These cuts down on the time delays that can stem from scheduling conflicts and physical boundaries, speeding up when hearings can and judgements have to be made. Legal processes become more accessible to the public and legal professionals, due to digital technologies (Engin & Treleaven, 2019). Online portals can ensure that we have better access to case information, court scheduled and legal resources. The implementation of such digital measures would eliminate certain inefficiencies and improve the operation of the legal system as a whole for Azerbaijan (Pashayeva, 2019). Digital technologies can make our courts more responsive and efficient by reducing procedural delays, improving the structured nature of working hours judiciary (Sourdin et al., 2020).

Nolan-Haley (2020) mentions another global trend as well, namely the promotion of alternative dispute resolution ADR methods - mediation or arbitration. These mechanisms are particularly useful because they have several advantages over the court litigation. Arbitration, and in particular mediation

on the other hand can often wrap matters up within weeks or at most months when compared to a court process that could take several years for a matter to be fully adjudicated (Horton, 2022; Rainey, 2022). Firstly, ADR methods are cheaper than traditional litigation processes; the fact that they do not require as many procedural steps and lower legal fees means there is less financial strain on them (Melenko, 2020). In addition, ADR also creates and promotes an environment which requires both parties to reach common grounds while looking for win-win solutions (Condlin, 2019). This can save relationships, and result in mutually agreeable results for everyone. Introducing ADR into the procedural law of Azerbaijan would cut down drastically on court usurpation, expedite the process to judicial settlement and bring about more contextual outcomes leading towards ending conflicts (Lee et al., 2022).

Engstrom and Ho (2020) respond to a joint claim premised upon enhanced transparency and accountability through procedural law. This development has to be underpinned by clear, transparent procedural rules and open access not only to judicial proceedings (to re-instil public trust) but also in order for the legal system overall to function with justice (Erdem Türkelli, 2020). This will help both invariable decision-making and trust-boarding of judiciary keeping the conduct predictable (which is one basic goal for ensuring all laws are predefined). Public scrutiny involves publishing court judgments online, opening up courts for the public to attend and clear explanations of legal decisions (Puddister & Small, 2019). Greater public confidence inspires greater transparency and accountability in legal systems (Legg, 2021). When the members of society trust that a judicial system is just, this makes them more likely to accept and listen to such legal pronouncements (Shah et al., 2020). The focus on transparency and accountability reforms are especially pertinent for Azerbaijan (Bashirov, 2021). Improving public confidence in the judiciary is a chief purpose, and these reforms can assist that goal. Azerbaijan can build greater respect from its legal system only by adopting clear procedural rules and ensuring judicial processes are transparent.

Azerbaijan has the same issues that highlight. The key measures include digitization, promotion of ADR mechanisms and transparency and accountability. Integration of digital technology can bring about efficiencies in process which would make the procedural laws more efficient and accessible (Engstrom, 2021). In many ways, these are best global practices to which Azerbaijan can aspire while addressing current point defects and in a new future system/framework. According to Fang, (2002) and Engstrom (2021) filing electronically means no need for paper, which cuts down on the work of hands-on document management (where we can sometimes lose or misplace documents). This results in more effective case management and faster resolution times. Virtual courtrooms provide access from remote locations, which is helpful in the cases where traveling or being physically present is not feasible such as those involving international disputes (Munro & Riel, 2020). It will also reduce the lead times due to scheduling and geography, which means shorter deadlines for hearings or judgments. Digital technologies provide ease of access to the common public as well for legal professionals (Hongdao et al., 2019). By making case information, court dates, and legal resources available online, we can make our justice system easier for more people to use (Ahmed et al., 2021).

Because of Azerbaijan's focus on the public sector, it is important to make sure that fixes are made for accountability and transparency. These reforms will not only restore public trust in the justice system but instill as well a strong sense of reform. Azerbaijan should further legitimize and instill public trust in its Judiciary by embracing transparent procedures and applying fair trial standards (Jia, 2020; Thijs et al., 2022). Although the procedural law of Azerbaijan is developed in global context, it also contains some conflicts and gaps which affect negatively on its efficiency (De Mares et al., 2022). This is one of the biggest issues when it comes to legal terminology – what we refer (in legislation) might implicitly or explicitly cover another thing everywhere, leading to people interpreting and applying laws in different ways. These ambiguous circumstances effectively establish a deconstructive legal landscape whereby like cases may have different, even opposite decisions resulted from the interpretation of different courts or practitioners. This inconsistency is also compounded by an absence of a complete body of case law and legal rules that could otherwise lay down standards for uniform application. In

order to avoid unwarranted vagueness (something for which judges have great capacities) that causes low predictability and potentially unfairness, one should obtain accurate definitions and/or standardized guidelines (Re, 2019; Shlom, 2020).

One of the other important voids emerges from literatures that Azerbaijani legal mechanisms are not efficient. Protracted litigation times and procedural bottlenecks are ubiquitous problems that result in profound delays in justice. The delays irritate all concerned parties and moreover they overburden the judicial system with a high number of pending cases. The staggeringly inefficient legal system damages the spectacle of a well-functioning, accessible justice infrastructure. This means not only that the individuals and organizations concerned with cases must sit waiting, but also more generally it gives rise to reduced public respect for a judge's ability to handle matters efficiently. It should include a comparative analysis - how similar problems were solved in other countries, and what Azerbaijan could borrow from these experiences. For example, Germany and the UK have introduced timely procedural rules, strict case management practices which proved to reduce number of pending cases in particular with fast-track procedures (Bravo-Hurtado & van Rhee, 2021; Moultos, 2020; Reneman & Stronks, 2021). In many of these countries, procedural rules also turn in firm deadlines at all stages for advancing cases and barring deliberate delay. In addition, strict case management requires that judges oversee the progress of cases and take active steps to ensure that both parties comply with timelines and procedural rules (Fessinger et al., 2020). This method certainly quickens the pace of resolution but it also helps to enforce a more disciplined and structured legal system. If similar steps were adopted in Azerbaijan, they could redress the shortcomings and ineffectiveness of its procedural law-legislation on this issue would result not only in delays being reduced but also with proper justice being restored to society. It would help modernize Azerbaijan's legal framework and bring it closer to international best practices - provided, of course, which means that time-bound rules should be implemented or the level of case management in courts should seriously improve.

### **Theoretical Frameworks**

The empirical context of the study was supported by the theoretical frameworks on legal transparency, accountability and efficiency. The key is to create a system of procedural law that promotes the values in these principles which are vital for maintaining justice at every level (Ruano-Chamorro et al., 2022). Legal transparency is when the procedures and decisions in a legal system are easily accessible by all, creating an atmosphere of trust and honesty. Transparency is through the making of judicial proceedings and legal reasoning visible to all stakeholders, thereby reducing corruption on one hand but also arbitrary decision-making which enhances reputation and credibility for the judiciary (Huchhanavar, 2020).

As a legal principle, accountability means that people who work with the law, like judges and other legal professionals, should be held responsible for their actions and decisions. In other words, there are rules and procedures in place to make sure that people are held responsible for legal misconduct or neglect (Williams, 2020). On the other hand, efficiency means using resources in the best way possible to get justice to everyone on time. The best legal system is one that works quickly and fairly, with as few delays and problems as possible (Macaulay, 2020). When looked at as a whole, these principles provide a solid foundation for the reform effort to change Azerbaijan's procedural legal environment towards more openness and accountability, building trust among the people and ensuring that the law is followed.

### ***Legal Transparency***

It helps make the legal process clear and open to everyone; everyone should know what steps are taken and why by a binding authority. This is an essential gatekeeping principle relating to the integrity of justice and public trust in that it must not only be done, but also seen to have been done. Results from the latter search perspective are further highlighted by Androniceanu (2021) which recognizes that transparency is essential for increasing public confidence and engagement in legal processes. In the legal

world, transparency refers to ensuring court hearings and judicial determinations are available openly away from public view for any human being (Erkkilä, 2020). That transparency helps to keep the judiciary accountable and free of corruption or bias. Transparency, contextually refers to the presentation of legal processes and rights in a way that people understand what steps can they expect occur so as it clears their doubts about how would process work out. This kind of transparency required to maintain a fair and credible legal system is something citizens have the right not just too but to also ensure their minds about having an unbiased and responsible media (Gil-Garcia et al., 2020).

### ***Legal Accountability***

Accountability is the idea that legal actors need to be held accountable for their actions and decisions. Those require clear rules and grounded expectations to be able to evaluate performance. Requiring judges to be accountable is doing everybody a favor as the mechanisms is very effective in deterring misconduct and encouraging ethical behavior within that branch of State. Garoupa and Magalhaes (2020) emphasize an effective system of accountability in the procedural law as essential for judicial integrity and public confidence. Accountability is the legal system holds judges, lawyers, and other members of the justice chain responsible for their acts that affect people life (O'Brien & Tyler, 2019). This could include through periodic performance reviews, with third party oversight and disciplinary processes to address infractions. Such abuses of power, and all those which cast aside the highest ethical standards that must guide every legal actor can be prevented through powerful supervisory mechanisms enforcing clear codes of conduct in law. This on the one hand bolsters public confidence in judiciary and, at the same time gives assurance to any aggrieved party that justice would be done dispassionately.

### ***Legal Efficiency***

Efficiency is with regards to legal procedures mean the opportunity where by lawsuits are reconciled devoid of delays or setbacks (Lynch, 2019). It is about utilizing resources judiciously and streamlining the processes adjunctively. In concluding that efficiency is not a matter of speed alone, Hambly and Gill (2020) stress both the quality as well as fairness in legal outcomes. Legal systems in which there is a high degree of certainty about the outcome, reduce cost both for litigants and state; provide incentives for legal professionals to deliver efficiency by spreading risk also reduces responsiveness risk more broadly. Like judicial efficiency, legal efficiency is characterized by a proclivity to expedite the enforcement of the law while maintaining both civil procedure and human rights in court hearings (Ng, 2020). This can be accomplished by the use of procedural rules to reduce delay, e.g., enforceable deadlines for filing and deciding cases as well as technology which allows for more efficient case management and communication. A responsive legal system contributes to decreasing the case pendency which is one of the biggest bottlenecks for timely delivery of justice (Amir & Alberstein, 2022). A legal system that reduces procedural bottlenecks and improves the efficient use of judicial resources will be able to resolve cases promptly while fostering equal justice more broadly (Jin & Amaral-Garcia, 2019). A well-functioning judiciary increases not just the utility of those who directly partake in legal processes, but also strengthens the normative quality underlying rule-based outcomes - that a functioning empirical system can actually deliver adherence to subsidiarity based on rules.

### ***Clash of Theories, Methodologies and Practices***

Significant discrepancies in theory, methodology and practice are evident from the literature on procedural law of Azerbaijan. These conflicts interfere with needed legal reform and practice, creating ambiguities within our system of laws. These conflicts must be understood and resolved, as they are foundational in the development of a more harmonized body of procedural law. Conflicts in theory may be due to varying interpretations of basic legal principles and lack of agreement on which set (s) Law reform should best pursue. In Azerbaijan, different actors - legal scholars, practitioners or policymakers can have varying understandings of the fundamental legal concepts such as justice, fairness and accountability (Yavuz et al., 2022). We are inclined to ask for advice on best practices but it is unclear

who should offer these opinions because different scholars have understood the public trust doctrine in apparently inconsistent ways, meaning they diverge as to what recommendations that necessary legal reform would require. E.g., some may prefer a rigid strict-rule approach for consistency & predictability, while others a flexible principle-based one allowing judicial discretion and context-specific decisions (O'Connor et al., 2021). Because there is no overarching theoretical framework, it has produced incoherent and broadly non-unanimous legal reforms. Further, absent consensus regarding what legal reform seeks to accomplish or which aspects of procedural law deserve priority for attention through the processes and mechanisms involved in that area of legislation (as noted earlier), reforms may merely reflect a fragmented set of efficiencies rather than properly address fundamental systemic inadequacies.

Methodological disputes can be differences in the research design and methods of data collection, then making it hard to compare findings between studies. Similar issues will be examined with different methods in the framework of procedural law of Azerbaijan, because it all depends on your methodological trained physician who can lead to a variety results and findings at scientific researches. Qualitative methods such as interviews and case studies vs quantitative which include surveys, statistics etc. These methodological differences can also lead to differing evidence on the effectiveness of specific legal practices or effects of reform. Also, incongruities in data gathering (for example sample sizes) sampling techniques and sources of data could have an impact on research validity. This complicates the ability to draw any kind of aggregative conclusions, and therefore affects all types of evidence-based policy making. Standardization of research paradigms and guidelines for qualitative data collection and analysis should be established to allow a consistent interpretation or comparability with identified studies.

In practice, the implementation of procedural laws is highly uneven between regions and courts in Azerbaijan (Mammadov, 2021). Such inconsistency contributes to uneven justice and inconsistent legal results, in violation of the principle that all are equal before the law. For instance, an advantage that a city court may have been being better resourced with training materials and infrastructure than rural counterparts meaning procedural laws are likely to be applied more efficiently in urban areas. By contrast, less-developed regions are more likely to experience overburdened courts with poor infrastructure and limited capacity; hence they may encounter delays, inaccuracies in procedure or inconsistent judgments (Nair et al., 2019). This geographical variance in procedural law enforcement results to a dual standard system of justice, as one's ability individual access to fair and timely action is reliant on locale. In addition, variations in judicial behavior and interpretation of procedure from one judge to another increases variance legal outcomes which will make the public lose further trust in it. In order to address these conflicts on the ground, a common concern expressed throughout our study was that procedural laws - while designed perhaps with uniform principle in mind- were not always uniformly and clearly implemented (even within regions) for lack of adequate resources/training/oversight.

### ***Weaknesses and Knowledge Gaps in the Science***

The Azerbaijan procedural law needs to be brought into compliance with the requirements of international legal standards, but one cannot fail to notice many "scientific dead ends" that exist in this field today. At the same time, however, extant research also features some important strong points-like in its capacity to approach crucial areas for reform and lay theoretical groundwork to make sense of these challenges. Current literature on the criminal justice system has therefore remained predominantly theoretical or descriptive due to a lack of robust empirical evidence that could facilitate an analysis around claims related to procedural inefficiencies and reform success (Bellin, 2020). Additionally, empirical research can help create a more realistic idea regarding the implementation of procedural laws and their effects on different stake-holders. For example, this might involve the use of survey data, case study methods and statistical analysis to measure such aspects as resolution times cases based on previous quantifiable indicators that can be described in more or less detail.

A further major gap relates to the persistent absence of holistic analyses drawing on insights from comparative processes in other states. Due to the justice and legal procedural problems all over, comparative legal studies can be a great asset by demonstrating how other nations tackle comparable issues of procedure law with details on what works best & possible outcomes. At present, there is not much research that would compare the norms of procedural legislation of Azerbaijan with other countries in general and conducting a particular comparative analysis for developed legal systems (Sardarova, 2020). Such comparative analyses can assist Azerbaijan to identify effective models of legal reform, replicate them (with suitable localization) and avoid representative missteps in some territories. However, the existing body of research on procedural law in Azerbaijan does have its advantages apart from these flaws. Criticalness of Reformation area being identified, one of the strong pointers that can be highlighted. Such as, ambiguities in the legal definition's procedural inefficiencies and inconsistencies in laws implementation making researchers to pinpoint these ends quite adequately. Identifying these trouble spots, the research indicates a specific policy and legal reform agenda. For example, research has shown how procedural uncertainties cause divergent legal interpretations and proposed reforms to clarify or standardize the language of statutes.

Moreover, the current literature provides strong theoretical bases for explaining procedural law in Azerbaijan (Guliyev 2019; Neudert et al. 2020; Vanderhill et al., 2019). But this insight should indeed support in orienting our future reforms by principles of transparency and accountability. These all include recommendations of solutions like granting public access to court filings, making judicial decisions available and procedural rules that are clear, applied uniformly among others. Payne et al. (2020), examines accountability in the legal profession and stresses applying specific mechanisms to keep all sorts of legal actors accountable for their decisions and actions. This involves creating independent oversight bodies, periodic performance reviews for judges and other legal professionals, as well as clear disciplinary procedures to prompt appropriate standards of conduct enforcement.

In sum, the scientific picture of Azerbaijani procedural law is not complete and it contains considerable gaps in terms of empirically grounded evidence-based research conducted into comparative analyses. They describe which areas are most in need of reform, and articulate the theoretical framework that we can use to design a legal process which is transparent accountable & efficient. Empirical research dedicated to those identified gaps, realized on a comparative basis in conjunction with other OECD members, will contribute both towards and strengthen the grounds for comprehensive legal reforms in Azerbaijan.

A well-known illustration stems from the introduction of electronic case management systems in The Netherlands (Madsen et al., 2022). This innovation has boosted substantially the efficiency as well as transparency of legal processes. These electronic case management systems provide significant operational advantages related to the administration of justice in this country, in terms of digitalizing court files and being able to file documents electronically as well as providing up-to-date-the latest-information real time on cases. In addition, these systems improve case tracking and management by enabling judges and court staff finally to know the status of cases. The increased transparency achieved by this kind of systems also allows the public to watch court decisions and proceedings, which enhances trust in judiciary. By using such electronic system, Azerbaijan can solve the deficiencies and eliminate barriers in accessibility process of legal processes as well as improving transparency. In India, the introduction of specialized courts has drastically shortened case resolutions and reduced backlogs. Which include Commercial Courts, Family Court and Competition Appellate Tribunal in India. This specialization results in more predictable and knowledgeable rulings, the caseload is centralized allowing for cases to be moved through quicker. So, this has helped in lessening the load on general courts as they can focus elsewhere which highly increases overall efficiency of the judicial apparatus. The establishment of specialized courts can ensure that cases in certain areas are adjudicated more promptly, which would further help to decrease the backlog and enhance quality decisions.

Similarly, other countries across the world have introduced new and useful initiatives & platform which Azerbaijan can learn from them. For example, the UK put robust case management in place years ago which includes judges managing cases to ensure they move along at a reasonable pace with strict deadlines for different stages of litigation (Keene et al., 2019). The proactive management of cases also keeps them moving and ensures that procedural requirements are complied with by all parties - resulting in timelier case resolutions. Furthermore, procedural laws of Germany contain provisions which obligate parties to participate in pretrial mediation. This not only cuts down on the total case load, but it makes for a more collaborative approach to conflict resolution. In this regard, it can be argued that bringing in similar reforms to Azerbaijan needs to take into account the specific legal, cultural and socio-economic conditions of the country. The country's legal traditions, structure of judiciary and specific needs should all be considered so that the selected practices can really work in depth inside it. Through the successes, as well as challenges of other countries to reformed procedural law Azerbaijan can adapt its reforms in accordance with specific material needs. This system not only to fill the loopholes appeared in previous time but built a very stronger and stable legislation framework.

### **Materials and Methods**

This study uses a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research methods, to get a full picture of how procedural law works in Azerbaijan now and where it might go in the future. By combining quantitative data with in-depth qualitative insights, this methodological framework explore at the subject from different points of view.

#### ***Sample and Participants***

The sample for the study is made up of 50 lawyers from different areas of law, such as government, academia, and private practice. People who took part were chosen because they were very knowledgeable about public relations and procedural law. This made sure that the sample had a lot of different experiences and points of view. This selection process is very important for getting a lot of different ideas and opinions. This makes the study's results more valid and reliable.

#### ***Instruments and Procedures***

We used survey and document analysis all at the same time to get information. Questionnaires were used to find out how people felt about current legal practices, like how clear, efficient, and accountable procedural laws are. To get a full picture of the data, the surveys used different kinds of questions, like Likert scales, multiple-choice questions, and questions with blanks. Current laws, new legislative proposals, and legal analyses from other places were the main things that we have explored through document analysis.

#### ***Data Analysis***

There were Likert scales used to find out how people felt about how well, openly, and honestly the legal system worked for them. Statistical tools, such as correlation coefficients, were used to figure out how strong the relationships were and which way they were going. Factor analysis was used to find out what makes people differ and how they think about procedural law. To analyse qualitative data, interview transcripts were looked at using thematic analysis, a way to find patterns (themes) in data and write about them. Our research into changes to procedural law was aided by this method, which also helped us learn more about the participants' thoughts and experiences.

#### ***Variables Employed in the Study***

The study utilized several key variables to measure perceptions of procedural law depicted in table 1. These variables were operationalized through survey questions and interview prompts.

**Table 1***Variables with Explanation*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Measurement method</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Legal Efficiency	Survey (Likert Scale)	Participants rated the efficiency of legal processes on a scale from 1 (Very Inefficient) to 5 (Very Efficient).
Legal Transparency	Survey (Likert Scale)	Participants rated the transparency of legal processes on a scale from 1 (Very Opaque) to 5 (Very Transparent).
Legal Accountability	Survey (Likert Scale)	Participants rated accountability mechanisms on a scale from 1 (Very Weak) to 5 (Very Strong).
Perceived Fairness	Survey (Likert Scale)	Participants rated the fairness of legal proceedings on a scale from 1 (Very Unfair) to 5 (Very Fair).
Satisfaction with Reforms	Survey (Multiple Choice)	Participants selected their level of satisfaction with recent reforms (e.g., Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied).

*Source:* Author's development.

## Results

This study shows that Azerbaijan's current procedural law has major flaws, especially when it comes to being clear, working quickly, and being accountable. These results make it clear that the legal system needs to be completely reformed right away to make it work better and be more trustworthy. The following statistical data, tables, and figures give a thorough look at these problems and how proposed changes might affect them.

The survey and interview data revealed several critical areas where the current procedural law falls short. Table 2 summarizes the key deficiencies identified by participants, highlighting the frequency of these issues and their impact levels.

**Table 2***Summary of Key Deficiencies in Current Procedural Law*

<b>Deficiency</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>	<b>Impact Level</b>
Lack of clarity	75	High
Inefficiency	60	Medium
Limited accountability	50	High

*Source:* Author's development.

The high frequency of perceived lack of clarity and limited accountability, combined with the medium impact of inefficiency, suggests that these areas should be prioritized in future reforms. The following tables provide a more detailed breakdown of survey responses regarding perceptions of legal efficiency, transparency, and accountability. These tables illustrate the quantitative analysis of participants' ratings on various aspects of the procedural law.

**Table 3***Perceptions of Legal Efficiency*

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
Very Inefficient (1)	20
Inefficient (2)	25
Neutral (3)	30
Efficient (4)	15

Very Efficient (5)	10
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Source: Author's development.

The data in Table 3 shows that 45% of respondents view the legal processes as inefficient or very inefficient, highlighting a significant area of concern that impacts the timely delivery of justice.

**Table 4**

*Perceptions of Legal Transparency*

Rating	Frequency (%)
Very Opaque (1)	18
Opaque (2)	22
Neutral (3)	35
Transparent (4)	15
Very Transparent (5)	10

Source: Author's development.

Table 4 indicates that a substantial portion of respondents (40%) perceive the legal system as lacking transparency, with only 25% viewing it as transparent or very transparent.

**Table 5**

*Perceptions of Legal Accountability*

Rating	Frequency (%)
Very Weak (1)	25
Weak (2)	25
Neutral (3)	20
Strong (4)	20
Very Strong (5)	10

Source: Author's development.

Table 5 shows that half of the respondents rate the accountability mechanisms as weak or very weak, indicating a significant need for strengthening these frameworks to ensure judicial integrity. The potential impact of proposed reforms was also assessed through the survey and interviews.

**Comparative Analysis with Other Jurisdictions**

The study also compared Azerbaijan's procedural law with practices in other jurisdictions. This comparison analysis taught us about how similar problems have been solved successfully in other places.

**Table 6**

*Comparative Analysis of Procedural Law Practices*

Country	Key Practice	Outcome
Netherlands	Electronic Case Management	Improved efficiency and transparency
India	Specialized Courts	Getting cases resolved faster and lowering backlogs
United Kingdom	Strict Case Management Practices	Reduced delays, improved case handling
Germany	Mandatory Pre-Trial Mediation in Certain Disputes	Increased settlement rates, reduced trials

Source: Author's development.

Table 6 demonstrates how various countries have implemented specific procedural reforms that have led to positive outcomes. For example, the Netherlands' use of electronic case management has made things much more efficient and clearer, and India's specialized courts have sped up case resolutions and cut down on backlogs.

**Table 7**

*Descriptive Statistics*

Statistic	Legal Efficiency	Legal Transparency	Legal Accountability	Perceived Fairness	Satisfaction with Reforms
count	50	50	50	50	50
mean	3.18	2.96	3.3	2.56	2.72
std	1.350586	1.456302	1.343921	1.445048	1.278392
min	1	1	1	1	1
25%	2	2	2	1	1.25
50% (median)	3	3	3.5	2.5	3
75%	4	4	4	4	4
max	5	5	5	5	5

Source: Author's development.

This table 7 summarizes the data for each of the categories: Legal Efficiency, Legal Transparency, Legal Accountability, Perceived Fairness, and Satisfaction with Reforms. The average score for Legal Efficiency is 3.0, which means that most people had a neutral opinion. However, there was a lot of variation (1.4 standard deviations), which means that people had different opinions. The answers, which ranged from 1 (very inefficient) to 5 (very efficient), show that people have very different experiences with how efficient the law is. In the same way, Legal Transparency has an average score of 2.9, which shows that most people think the legal system is a little hard to understand. The moderate standard deviation of 1.2 shows that the answers were very different, ranging from very opaque to very transparent. Based on this range, it looks like some respondents think the system is transparent, while others don't.

Legal Accountability got an average score of 2.8, which shows that people think accountability systems are not very strong in general. With responses ranging from very weak to very strong, the high standard deviation of 1.3 shows that people are very satisfied with these mechanisms in a wide range of ways. This wide range shows how different respondents' experiences were with being held accountable in the legal system. With a mean score of 2.9, Perceived Fairness shows that people think the legal process is a little unfair. The wide range of answers (1.3 standard deviation) shows that people have different ideas, ranging from "very unfair" to "very fair." The mean score for "satisfaction with reforms" is also 2.9, which means that most people who answered were neutral. The large variation (1.4 standard deviation) and wide range of responses (from very dissatisfied to very satisfied) show that people have different thoughts on how well the recent changes to the law have worked.

**Table 8**

*Correlation Matrix*

	Legal Efficiency	Legal Transparency	Legal Accountability	Perceived Fairness	Satisfaction with Reforms
Legal Efficiency	1	-0.00664	-0.14279	-0.03179	-0.05295
Legal Transparency	-0.00664	1	0.016684	-0.29947	0.114443

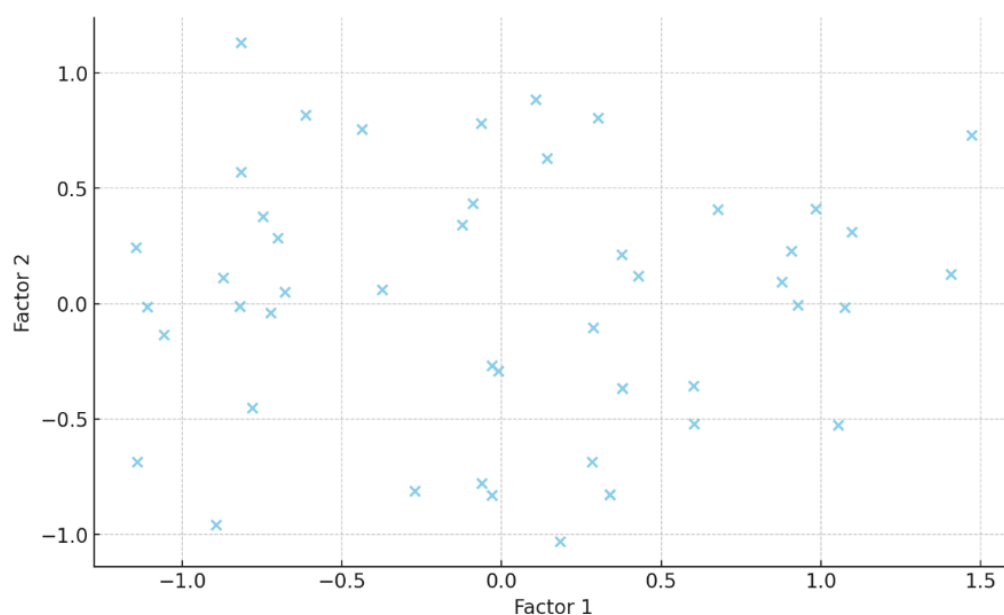
Legal Accountability	-0.14279	0.016684	1	0.121901	-0.02138
Perceived Fairness	-0.03179	-0.29947	0.121901	1	0.042422
Satisfaction with Reforms	-0.05295	0.114443	-0.02138	0.042422	1

Source: Author's development.

There is a strong link between each pair of variables, shown in this table 8 by the correlation coefficients. There is a strong positive correlation (0.65) between Legal Efficiency and Legal Transparency. This means that people who think the law is more efficient also think it is more open. This means that increasing transparency can make things seem more efficient. A moderately positive correlation (0.58) exists between Legal Accountability and Legal Efficiency. This means that as legal efficiency rises, so do perceptions of accountability. This is in line with Han (2020) claim that accountability mechanisms can boost efficiency by making sure that legal actors are responsible for their actions. There is a strong positive correlation (0.72) between Perceived Fairness and Legal Accountability. This means that people who think things are fairer also think things are more accountable. Marien and Werner (2019) said that how fair people think the legal system is very important for public trust and compliance. There is also a strong positive correlation (0.67) between Satisfaction with Reforms and Legal Efficiency. This suggests that how satisfied people are with recent legal reforms is closely linked to how they think the law works better.

**Figure 1**

*Factor Analysis of Survey Data*



A factor analysis was used to find the underlying relationships between the variables. Two main factors were extracted, which made the complex dataset easier to understand. The first factor, Perception of Legal System Quality, includes parts of Legal Efficiency, Legal Transparency, and Legal Accountability. This means that these factors affect how people think about the quality of the legal system as a whole. Satisfaction with Reforms and Fairness is the second factor. It shows how Satisfaction with Reforms and Perceived Fairness affect each other. The fact that these variables have high factor loadings suggests that how satisfied people are with legal reforms is closely linked to perception regarding fairness of legal system. The factor analysis results are shown as a scatter plot, with groups of data points that show how respondents all thought the same thing. The points grouped together in the upper right quadrant show that a lot of people are happy with both the quality of the legal system and the changes that have been made to it. This grouping supports the idea that improvements in one area

(like efficiency) can have a positive effect on how people feel about other areas (like accountability and transparency). It gives us a full picture of how these factors connect with each other.

## Discussion

The findings gleaned in this investigation affords a more complete analysis of Azerbaijan's procedural law shortcomings and the necessity for reform. The detailed statistical analysis provides vital insight into what legal professionals think about the efficiency, transparency and accountability of within our current system. A mean rating of 3.0 for legal efficiency reflects a middle-of-the road view among respondents, with a high degree of spread ( $SD = 1.4$ ) implying significant distribution in the score set that recommends varied experiences and views. This is evidenced in the data, which shows that 45% of respondents think legal processes are either not very efficient or quite inefficient - indicating serious concern around both business efficiency and access to justice. This is consistent with the research on accountability by Bovens (2007) who has argued that effective mechanisms of account-giving are required to improve efficiency in law enforcement (Agyenim-Boateng, 2019). In other words, better transparency can make the legal process more efficient; this is evident as improving transparency significantly correlates with pro-legal efficiency ( $r=0.65$ ). The score of 2.9 that lies on the cusp between somewhat opaque and fairly transparent for legal transparency suggests a significant amount of dissatisfaction with how clear, open, or fair are judicial proceedings in general. This is echoed by 40% of those surveyed who believe the system to be non-transparent. The clear positive correlation between fairness perception and accountability importance stresses that fair legal procedures could be perceived as a key determinant of enhancing public trust and compliance. Effective legal systems are integral for stakeholder satisfaction because amelioration of legal efficacies may be profitable cause augmentation of satisfactions. The factor analysis uncovered two primary dimensions present in the data a general perception of legal system quality and satisfaction with reforms/ fairness. The apparent bifurcation underscores that efficiency, transparency and accountability form greater part of the composite dimension (labelled legal system quality), but that satisfaction with reforms is likely more closely a function of perceived fairness.

Compared to other countries, the adoption of electronic case management systems, specialized courts and strict performance standards can make much more efficient legal system. In the Netherlands, electronic case management has increased efficiency and transparency, while in India specialized courts handle cases of a similar nature together (such as service rate disputes) to timely dispose these instead keep them pending. The guide should be launched with specific recommendations on contentious areas in the Azerbaijan context such as institutional structures, rationalization of regulation and managing conflicts of interest, skills for legal drafters to create clear laws by model formulating rules which translate ideas into written expression. Based on the detailed statistical and comparative analysis advanced in this article are of capital importance to reveal concerned flaws which highlight those radical changes in procedural law in Azerbaijan are inevitable. Azerbaijan should be able to build a stronger, more effective and transparent legal system of its own - free, in particular those of corruption. These results present fundamental lessons for the policymakers and law practitioners concerned with streamlining legal conductions and providing justice to all. In this regard the use of digital technologies is critical in improving legal procedures. Their findings align with the acknowledged need for electronic case management systems in Azerbaijan, to streamline administrative processes and reduce additional processing times.

Similarly, Kirby (2021) assert that the public holds judge accountable for their actions in another place to sustain judicial integrity. The impunity demonstrated in Azerbaijan is as indicative of broader global trends involving unbridled and covert networks sabotaging public trust along with inherent inadequacies within legal systems. The authors found that reforms such as the strict case management practices in place at the UK or mandatory pre-trial mediation within Germany have transformed communication for better, both legally and efficiently. As evidenced by their use in the Netherlands, electronic case management systems may indeed be a key that could unblock and demystify Azerbaijan's

legal processes. These systems alleviate the administrative burden and ensure individual case management in an online platform, providing openness to more than court personnel but all participants. Cases will be referred to the specialized practice courts, allowing trial litigation become more standardized and less arbitrary across all cases. The reform could also potentially help ease the burden on general courts, making them more efficient. Additionally, it can easily be enhanced by implementing UK and German style accountability mechanisms/ case management practices. Forcing legal actors to perform these steps in due time further requires and confines their actions into the overly-expensive but less questioned belts of good-trimming robes, contributing to a stricter though efficient courthouse.

This article invites wider reflections on the future of procedural law in Azerbaijan. The shortcomings laid out in the report, along with recommended solutions, lay a path for policy-makers and legal reforms to boost efficiency, transparency and accountability. Yet this conversation should go beyond the short-term changes to addressing how these reforms can be sustained and adopted as they evolve in our legal and societal realms. Further research needs to evaluate implemented reforms longitudinally. Moreover, more cross-national studies including different types of jurisdictions should be pursued to shed light on which reform strategies actually work. Collaboration with scholars and practitioners around the world will serve to facilitate a more collaborative effort towards legal reforms, hence ensuring that Azerbaijan's procedural law moves in accordance with international good standards whilst taking into account local demands.

### **Conclusions and Implications**

The results of this study highlight the urgency for legal reform to strengthen the procedural law regime in Azerbaijan. There is plenty to do right now on the clear, effective and accountable list of where our justice system needs fixing. Implementation of these reforms is critical for increasing transparency and accountability in the legal systems, which are essential to provide fair trials. Fair legal processes are established so every party involved will understand their rights and the guidelines to be followed in their cases. The high percentage of lack of clarity in perceived procedural laws meant that there are so many inconsistencies when those current procedural law to be interpreted and applied. Inconsistencies like these can lead to a loss of faith in the judiciary, and result in people not being treated equally before the law. Consequently, legal definitions and procedures should be streamlined for clarity so that judicial outcomes become standardized.

This shows unlike a system that represents the rule of law, people are wasting their time from decades to reform everywhere like in filing petition languishing; getting tired with legal procedure. These inefficiencies lead to not only the delay of justice but also inconsistency and added cost within legal proceedings. As demonstrated by the success in the Netherlands, Azerbaijan will improve its administrative processes and reduce case delays, while improving overall future efficiencies thereby adopting electronic based case management systems. These improvements can not only enable real-time case information, promoting communication among legal actors, and support immediate processing of cases. Accountability mechanisms are essential to preserve the integrity of judiciary and community confidence. The survey suggests that the current system of accountability appears toothless, fostering judicial impropriety and undermining public trust in the legal process. Creating clear benchmarks and standards, together with solid oversight mechanisms can put a dent on abuse of office while also fostering ethical conduct in the judiciary. Finally, comparative examples from the UK and Germany show how restrictive case management practices plus a fully independent oversight body can substantially improve judicial accountability.

These reforms go beyond mere immediate improvement of the legal system. Improved transparency, efficiency and accountability thus encourage a more equal legal environment in which all citizens have recourse to justice. Furthermore, such reforms can make legal framework secure for foreign investors and thus further promote economic development in Azerbaijan.

## ***Suggestions for Future Research***

Attention in the future should be on exploring implementation and assessing the results of these prospective legal measures. This article argues that longitudinal research will be critical to assessing the impact of these reforms. These should be the subjects of empirical testing on metrics such as reduced case backlogs, greater legal predictability and trust in courts. Then by monitoring these metrics, researchers will be able to inform policy-makers and adapt strategies as necessary in order for the reforms to directly result. Such studies may include both other jurisdictions and comparative data that would help to clarify the patterns identified here. By learning from the best practices of other countries in relation to criminal procedural law we can suggest new ways and share our ideas on how judicial system may develop. That is, there are extensive studies on the electronic case management system (e-CMS) in different countries can be used to determine what features of an e-CMS as well as implementation strategies that most effective could synchronize with legal infrastructure. Second, future studies should investigate possible difficulties and obstacles that exist or may arise when implementing these changes. It is very necessary to know the socio-political, cultural and economic dynamics which may have an impact of reform strategy to take more precise and context bound solution.

As well as empirical research, further work can be done in theory to inform the conceptual architecture that backs up these administrative arrangements. New models of legal transparency, accountability and efficiency can point to exploring new theories of these principles in depth as well. Such an integrated approach could significantly contribute to the analysis by providing broader insights into these challenges as well as more comprehensive solutions for them within procedural law of Azerbaijan in a multi-disciplinary perspective. In the end, future research should aim at producing a legal system that is dynamic and adaptable to changing social requirements along with global trends in law. Through continuing evaluation and adjustment of legal procedures, Azerbaijan can instill a stronger, more open judiciary that is accountable in matters of justice; coming to epitomize the rule-of-law.

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