

# Leveraging Legal Technology to Enhance Legal Awareness and Access to Justice in Underserved Communities



Lubabalo Mjadu <sup>1</sup> 

<sup>1</sup> School of Law, Faculty of Law, Humanities and Social Sciences, Walter Sisulu University, Eastern Cape, Mthatha, South Africa.

## ABSTRACT

This study explored how legal technology can be utilized to enhance legal awareness and improve access to justice, with a specific focus on underserved communities. The primary objective was to examine the opportunities and challenges that technology presents in democratizing legal information and promoting legal literacy. The study adopted a qualitative approach, drawing on case studies, literature reviews, and analysis of technological tools such as AI-driven platforms, online legal services, mobile applications, and e-government initiatives. Findings reveal that legal technology significantly improves access to legal information, simplifies complex legal concepts, and provides personalized legal solutions. However, barriers, such as the digital divide, data privacy concerns, and resistance from traditional legal practitioners, limit its effectiveness, particularly in marginalized regions. The study highlights the critical need to address these challenges through enhanced digital infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, and greater collaboration between legal professionals and technology developers. Recommendations include expanding digital legal education, integrating legal technology into formal legal training, and ensuring robust data protection standards. This research contributes to the growing scholarship on legal technology by emphasizing its potential to empower individuals, foster legal awareness, and advance social justice, particularly for those historically excluded from legal resources.

### Correspondence

Lubabalo Mjadu  
Email:  
lmjadu@wsu.ac.za

### Publication History

Received:  
13<sup>th</sup> April, 2025  
Accepted:  
18<sup>th</sup> August, 2025  
Published:  
29<sup>th</sup> September, 2025

### To Cite this Article:

Mjadu, Lubabalo. "Leveraging Legal Technology to Enhance Legal Awareness and Access to Justice in Underserved Communities," *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences* 6, no. 10 (2025): 2544 - 2555, <https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.202561022>

*Keywords: Legal Awareness, Legal Technology, AI-Driven Platforms, Legal Practitioner*

## INTRODUCTION

Legal awareness refers to the understanding of rights, responsibilities, and the legal framework that governs individual and societal interactions. It is crucial for promoting justice, protecting rights, and encouraging public participation in the legal system. A well-informed populace is better equipped to assert its rights and engage with legal processes, which ultimately fosters a more equitable society.<sup>1</sup> Legal awareness is particularly significant in contexts where marginalized groups may be unaware of their rights or the legal avenues available to them, thus perpetuating cycles of injustice.

Legal technology (legal tech) encompasses the use of technology and software to provide

<sup>1</sup> G. Abhay, "Impact of Legal Awareness and Women Empowerment: A Quantitative Analysis of Working Women," *Journal of Critical Reviews* 7, no. 2 (2020): 1–8.

legal services and enhance the efficiency of legal processes. It plays a transformative role in the legal landscape by streamlining operations, improving access to legal information, and facilitating communication between legal professionals and the public.<sup>2</sup> The integration of legal tech not only enhances the delivery of legal services but also democratizes access to legal knowledge, making it more accessible to individuals who may have previously faced barriers due to geographical, financial, or educational constraints.<sup>3</sup>

The primary goal of this article is to explore how legal technology can enhance legal awareness, democratize access to legal information, and promote legal literacy among the public. By examining the intersection of legal tech and legal awareness, this article aims to highlight the potential of technology to empower individuals, particularly those in underserved communities, by providing them with the tools and knowledge necessary to navigate the legal system effectively.<sup>4</sup> This exploration is vital in understanding how legal tech can catalyze social change and justice.

This article will first present the concepts of legal awareness and legal technology, establishing a foundation for the discussion. It will then delve into recent technological advancements that have influenced the legal field, including AI-driven platforms and online legal resources. Following this, case studies will illustrate practical applications of legal tech in enhancing legal awareness. The article will also address the challenges faced in implementing legal technology effectively, such as digital literacy and access disparities. Finally, it will offer recommendations for leveraging legal tech to maximize its benefits for legal awareness and public engagement.

## METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a qualitative approach, drawing on case studies, literature reviews, and analysis of technological tools such as AI-driven platforms, online legal services, mobile applications, and e-government initiatives.

## DISCUSSION

### Legal Awareness and Technology

#### *Defining Legal Awareness*

Legal awareness encompasses the knowledge and understanding of rights, obligations, and legal processes that individuals possess. This awareness is essential for individuals to navigate the legal system effectively, assert their rights, and fulfill their responsibilities within society.<sup>5</sup> Legal awareness is crucial for promoting access to justice, as it empowers individuals to recognize when their rights are being violated and to seek appropriate remedies.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, a well-informed populace is more likely to engage in civic activities, thereby enhancing public participation in the legal and democratic processes.<sup>7</sup> The absence of legal awareness can lead to disenfranchisement, particularly among marginalized groups, who may lack the necessary knowledge to advocate for their rights or access legal resources.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> S. Babikian, "The Role of Legal Frameworks in Protecting Digital Artifacts: Artists' and Collectors' Perspectives," *Interdisciplinary Studies in Society, Law, and Politics* 2, no. 4 (2023): 18–24; Dwi Iman Muthaqqin and Baeihaqi Baeihaqi, "Strengthening Legal Knowledge Through E-Legal Basic Learning Methods," in *Annual Civic Education Conference (ACEC 2021)* (Atlantis Press, 2022), 503–6.

<sup>3</sup> Qian Hongdao et al., "Legal Technologies in Action: The Future of the Legal Market in Light of Disruptive Innovations," *Sustainability* 11, no. 4 (2019): 1015.

<sup>4</sup> P. R. Ananda and Y. Indarsih, "The Role of Legal Education in Raising Awareness of Financial Institutions on the Prevention of Money Laundering Crime in Property Transactions," *Indo-MathEdu Intellectuals Journal* 4, no. 2 (2023): 1225–36.

<sup>5</sup> Fahmi Sidiq, Chun Wang, and Grida Saktian Laksito, "Community Empowerment Through Legal Counseling: Increasing Legal Awareness and Justice for Women and Children in Cijeruk Hamlet, Tasikmalaya City," *International Journal of Research in Community Services* 5, no. 1 (2024): 51–54.

<sup>6</sup> Ananda and Indarsih, "The Role of Legal Education in Raising Awareness of Financial Institutions on the Prevention of Money Laundering Crime in Property Transactions."

<sup>7</sup> Sarah Esther Lageson, "Crime Data, the Internet, and Free Speech: An Evolving Legal Consciousness," *Law & Society Review* 51, no. 1 (2017): 8–41.

<sup>8</sup> Lageson, "Crime Data, the Internet, and Free Speech: An Evolving Legal Consciousness."

### ***The Emergence of Legal Technology***

Legal technology, often referred to as legal tech, includes a variety of tools and platforms designed to facilitate legal processes and improve access to legal information. This encompasses AI-driven platforms, legal databases, online legal services, and digital tools that streamline legal research and documentation.<sup>9</sup> The evolution of legal tech has transitioned from traditional systems, such as paper-based documentation and in-person consultations, to innovative solutions that leverage artificial intelligence and machine learning. For example, AI can assist in contract analysis, predictive analytics for case outcomes, and automated legal research, significantly enhancing the efficiency of legal practices.<sup>10</sup> This transformation reflects a broader trend towards digitalization in the legal sector, which aims to make legal services more accessible and efficient.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Intersection of Legal Awareness and Technology***

The intersection of legal awareness and technology is pivotal to facilitating access to legal information. Legal technology makes legal resources more accessible, user-friendly, and cost-effective, thereby lowering the barriers that individuals face when seeking legal knowledge.<sup>12</sup> For instance, online platforms provide a wealth of legal information that can be accessed at any time, allowing individuals to educate themselves about their rights and legal processes without the need for costly consultations.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, AI-driven tools can simplify complex legal language, making it easier for users to understand their rights and responsibilities.<sup>14</sup> By enhancing the accessibility and comprehensibility of legal information, legal technology plays a critical role in promoting legal awareness and, consequently, access to justice.

Legal awareness is foundational for individuals to navigate the legal landscape effectively, while legal technology serves as a powerful enabler in enhancing this awareness. The integration of technology into the legal field not only democratizes access to legal information but also empowers individuals to engage more fully in their legal rights and responsibilities.

### ***Types of Legal Technology Enhancing Legal Awareness***

The advent of legal technology has significantly transformed the landscape of legal awareness, providing individuals with accessible resources and tools to navigate common legal issues. This response synthesizes various types of legal technology, including online legal information platforms, AI-powered legal assistance, mobile legal applications, and e-government initiatives.

### ***Online Legal Information Platforms***

Online legal information platforms, such as LegalZoom and Rocket Lawyer, play a crucial role in democratizing access to legal resources. These platforms offer a variety of services, including legal guides, templates for contracts and wills, and resources for resolving disputes. By providing these tools, they enhance public knowledge of common legal issues, enabling individuals to understand their rights and responsibilities better. Research indicates that such platforms not only make legal services more affordable but also help users develop a basic understanding of legal concepts, which is essential for informed decision-making.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, these platforms address barriers to access by

<sup>9</sup> Jennyola Savira, Benny Djaja, and Maman Sudirman, "Polemic of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technology on the Development of Human Resources, Especially in Legal Practitioners," *Edunity: Social and Educational Studies* 2, no. 10 (2023): 1089–95; Alevtina Repina, "Artificial Intelligence In Legal Services: State-of-Art And Users' Expectations In Russia," *Higher School of Economics Research Paper No. WP BRP* 104 (2019).

<sup>10</sup> Alona Klochko et al., "The Legal Regulation of Artificial Intelligence Security in Ukrainian Banking," 2024.

<sup>11</sup> Josephine Bhavani Rajendra and Ambikai S Thuraisingam, "Artificial Intelligence and Its Impact on the Legal Fraternity," *UUM Journal of Legal Studies (UUMJLS)* 13, no. 1 (2022): 129–61; Richard Susskind, *Online Courts and the Future of Justice* (Oxford University Press, 2019).

<sup>12</sup> Babikian, "The Role of Legal Frameworks in Protecting Digital Artifacts: Artists' and Collectors' Perspectives"; Xudaybergenov Azamat, "Toward Legal Recognition of Artificial Intelligence Proposals for Limited Subject-of-Law Status," n.d.

<sup>13</sup> Susskind, *Online Courts and the Future of Justice*.

<sup>14</sup> J. C. D. Here Bessie and D. G. Rudy, "Consumer Protection for Losses Arising from the Use of Auto Pilot-Based Technology in Indonesia," *Policy Law Notary and Regulatory Issues (Polri)* 3, no. 1 (2023): 106–12.

<sup>15</sup> Hongdao et al., "Legal Technologies in Action: The Future of the Legal Market in Light of Disruptive Innovations"; Susana Navas, "The Provision of Legal Services to Consumers Using LawTech Tools: From 'Service' to 'Legal Product,'" *Open Journal of Social Sciences* 7, no. 11 (2019): 79–103.

simplifying complex legal jargon, thus making legal information more approachable for laypersons.<sup>16</sup>

### ***AI- Powered Legal Assistance***

AI-powered legal assistance tools, such as chatbots and virtual legal assistants, further enhance legal awareness by providing real-time legal advice and guidance. These tools can answer legal questions and help users navigate legal procedures, effectively breaking down complex legal terminology into understandable language. The use of AI in legal contexts has shown promise in predicting litigation outcomes and providing tailored legal information to users, thereby improving their understanding of legal processes.<sup>17</sup> The ability of these tools to offer immediate assistance can significantly reduce the intimidation often associated with legal matters, empowering users to take proactive steps in their legal affairs.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Mobile Legal Apps***

Mobile applications like MyLawyer and DoNotPay have emerged as vital resources for individuals seeking legal assistance on the go. These apps facilitate easy access to legal information, assist users in completing legal forms, and guide them through the process of filing disputes. The convenience of mobile technology allows users to engage with legal content at their own pace, which can enhance their understanding of their rights and the legal processes relevant to them.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, the integration of user-friendly interfaces in these apps helps demystify legal procedures, making it easier for users to comprehend and utilize legal resources effectively.<sup>20</sup>

### ***E-Government and Digital Courts***

E-government initiatives, including e-filing systems and online dispute resolution platforms, have significantly increased transparency and efficiency in legal processes. These technologies streamline the interaction between citizens and the legal system, making legal resources more accessible to the public. By digitizing court processes, e-government initiatives reduce the time and complexity associated with traditional legal procedures, thus enhancing public engagement with the legal system.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the availability of online resources fosters a more informed citizenry, as individuals can access legal information and services without the barriers of time and location.<sup>22</sup>

The integration of various legal technologies has profoundly impacted legal awareness by providing accessible resources, simplifying complex legal processes, and fostering a more informed public. As these technologies continue to evolve, they hold the potential to further enhance access to justice and empower individuals in their legal journeys.

### **Benefits of Legal Technology in Enhancing Legal Awareness**

Legal technology has emerged as a transformative force in enhancing legal awareness, particularly by addressing barriers to access, simplifying complex legal concepts, personalizing legal solutions, and providing real-time updates on legal rights and regulations. This section discusses the multifaceted benefits of legal technology in promoting legal awareness among the public.

### ***Accessibility and Affordability***

Legal technology significantly reduces geographical, financial, and knowledge barriers by providing free or low-cost legal information online, especially in underserved areas. Platforms such as

<sup>16</sup> Jana Soukupová, "AI-Based Legal Technology: A Critical Assessment of the Current Use of Artificial Intelligence in Legal Practice," *Masaryk University Journal of Law and Technology* 15, no. 2 (2021): 279–300.

<sup>17</sup> Soukupová, "AI-Based Legal Technology: A Critical Assessment of the Current Use of Artificial Intelligence in Legal Practice."

<sup>18</sup> Soukupová, "AI-Based Legal Technology: A Critical Assessment of the Current Use of Artificial Intelligence in Legal Practice."

<sup>19</sup> Hugh McFaul et al., "A Mobile App for Public Legal Education: A Case Study of Co-Designing with Students," *Research in Learning Technology* 28 (2020).

<sup>20</sup> McFaul et al., "A Mobile App for Public Legal Education: A Case Study of Co-Designing with Students."

<sup>21</sup> Gordon Pennycook and David G Rand, "Fighting Misinformation on Social Media Using Crowdsourced Judgments of News Source Quality," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 116, no. 7 (2019): 2521–26.

<sup>22</sup> Pennycook and Rand, "Fighting Misinformation on Social Media Using Crowdsourced Judgments of News Source Quality."

LegalZoom and Rocket Lawyer exemplify how legal tech can democratize access to legal resources, making essential information available to individuals who may not otherwise afford traditional legal services.<sup>23</sup> In regions where legal services are scarce, these platforms can serve as vital resources for individuals seeking guidance on issues such as contracts, wills, and family law.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the integration of technology in legal aid delivery has been shown to enhance outreach and efficiency, allowing legal aid providers to reach a broader audience and offer services at reduced costs.<sup>25</sup>

### ***Simplification of Legal Concepts***

Legal technology simplifies complex legal language, making it easier for the public to understand their rights and responsibilities. Many legal tech platforms employ user-friendly interfaces and plain language to explain legal concepts, which is crucial for enhancing legal literacy among the general population.<sup>26</sup> This simplification is particularly beneficial for individuals with limited legal knowledge, as it empowers them to engage with legal processes more confidently and competently.<sup>27</sup> By breaking down complex legal jargon, legal tech fosters a more informed citizenry capable of making better decisions regarding their legal rights and obligations.

### ***Personalization of Legal Solutions***

AI-driven platforms offer personalized legal advice based on user input, which significantly improves the relevance and effectiveness of the information provided. These platforms utilize algorithms to analyse user queries and provide tailored responses, thereby enhancing the user experience and ensuring that individuals receive information pertinent to their specific circumstances.<sup>28</sup> This personalization not only increases user engagement but also helps individuals navigate legal complexities more effectively, as they receive guidance that is directly applicable to their situations.<sup>29</sup> The ability to access customized legal solutions can lead to better outcomes in legal matters, as users are more likely to act on advice that resonates with their unique needs.

### ***Real-Time Legal Updates and Awareness Campaigns***

Legal technology plays a crucial role in keeping the public informed of new laws, regulations, and legal rights through real-time updates and online awareness campaigns. Digital platforms can disseminate information rapidly, ensuring that individuals are aware of changes that may affect their legal standing.<sup>30</sup> For instance, legal tech companies often utilize social media and online campaigns to educate the public about their rights, thereby fostering a culture of legal awareness.<sup>31</sup> This proactive approach to legal education is essential in a rapidly changing legal landscape, as it helps individuals stay informed and prepared to respond to new legal challenges.<sup>32</sup>

The benefits of legal technology in enhancing legal awareness are manifold. By improving accessibility and affordability, simplifying legal concepts, personalizing legal solutions, and providing real-time updates, legal tech empowers individuals to engage more effectively with the legal system. As these technologies continue to evolve, they hold the promise of further democratizing access to justice and fostering a more informed public.

<sup>23</sup> Hongdao et al., "Legal Technologies in Action: The Future of the Legal Market in Light of Disruptive Innovations."

<sup>24</sup> Md Emran Ahmed, "Access to Justice for Illiterate Women in the Southern Char Areas of Bangladesh," *Available at SSRN 4574794*, 2023.

<sup>25</sup> Ludmila Goncarencu, "Legal Aid Delivery: Technology, pro Bono Services, and Collaborative Funding Models," *Development Through Research and Innovation*, 2023, 8–20.

<sup>26</sup> Nur Putri Hidayah and Galih Wasis Wicaksono, "Legal Knowledge Management System on Family Law for Society," *Jurnal Hukum Novelty* 11, no. 1 (2020): 68–85.

<sup>27</sup> Victoria Lez'er, Nina Semeryanova, and Elena Grigorovich, "Clarification and Analysis of the Concept of 'Legal Reality,'" in *E3S Web of Conferences*, vol. 135 (EDP Sciences, 2019), 04061.

<sup>28</sup> L N Berg, "Transformation of Legal Impact in the Context of the Modern Information and Technological Structure (Case Study of the Relations Connected with Genomic Information)," in *SHS Web of Conferences*, vol. 134 (EDP Sciences, 2022), 00117.

<sup>29</sup> Svetlana A Sivova, "Categorization Of Legal Realities In Modern Russian Science," *European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 2022.

<sup>30</sup> Hongdao et al., "Legal Technologies in Action: The Future of the Legal Market in Light of Disruptive Innovations."

<sup>31</sup> McFaul et al., "A Mobile App for Public Legal Education: A Case Study of Co-Designing with Students."

<sup>32</sup> Amaka Debie Samuel-Okon et al., "Formulating Global Policies and Strategies for Combating Criminal Use and Abuse of Artificial Intelligence," *Available at SSRN 4873822*, 2024.

## Legal Technology in Action

Legal technology has made significant strides in enhancing legal awareness and access to justice. This section examines three case studies that illustrate the practical applications of legal tech in improving public understanding of legal issues and processes.

### Case Study 1: Do-Not-Pay

The AI Lawyer for Everyday Legal Issues Do-Not-Pay is an AI-powered chatbot designed to assist users with various legal issues, such as contesting fines, cancelling subscriptions, and handling small legal disputes. By leveraging artificial intelligence, Do-Not-Pay simplifies the legal process for ordinary citizens, making it more accessible and less intimidating. Users can interact with the chatbot to receive tailored advice and templates for legal documents, which enhances their understanding of their rights and the legal options available to them.<sup>33</sup>

The platform exemplifies how legal technology can empower individuals by providing them with the tools and knowledge necessary to navigate everyday legal challenges without the need for expensive legal representation.<sup>34</sup> This democratization of legal services not only fosters greater legal awareness but also encourages public participation in the legal system, as users become more informed about their rights and responsibilities.<sup>35</sup>

### Case Study 2: Legal Information Systems in Developing Countries

In developing countries, digital platforms are increasingly being utilized to enhance access to legal resources and knowledge, particularly in remote or impoverished communities. These systems often provide free or low-cost legal information, which is crucial in areas where traditional legal services are scarce or unaffordable.<sup>36</sup> For instance, initiatives that leverage mobile technology to disseminate legal information have proven effective in reaching underserved populations, thereby improving legal literacy and awareness.<sup>37</sup> Such platforms can offer guidance on various legal matters, including land rights, family law, and consumer protection, which are vital for empowering individuals in these communities.<sup>38</sup> By bridging the gap between legal services and the public, these systems not only enhance legal awareness but also promote social justice and equity.<sup>39</sup>

### Case Study 3: Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) Platforms

Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platforms have emerged as innovative solutions for resolving disputes, particularly in consumer transactions and family law. These platforms utilize technology to facilitate negotiations and settlements without the need for traditional court proceedings, making the dispute resolution process more efficient and accessible.<sup>40</sup> ODR systems often include features such as automated decision-making and mediation tools, which help users understand their rights and the legal implications of their disputes.<sup>41</sup> By providing a user-friendly interface and clear guidance throughout the resolution process, ODR platforms enhance the public's understanding of legal procedures and rights.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, the ability to resolve disputes online reduces the burden on traditional court systems, thereby increasing overall access to justice.<sup>43</sup> As a result, ODR not only

<sup>33</sup> Soukupová, "AI-Based Legal Technology: A Critical Assessment of the Current Use of Artificial Intelligence in Legal Practice"; Qian Hongdao et al., "Legal Business Model Digitalization: The Post COVID-19 Legal Industry," *Sage Open* 12, no. 2 (2022): 21582440221093984.

<sup>34</sup> Hongdao et al., "Legal Technologies in Action: The Future of the Legal Market in Light of Disruptive Innovations."

<sup>35</sup> Soukupová, "AI-Based Legal Technology: A Critical Assessment of the Current Use of Artificial Intelligence in Legal Practice."

<sup>36</sup> Elena P Ermakova, "Features of Online Settlement of Consumer Disputes by E-Commerce Platforms in the People's Republic of China," *Journal of Digital Technologies and Law* 1, no. 3 (2023).

<sup>37</sup> Hongdao et al., "Legal Technologies in Action: The Future of the Legal Market in Light of Disruptive Innovations."

<sup>38</sup> Ermakova, "Features of Online Settlement of Consumer Disputes by E-Commerce Platforms in the People's Republic of China."

<sup>39</sup> Ermakova, "Features of Online Settlement of Consumer Disputes by E-Commerce Platforms in the People's Republic of China."

<sup>40</sup> A. Hassan, *Islam and Christianity in Ghana: Interfaith Relations and Societal Impact* (Accra: Accra University Press., 2019); Bayu Retno et al., "Human Resource Management Strategy the Role of Managers and Career Development," *Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Kesatuan* 12, no. 4 (2024): 951–60.

<sup>41</sup> Hassan, *Islam and Christianity in Ghana: Interfaith Relations and Societal Impact*.

<sup>42</sup> Hassan, *Islam and Christianity in Ghana: Interfaith Relations and Societal Impact*.

<sup>43</sup> A N Kutovaya and K R Khadzi, "Online Dispute Resolution: International, Domestic and Private Practices and Further Prospects for Development," *International Trade and Trade Policy*, no. 4 (2020).

streamlines the resolution process but also educates users about their legal rights, fostering a more informed citizenry.<sup>44</sup> In summary, these case studies illustrate the transformative impact of legal technology on enhancing legal awareness. By providing accessible resources, simplifying complex legal processes, and promoting user engagement, legal tech plays a crucial role in empowering individuals and improving access to justice.

### **Challenges and Limitations of Legal Technology**

Despite the transformative potential of legal technology in enhancing legal awareness and access to justice, several challenges and limitations persist. This section explores the key obstacles that hinder the effective implementation and utilization of legal tech.

#### ***Digital Divide and Accessibility***

One of the most significant challenges facing legal technology is the digital divide, which refers to unequal access to technology and the internet across different demographics and geographic regions. Digital illiteracy, limited internet availability, and economic disparities particularly affect rural and underdeveloped areas, where individuals may lack the necessary skills or resources to utilize legal tech effectively.<sup>45</sup> This divide can worsen existing inequalities in access to legal information and services, leaving marginalized communities without the tools needed to understand and assert their legal rights. As a result, although legal technology has the potential to democratize access to justice, it may inadvertently widen the gap between those who can leverage these tools and those who cannot.<sup>46</sup>

#### ***Legal Complexity and Tech Limitations***

Another limitation of legal technology is its inability to handle highly complex legal issues that require nuanced human judgment and expertise. Although AI-driven platforms and legal databases can provide valuable information and assistance, they often fall short when it comes to interpreting intricate legal scenarios or providing tailored legal advice in unique circumstances.<sup>47</sup> The reliance on algorithms and automated systems may lead to oversimplification of legal matters, potentially resulting in inadequate or misleading guidance for users. Consequently, there remains a critical need for human legal professionals to complement technological solutions, particularly in cases involving complicated legal frameworks or sensitive issues.

#### ***Data Privacy and Security Concerns***

The use of online platforms and AI-powered tools raises significant concerns about data privacy and security. Legal technology often involves the collection and storage of sensitive personal information, which can be vulnerable to breaches and unauthorized access.<sup>48</sup> Users may be hesitant to engage with legal tech due to fears about the confidentiality of their legal matters, especially when dealing with sensitive issues such as family law or criminal defence. Ensuring robust data protection measures and transparent privacy policies is essential to building trust in legal technology and encouraging its adoption among users.<sup>49</sup> Without addressing these concerns, the potential benefits of legal tech may be undermined by the risks associated with data misuse and breaches.

---

<sup>44</sup> Hassan, *Islam and Christianity in Ghana: Interfaith Relations and Societal Impact*; Retno et al., "Human Resource Management Strategy the Role of Managers and Career Development."

<sup>45</sup> Shila Nhemi, "Law Without Lawyers: Examining the Limitations of Consumer-Centric Legal Tech Services," *Journal of Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law (JIPIT)* 3, no. 1 (November 28, 2023): 15–76, <https://doi.org/10.52907/jipit.v3i1.223>.

<sup>46</sup> Chengyu Fang et al., "'AI Am Here to Represent You': Understanding How Institutional Logics Shape Attitudes Toward Intelligent Technologies in Legal Work," *Management Communication Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (November 17, 2023): 941–70, <https://doi.org/10.1177/08933189231158282>.

<sup>47</sup> Archwell Nhemachena, Munyaradzi Mawere, and Oliver Mtapuri, "Operation Dudula, Xenophobic Vigilantism and Sovereignty in Twenty-First Century South Africa," *Sovereignty Becoming Pulverization: Unpacking the Dark Side of Slave 4.0 Within Industry 4.0 in Twenty-First Century Africa*, 2022, 153–74.

<sup>48</sup> Fatima Khan, "Does the Right to Dignity Extend Equally to Refugees in South Africa?," *African Human Rights Law Journal* 22, no. 2 (January 27, 2023): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.17159/1996-2096/2020/v20n1a10>.

<sup>49</sup> Repina, "Artificial Intelligence In Legal Services: State-of-Art And Users' Expectations In Russia."

### **Resistance by Traditional Legal Practitioners**

The resistance to legal tech by traditional legal practitioners poses another challenge to the widespread adoption of legal technology. Many lawyers express concerns about the accuracy, ethics, and reliability of AI-driven legal advice, fearing that it may undermine the quality of legal services and the role of human lawyers. This skepticism can hinder collaboration between legal tech developers and legal professionals, limiting the potential for innovation and integration of technology into legal practice.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, the legal profession's historical reliance on established practices and norms may create a cultural barrier to embracing new technologies, which can slow the pace of change in the industry.

Addressing these concerns through education and dialogue are crucial for fostering a more collaborative environment that embraces the benefits of legal technology while maintaining professional standards. Hence, although legal technology offers significant opportunities for enhancing legal awareness and access to justice, it is essential to address the challenges and limitations that accompany its implementation. By recognizing and mitigating these obstacles, stakeholders can work towards a more equitable and effective legal tech landscape.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Expanding Access to Digital Legal Education in Underserved Areas**

To enhance access to digital legal education in underserved communities, the existing digital divide must be addressed through strategic investments in digital infrastructure. This includes expanding broadband access, particularly in rural and economically disadvantaged urban areas, where connectivity remains a significant barrier to education. Research indicates that improving internet connectivity can facilitate access to online learning resources, thereby bridging the digital divide and promoting inclusive education.<sup>51</sup> Partnerships with local organizations, such as libraries and community centers, can also play a crucial role in providing portable Wi-Fi hotspots and digital literacy programs tailored to the needs of these communities.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, leveraging telehealth models, which have successfully expanded access to healthcare in similar contexts, can serve as a blueprint for implementing digital legal education initiatives.<sup>53</sup>

### **Integrating Digital Platforms into Formal Legal Education**

Integrating digital tools and platforms into formal legal education systems can significantly enhance learning outcomes and accessibility. Collaborations between universities and legal institutions can facilitate the development of comprehensive online curricula that incorporate interactive elements, such as virtual simulations and case studies. This approach not only enriches the educational experience but also prepares students for the digital landscape of modern legal practice.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, adopting a hybrid model of education that combines traditional classroom learning with online resources can cater to diverse learning preferences and increase student engagement.<sup>55</sup> The establishment of interprofessional education programs, like those in healthcare, can also foster collaboration among law students, legal practitioners, and technology developers, ensuring that legal education remains relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of society.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Alice F Artzt et al., *Becoming a Reflective Mathematics Teacher: A Guide for Observations and Self-Assessment* (Routledge, 2015).

<sup>51</sup> Nathaniel Bell et al., "Broadband Access within Medically Underserved Areas and Its Implication for Telehealth Utilization," *The Journal of Rural Health* 39, no. 3 (2023): 625–35.

<sup>52</sup> Boon Peng Ng et al., "Accessibility and Utilisation of Telehealth Services among Older Adults during COVID-19 Pandemic in the United States," *Health & Social Care in the Community* 30, no. 5 (2022): e2657–69.

<sup>53</sup> Mary Brooks et al., "Feasibility of Developing a Pediatric Telehealth Network in Honduras with International Consultation Support," *Rural and Remote Health* 17, no. 2 (2017): 1–7.

<sup>54</sup> Musa Rabiati Mafara and Adamu Nurradin Kanon Haki, "Imperatives of Online Learning in Tertiary Institutions During COVID-19 Pandemic," *Journal of Institute of Africa Higher Education Research and Innovation (IAHERI)* 1, no. 1 (2024).

<sup>55</sup> Maryam Amin et al., "Should Dental Schools Adopt Teledentistry in Their Curricula? Two Viewpoints," *Journal of Dental Education* 85, no. 7 (2021): 1238–44.

<sup>56</sup> Xuefei Deng and Sheng Yi, "The Digital Divide in Online Education: A Study of Underserved College Students," 2022, <https://doi.org/10.24251/HICSS.2022.624>.

## Enhancing the Credibility and Regulation of Digital Legal Platforms

To ensure the accuracy, quality, and ethical standards of online legal education platforms, it is imperative to create robust certification systems and regulatory frameworks. These frameworks should be designed to monitor and evaluate the content delivered by digital platforms, ensuring compliance with established educational standards.<sup>57</sup> The implementation of experimental legal regimes, as suggested in the literature, could provide a flexible regulatory approach that adapts to the rapid evolution of digital technologies while safeguarding the interests of learners.<sup>58</sup> Additionally, fostering transparency and accountability in the operations of digital platforms is crucial for building trust among users, particularly in underserved communities where access to reliable legal information is paramount.<sup>59</sup>

## Increasing Collaboration Between Legal Professionals and Tech Innovators

Stronger collaboration between legal professionals and technology innovators is essential for developing user-friendly, legally sound platforms that can reach a wider audience. This partnership can facilitate the creation of tools that not only enhance legal education but also improve access to legal services for marginalized populations.<sup>60</sup> Developers can ensure that these platforms meet the specific needs of users while adhering to legal standards by involving legal experts in the design and implementation of digital solutions.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, interdisciplinary initiatives that bring together stakeholders from various sectors can foster innovative approaches to addressing the challenges faced by underserved communities in accessing legal education and services.<sup>62</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This paper set out to examine how legal technology can be leveraged to enhance legal awareness and improve access to justice, with a particular emphasis on underserved communities. The analysis revealed that although digital platforms, AI-driven tools, mobile applications, and e-government initiatives have significantly improved the accessibility of legal information, several challenges continue to limit their full potential. These include the digital divide, technological limitations, concerns over data privacy, and resistance from traditional legal practitioners. To address these barriers, the study recommends expanding digital infrastructure, promoting collaboration between legal experts and technology developers, and implementing regulatory frameworks that enhance the credibility of legal tech solutions. Ultimately, this research highlights that legal technology, if inclusively developed and deployed, holds the promise of democratizing access to legal resources, empowering marginalized populations, and fostering a more legally aware and just society. For policymakers, educators, and innovators, prioritizing accessibility, digital literacy, and ethical safeguards will be essential in ensuring that legal technology serves as an effective tool for advancing justice for all.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abhay, G. "Impact of Legal Awareness and Women Empowerment: A Quantitative Analysis of Working Women ." *Journal of Critical Reviews* 7, no. 2 (2020): 1–8.
- Ahmed, Md Emran. "Access to Justice for Illiterate Women in the Southern Char Areas of Bangladesh." *Available at SSRN 4574794*, 2023.
- Amin, Maryam, Jim Yuan Lai, Paul A Lindauer, Karen McPherson, and Hiba Qari. "Should Dental Schools Adopt Teledentistry in Their Curricula? Two Viewpoints." *Journal of Dental Education* 85, no. 7 (2021): 1238–44.

<sup>57</sup> Andrea Moreno-Vasquez et al., "Developing and Implementing a Co-curricular IPE Program: AHEC Scholars Program," *Public Health Nursing* 38, no. 6 (2021): 1080–87.

<sup>58</sup> Elena Anatolyevna Kirillova et al., "Prospects for Developing the Legal Regulation of Digital Platforms," *Jurídicas Cuc* 18, no. 1 (2022): 35–52.

<sup>59</sup> B. Ang, M. A. Rahman, and Y. L. Teo, "Legal Strategies for Combating Fake News and Misinformation," *Interdisciplinary Studies in Society, Law, and Politics* 2, no. 1 (2023): 24–30.

<sup>60</sup> Federico Brunetti et al., "Digital Transformation Challenges: Strategies Emerging from a Multi-Stakeholder Approach," *The TQM Journal* 32, no. 4 (2020): 697–724.

<sup>61</sup> Brunetti et al., "Digital Transformation Challenges: Strategies Emerging from a Multi-Stakeholder Approach."

<sup>62</sup> Brunetti et al., "Digital Transformation Challenges: Strategies Emerging from a Multi-Stakeholder Approach."

- Ananda, P. R., and Y. Indarsih. “The Role of Legal Education in Raising Awareness of Financial Institutions on the Prevention of Money Laundering Crime in Property Transactions.” *Indo-MathEdu Intellectuals Journal* 4, no. 2 (2023): 1225–36.
- Ang, B., M. A. Rahman, and Y. L. Teo. “Legal Strategies for Combating Fake News and Misinformation.” *Interdisciplinary Studies in Society, Law, and Politics* 2, no. 1 (2023): 24–30.
- Artzt, Alice F, Eleanor Armour-Thomas, Frances R Curcio, Theresa J Gurl, and Mara P Markinson. *Becoming a Reflective Mathematics Teacher: A Guide for Observations and Self-Assessment*. Routledge, 2015.
- Azamat, Xudaybergenov. “Toward Legal Recognition of Artificial Intelligence Proposals for Limited Subject-of-Law Status,” n.d.
- Babikian, S. “The Role of Legal Frameworks in Protecting Digital Artifacts: Artists’ and Collectors’ Perspectives.” *Interdisciplinary Studies in Society, Law, and Politics* 2, no. 4 (2023): 18–24.
- Bell, Nathaniel, Peiyin Hung, Ana Lòpez-De Fede, and Swann A Adams. “Broadband Access within Medically Underserved Areas and Its Implication for Telehealth Utilization.” *The Journal of Rural Health* 39, no. 3 (2023): 625–35.
- Berg, L N. “Transformation of Legal Impact in the Context of the Modern Information and Technological Structure (Case Study of the Relations Connected with Genomic Information).” In *SHS Web of Conferences*, 134:00117. EDP Sciences, 2022.
- Brooks, Mary, Kenton R Holden, Reyna M Durón, James T McElligott, and Andrea Summer. “Feasibility of Developing a Pediatric Telehealth Network in Honduras with International Consultation Support.” *Rural and Remote Health* 17, no. 2 (2017): 1–7.
- Brunetti, Federico, Dominik T Matt, Angelo Bonfanti, Alberto De Longhi, Giulio Pedrini, and Guido Orzes. “Digital Transformation Challenges: Strategies Emerging from a Multi-Stakeholder Approach.” *The TQM Journal* 32, no. 4 (2020): 697–724.
- Deng, Xuefei, and Sheng Yi. “The Digital Divide in Online Education: A Study of Underserved College Students,” 2022. <https://doi.org/10.24251/HICSS.2022.624>.
- Ermakova, Elena P. “Features of Online Settlement of Consumer Disputes by E-Commerce Platforms in the People’s Republic of China.” *Journal of Digital Technologies and Law* 1, no. 3 (2023).
- Fang, Chengyu, J. Nan Wilkenfeld, Nitzan Navick, and Jennifer L. Gibbs. “‘AI Am Here to Represent You’: Understanding How Institutional Logics Shape Attitudes Toward Intelligent Technologies in Legal Work.” *Management Communication Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (November 17, 2023): 941–70. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08933189231158282>.
- Goncearenco, Ludmila. “Legal Aid Delivery: Technology, pro Bono Services, and Collaborative Funding Models.” *Development Through Research and Innovation*, 2023, 8–20.
- Hassan, A. *Islam and Christianity in Ghana: Interfaith Relations and Societal Impact*. Accra: Accra University Press., 2019.
- Here Bessie, J. C. D., and D. G. Rudy. “Consumer Protection for Losses Arising from the Use of Auto Pilot-Based Technology in Indonesia.” *Policy Law Notary and Regulatory Issues (Polri)* 3, no. 1 (2023): 106–12.
- Hidayah, Nur Putri, and Galih Wasis Wicaksono. “Legal Knowledge Management System on Family Law for Society.” *Jurnal Hukum Novelty* 11, no. 1 (2020): 68–85.
- Hongdao, Qian, Sughra Bibi, Asif Khan, Lorenzo Ardito, and Muhammad Bilawal Khaskheli. “Legal Technologies in Action: The Future of the Legal Market in Light of Disruptive Innovations.” *Sustainability* 11, no. 4 (2019): 1015.
- Hongdao, Qian, Sughra Bibi, Dahai Mu, Asif Khan, and Asad Raza. “Legal Business Model Digitalization: The Post COVID-19 Legal Industry.” *Sage Open* 12, no. 2 (2022): 21582440221093984.
- Khan, Fatima. “Does the Right to Dignity Extend Equally to Refugees in South Africa?” *African Human Rights Law Journal* 22, no. 2 (January 27, 2023): 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.17159/1996-2096/2020/v20n1a10>.
- Kirillova, Elena Anatolyevna, Teymur El’darovich Zulfugarzade, Oleg Evgenyevich Blinkov, Olga Aleksandrovna Serova, and Irina Aleksandrovna Mikhaylova. “Prospects for Developing the Legal Regulation of Digital Platforms.” *Jurídicas Cuc* 18, no. 1 (2022): 35–52.

- Klochko, Alona, Mykola Kurylo, Oleh Rohovenko, Nataliia Volchenko, and Assol Shulzhenko. "The Legal Regulation of Artificial Intelligence Security in Ukrainian Banking," 2024.
- Kutovaya, A N, and K R Khadzhi. "Online Dispute Resolution: International, Domestic and Private Practices and Further Prospects for Development." *International Trade and Trade Policy*, no. 4 (2020).
- Lageson, Sarah Esther. "Crime Data, the Internet, and Free Speech: An Evolving Legal Consciousness." *Law & Society Review* 51, no. 1 (2017): 8–41.
- Lez'er, Victoria, Nina Semeryanova, and Elena Grigorovich. "Clarification and Analysis of the Concept of 'Legal Reality.'" In *E3S Web of Conferences*, 135:04061. EDP Sciences, 2019.
- McFaul, Hugh, Elizabeth FitzGerald, Francine Ryan, and David Byrne. "A Mobile App for Public Legal Education: A Case Study of Co-Designing with Students." *Research in Learning Technology* 28 (2020).
- Moreno-Vasquez, Andrea, Eduardo Gandara, Annette Z Idar, Pamela Recto, Jose Zapata Jr, and Janna Lesser. "Developing and Implementing a Co-curricular IPE Program: AHEC Scholars Program." *Public Health Nursing* 38, no. 6 (2021): 1080–87.
- Muthaqqin, Dwi Iman, and Baeihaqi Baeihaqi. "Strengthening Legal Knowledge Through E-Legal Basic Learning Methods." In *Annual Civic Education Conference (ACEC 2021)*, 503–6. Atlantis Press, 2022.
- Navas, Susana. "The Provision of Legal Services to Consumers Using LawTech Tools: From 'Service' to 'Legal Product.'" *Open Journal of Social Sciences* 7, no. 11 (2019): 79–103.
- Ng, Boon Peng, Chanhyun Park, Ciara L Silverman, Dawn O Eckhoff, Janeen C Guest, and Desiree A Díaz. "Accessibility and Utilisation of Telehealth Services among Older Adults during COVID-19 Pandemic in the United States." *Health & Social Care in the Community* 30, no. 5 (2022): e2657–69.
- Nhemachena, Archwell, Munyaradzi Mawere, and Oliver Mtapuri. "Operation Dudula, Xenophobic Vigilantism and Sovereignty in Twenty-First Century South Africa." *Sovereignty Becoming Pulverignty: Unpacking the Dark Side of Slave 4.0 Within Industry 4.0 in Twenty-First Century Africa*, 2022, 153–74.
- Nhemi, Shila. "Law Without Lawyers: Examining the Limitations of Consumer-Centric Legal Tech Services." *Journal of Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law (JIPIT)* 3, no. 1 (November 28, 2023): 15–76. <https://doi.org/10.52907/jipit.v3i1.223>.
- Pennycook, Gordon, and David G Rand. "Fighting Misinformation on Social Media Using Crowdsourced Judgments of News Source Quality." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 116, no. 7 (2019): 2521–26.
- Rabiat Mafara, Musa, and Adamu Nurradin Kanon Haki. "Imperatives of Online Learning in Tertiary Institutions During COVID-19 Pandemic." *Journal of Institute of Africa Higher Education Research and Innovation (IAHERI)* 1, no. 1 (2024).
- Rajendra, Josephine Bhavani, and Ambikai S Thuraisingam. "Artificial Intelligence and Its Impact on the Legal Fraternity." *UUM Journal of Legal Studies (UUMJLS)* 13, no. 1 (2022): 129–61.
- Repina, Alevtina. "Artificial Intelligence In Legal Services: State-of-Art And Users' Expectations In Russia." *Higher School of Economics Research Paper No. WP BRP* 104 (2019).
- Retno, Bayu, Harun Samsuddin, Elly Yuniar Nitawati, Djoko Soelistya, and Flora Grace Putrianti. "Human Resource Management Strategy the Role of Managers and Career Development." *Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Kesatuan* 12, no. 4 (2024): 951–60.
- Samuel-Okon, Amaka Debie, Omobolaji Olateju, Samuel Ufom Okon, Oluwaseun Oladeji Olaniyi, and Udochukwu Igwenagu. "Formulating Global Policies and Strategies for Combating Criminal Use and Abuse of Artificial Intelligence." *Available at SSRN* 4873822, 2024.
- Savira, Jennyola, Benny Djaja, and Maman Sudirman. "Polemic of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technology on the Development of Human Resources, Especially in Legal Practitioners." *Edunity: Social and Educational Studies* 2, no. 10 (2023): 1089–95.
- Sidiq, Fahmi, Chun Wang, and Grida Saktian Laksito. "Community Empowerment Through Legal Counseling: Increasing Legal Awareness and Justice for Women and Children in Cijeruk Hamlet, Tasikmalaya City." *International Journal of Research in Community Services* 5, no. 1 (2024):

51–54.

Sivova, Svetlana A. “Categorization Of Legal Realities In Modern Russian Science.” *European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 2022.

Soukupová, Jana. “AI-Based Legal Technology: A Critical Assessment of the Current Use of Artificial Intelligence in Legal Practice.” *Masaryk University Journal of Law and Technology* 15, no. 2 (2021): 279–300.

Susskind, Richard. *Online Courts and the Future of Justice*. Oxford University Press, 2019.

#### **ABOUT AUTHOR(S)**

Lubabalo Mjadu, LLB, LLM (Cum Laude) Department of School of Law, Faculty of Law, Humanities and Social Sciences, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa.