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THE FUTURE OF JUSTICE – ONLINE DISPUTE RESOLUTION IN INDIA

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I. ABSTRACT

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is a growing field with the potential to reshape how conflicts are settled. In India, ADR is becoming increasingly popular, which is helping courts lighten their heavy caseloads. The use of technology in dispute resolution is also changing the landscape by making the process faster and more accessible. With tech, parties in conflict can settle their disputes without needing to meet in person. These technological advancements are transforming how ADR works today. Some key developments in this area include Online Dispute Resolution (ODR), Virtual Reality (VR), Blockchain, and Artificial Intelligence tools. Among these, ODR has emerged as the most widely used innovation in tech driven ADR. This paper explores how ODR is currently used in India and takes a closer look at its legal framework, its practical use, and the challenges faced in putting it into practice.

II. KEYWORDS

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), Online Dispute Resolution (ODR), Virtual Reality, Blockchain Technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI).

III. INTRODUCTION

Mr. Fali S. Nariman once quoted “The future of Arbitration is bright, but only because the future of litigation is not”. This pragmatic observation sets the foundational context for commercial dispute resolution. This paper argues that the rapid adoption of technology, particularly Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platforms and AI assisted case management, is the indispensable mechanism that ensures arbitration maintains its core advantage. The process of arbitration is not alien to India. It always had been practiced

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since time immemorial. In India, people believed in resolving disputes within the four walls because this was somewhere considered as an element to protect their dignity and personality in the society. Hence, the mechanism gained significance in India since Ancient times². ADR has various methods to resolve disputes without opting litigation such as Arbitration, Conciliation, Mediation, Negotiation and Lok Adalat.

Integration of technology has significantly transformed the arena of Alternative Dispute Solution. After the pandemic the world has shifted towards digitalization. The digitalization of dispute resolution has made the process easy and efficient. The convergence of legal expertise with technological innovation has created a more dynamic and responsive dispute resolution mechanism. The establishment of virtual hearing platforms has revolutionized how proceeding is conducted.³

The main objective of incorporating technology in the ADR mechanism is to make the process more efficient and convenient to settle disputes between parties. Tools like AI powered analytics, virtual hearings, and digitized case management help ADR systems adapt to the demands of a digitally connected world⁴. From AI powered analytics to blockchain-based contracts, the incorporation of technology in dispute resolution mechanism is reshaping the field into a more efficient and accessible domain.

A. RESEARCH STATEMENT

The rapid evolution of technology has transformed almost every sector of modern society, and the legal field is no exception. In India, where the justice delivery system often faces challenges of pendency, accessibility, and affordability, the integration of technology into dispute resolution mechanisms represents not only a practical innovation but also a moral imperative toward ensuring equitable justice for all. This research seeks

²YLCC and Chaitrali Mane, "History of ADR in India: an overview" published on 24 march 2022 available at <https://yourlegalcareercoach.com/history-of-adr-in-india-an-overview/>

³" Digital Transformation in Alternative Dispute Resolution" <https://reddyandreddy.law/digital-transformation-in-alternative-dispute-resolution>

⁴" AI & Digitization in Arbitration" <https://www.icsi.edu/media/webmodules/CSI/December-2024/17.pdf>

to examine the incorporation of technology within the framework of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), with a specific focus on the emergence and effectiveness of Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) in the Indian context. The primary objective of this study is to understand how digital platforms and technological tools can address the long-standing inefficiencies of the traditional justice system while maintaining the core values of fairness, neutrality, confidentiality, and procedural integrity that ADR stands for.

The study will also focus on the legal and regulatory landscape that governs ODR in India, investigating how policies, institutional support, and judicial recognition are shaping its evolution. Through an examination of existing models, both domestic and international, the research will assess the effectiveness of various ODR mechanisms in resolving civil, commercial, and consumer disputes. It will also delve into issues related to data privacy, cyber security, and digital literacy, which have emerged as critical concerns in the age of virtual dispute resolution. By drawing insights from legal theory, policy frameworks, and real-world case studies, this paper aims to present a comprehensive evaluation of India's readiness to embrace a technology driven justice ecosystem.

Ultimately, this research aspires to contribute to the academic and policy discourse surrounding the future of justice in India. It will argue that Online Dispute Resolution is not merely a technological advancement but a paradigm shifts one that challenges conventional notions of legal participation, dispute resolution, and access to justice. The findings of this study are expected to provide a nuanced understanding of how India can balance innovation with inclusivity, ensuring that technology serves as a tool of empowerment rather than exclusion. By doing so, the paper envisions an equitable digital justice system that upholds the foundational principles of transparency, accountability, and fairness, shaping a more accessible and efficient future for dispute resolution in the world's largest democracy.

B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How is the integration of technology transforming the traditional framework of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in India?
2. What role does Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) play in improving access to justice, especially for individuals and communities with limited resources?
3. In what ways can technology-driven dispute resolution mechanisms help reduce the burden on India's overworked judicial system?
4. What are the major challenges legal, ethical, and technical faced by India in implementing ODR platforms effectively?
5. What lessons can India learn from international ODR models, and how can those best practices be adapted to the Indian legal and cultural context?
6. What kind of policy support and institutional framework are needed to promote the sustainable growth of ODR in India?
7. Does technology truly make justice more inclusive and efficient, or does it risk deepening existing social and digital divides?

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology adopted for this study is primarily doctrinal in nature. It relies on theoretical and analytical methods to examine the subject in depth. Additionally, the study evaluates the provisions related to Online Dispute Resolution alongside similar statutory frameworks to highlight best practices and identify gaps. The research draws upon a wide range of primary and secondary sources, including legislation, judicial decisions, and various committee reports. To build a strong theoretical foundation, textbooks, scholarly articles, journals, and official reports have been extensively reviewed and analyzed. Overall, this research is explanatory in character, aiming to interpret and clarify the different laws relevant to the topic within their broader legal and practical context.

IV. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ADR

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has had a big impact on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) by streamlining and automating several parts of the dispute resolution process. Artificial Intelligence is gradually transforming the way disputes are resolved in India. Platforms like *Presolv360*, *SAMA*, and *ODRways* use AI to simplify case management, analyze documents, and support online mediation and arbitration⁵. AI tools also help predict possible case outcomes, assist with quick legal research, and even power smart contracts that automatically enforce agreements. Some platforms are experimenting with **AI chatbots** to help mediators summarize discussions and guide negotiations. Overall, AI is helping make the dispute resolution process faster, more efficient, and accessible, without replacing human judgment or fairness

V. BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY IN ADR

Blockchain technology holds a lot of promises for making ADR processes more trustworthy and secure. It allows for the creation of secure, tamper-proof records of things like arbitration agreements, procedural steps, and final awards, so parties can't easily change or dispute their authenticity. Smart contracts built on Blockchain can also help automate parts of the ADR process, they can reduce delays, ensure parties stick to their agreements, and automatically trigger actions when certain conditions are met. This can be especially useful in cross border disputes, where transparency and trust are crucial. Blockchain-based Dispute Resolution (BDR) offers a promising alternative by enabling faster, transparent, and unbiased settlement of disputes. Several Indian platforms such as *Presolv360* and *ODRways* are already using blockchain to support digital mediation and arbitration. Technology ensures that all records, evidence, and actions are tamper-proof and traceable, which helps eliminate doubts over authenticity.

⁵ Yatharth Garg, "AI and Alternative Dispute Resolution(ADR)- Automating Arbitration and Mediation" available at <https://indiaai.gov.in/article/ai-and-alternative-dispute-resolution-adr-automating-arbitration-and-mediation>

VI. ONLINE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PLATFORMS

Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platforms have changed the way disputes are resolved by making the process more accessible to everyone. These platforms make it possible to carry out different types of ADR like mediation, negotiation, and arbitration entirely online. They come with tools such as video conferencing, document sharing, and instant messaging, which let people settle disputes without needing to meet in person. ODR platforms are especially helpful for handling smaller cases or international disputes, offering a faster and more affordable option compared to traditional methods.

VII. OTHER EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Other emerging technologies like Data Analytics, Machine Learning, and Virtual Reality are also beginning to shape the way Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) works. By analyzing data from past disputes, we can uncover patterns and insights that help design better strategies for resolving future conflicts. Virtual Reality could even be used to create immersive mediation sessions, where people can interact in realistic virtual spaces that encourage better understanding and collaboration.

VIII. EVOLUTION OF ONLINE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

A. Definitions

The pioneers of ODR, *Ethan Katsh* and *Colin Rule* explain the term ODR “as the application of information and communications technology to the prevention, management, and resolution of disputes”.⁶

According to *Hornle J.* “ODR is dispute resolution outside the courts, based on information and communications technology and in particular, based on the power of

⁶ Katsh, E., & Rule, C. (2016). ‘What we know and need to know about online dispute resolution’. *South Carolina Law Review*, 67(2), 329-344.

computers to efficiently process enormous amounts of data, store and organize such data and communicate it across the internet on a global basis and with speed”.⁷

UNCITRAL defines 'ODR' as “a solution which can assist the parties in resolving the dispute in a simple, fast, flexible and secure manner, without the need for physical presence at a meeting or hearing, which includes but is not limited to ombudsmen, complaints boards, negotiation, conciliation, mediation, arbitration and others”⁸. All these definitions reflect a perfect blend of procedural as well as innovative aspect. As the technology is continuously evolving, the incorporation of AI and other technical tools in ADR is making room for redefining Online Dispute Resolution.

B. ORIGIN OF ODR

Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) first emerged back in the 1990s with the rise of the internet. The way ODR has developed around the world can generally be seen in three stages, each shaped by ongoing improvements in information and communication technology (ICT). These three phases are as follows:

1. The First Phase

The first ODR projects were started in 1996 by the University of Massachusetts and the University of Maryland. A few years later, in 1999, eBay launched a pilot program to provide online mediation for disputes between buyers and sellers on its platform. By 2010, eBay's ODR system was handling and resolving over 60 million disputes every year. ⁹The early development of Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) in India coincided with the country's expanding internet network. During this period, basic digital tools like emails and online forms were used to facilitate remote negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. The Information Technology Act, 2000 played a key role by giving legal validity to electronic records and digital signatures. A major step forward came in 2006

⁷ Hornle, J. (2013). 'Encouraging Online Alternative Dispute Resolution in the EU and Beyond'. *European Law Review*, 38, 187-208.

⁸ UNCITRAL ODR, Part II, Sections 1, 2.

⁹ Shweta Singh, "The Rise of Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) in India" published on February 14, 2024, available at <https://juriscentre.com/2024/02/14/the-rise-of-online-dispute-resolution-odr-in-india>

with the launch of the IN-Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (INDRP), marking one of India's first structured uses of ODR.

2. The Second Phase

The growth of Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) and the emergence of different ODR platforms were mainly fueled by the early success of this model and the rapid spread of the internet. In 1999 alone, 21 new ODR projects were launched. Well-run platforms like the *Mediation Room*, *Smartsettle*, and *Cybersettle* played an important part in shaping how disputes are resolved today

3. The Third Phase

The success of several private ODR platforms has caught the attention of both the government and the courts, leading to a rise in government efforts to support this technology driven way of resolving disputes. This phase represents the expansion of Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) in India from small-scale experiments to a mainstream, policy-backed system. Private ODR platforms such as *SAMA*, *Presolv360*, *CADRE*, and *CORD* introduced AI-driven solutions for handling various disputes. Legislative and judicial support strengthened this growth, with the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2015 and Supreme Court rulings recognizing electronic agreements and communication.¹⁰

The government also took significant steps the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 made ODR mandatory for e-commerce disputes, while NITI Aayog, SEBI and MSMEs (through SAMADHAAN Portal) pushed its adoption across sectors. The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated this shift, leading to successful virtual hearings and Online Lok Adalats, which resolved millions of cases. Platforms now use AI and multilingual tools to reach smaller cities and new areas like cryptocurrency disputes. Overall, ODR has

¹⁰ "Evolution of Online Dispute Resolution in India: Phase 2 (2013 – October 14, 2025)" available at <https://www.odrindia.in/2025/10/14/evolution-of-online-dispute-resolution-in-india-phase-2-2013-october-14-2025/>

become a vital part of India's justice system, promoting faster dispute resolution, easing court workloads, and improving the nation's business environment.

C. NATURE OF ODR

ODR has brought the distinct principles of ADR into digital realm. Some of these distinct features are –

1. **Technology-Driven** - Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) relies on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to settle disputes. This means the entire process happens in a virtual space. From filing documents to carrying out the resolution process, everything is done online. In ODR, a case starts, moves forward, and gets resolved completely in a digital environment.
2. **Application of ADR** - The early days of Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) were closely tied to using technology to support mediation and arbitration. These systems were first created by private organizations to help people and businesses like eBay users settle their disputes without needing to go through the formal court process. Even now, many private ADR professionals and service providers include ODR as part of what they offer. Over the years, ODR has grown into its own method of resolving conflicts, with artificial intelligence now playing a bigger role in handling different types of disputes. Although people often use the term ODR to mean online ADR, they're not exactly the same thing. ADR has always been about providing an alternative to traditional court cases, while ODR emerged to tackle some of the challenges in offline dispute resolution. At first, ODR focused mainly on sorting out issues in online spaces, but it has since developed into a standalone approach that combines new AI tools with proven conflict resolution method.
3. **Flexibility** - ODR gives people the freedom to take part in resolving disputes at times that work best for them, which is especially helpful for those juggling busy lives or living in different time zones. It supports communication that doesn't have to happen in real time, so participants can respond and interact at their own pace without needing to meet face to face. This kind of flexibility is a big advantage in international disputes, where finding a common time to connect can often be difficult.

4. **Replacement of the 3rd (neutral) party** - Usually in the ADR procedure, the parties mutually elects the 3rd neutral party who presides, hears and presents award and the same happens in ODR too. However, the nature of dispute resolution is shifting due to the use of modern communication tools and the growing role of artificial intelligence. This change has introduced new ways for people to submit requests or present evidence, often without direct interaction, and even allows the entire process including the final decision to take place online. As AI continues to advance, we may soon see situations where machines, rather than human third parties, help settle disputes alongside the involved parties.
5. **Adaptability** - ODR offers the flexibility to tailor the process to fit the unique needs of the people involved and the type of conflict they're facing, making it a more adaptable option than traditional legal routes. Depending on what works best for their situation, parties can choose between methods like negotiation, mediation, arbitration or even mix them. This level of control allows individuals to shape the process in a way that improves both the speed and success of resolving their dispute.
6. **Geographic Accessibility** - ODR makes it possible for people to resolve disputes from virtually anywhere, as long as they have internet access removing the need to travel and breaking down location-related barriers. This is a big advantage for those living in remote areas or anyone who may have difficulty getting around. The process is even more accessible thanks to tools like email and video calls, which make communication simple and convenient.
7. **Cross Culture Differences** - ODR can be both helpful and challenging in this context. On one hand, it tends to mask cultural differences, which can be a drawback when those very differences are at the heart of a dispute. On the other hand, it works quite well for cross border conflicts or situations where people come from different cultural backgrounds. In some cases, not being physically present can actually create a more comfortable and neutral space for resolving issues.

Although exact numbers on how many people in India are opting for Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) aren't easy to find, it's clear that this method is becoming increasingly popular, especially in certain industries. Since 2020, over 3.6 million cases including consumer disputes and others have been settled through ODR. One of the main reasons for this shift is that ODR can save both time and money when compared to going through the traditional court system.

Online dispute resolution (ODR) covers both e- courts as well as courts that use ODR platforms for resolution of disputes. Some other assisted tools used for this process also ease the court process. Such technologies are –

1. **E- Mediation** - The Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platforms supports and streamlines the mediation process. These systems are usually tailored to fit the specific needs of either the mediation service provider or the organization offering the mediation.
2. **E – Negotiation** - Negotiation often comes before any formal dispute resolution and usually happens directly between the parties involved. This approach is especially common in B2C (business-to-consumer) setups. Many companies now use ODR platforms to handle customer complaints, allowing consumers to submit their issues easily online. While there's no strict legal requirement to create these systems, they can be a powerful tool to address concerns early and stop them from turning into bigger disputes.
3. **E – Courts** - E-Courts supported by technology mean that court proceedings can take place online. In this context, ODR mainly helps streamline these processes. It's largely about making legal steps digital and sharing information electronically.
4. **Blind bidding** - In blind bidding, each side privately submits the amount they're willing to pay or accept. An algorithm then compares these figures and determines a final amount, which is shared with both parties. If both sides agree, a settlement agreement can be put together.

IX. THE PRESENT STATUS OF ONLINE DISPUTE RESOLUTION IN INDIA

Although India's current legal system doesn't specifically mention ODR, it doesn't ban it either. So, by the principle that anything not explicitly forbidden is allowed, ODR comfortably fits within the existing legal framework. In fact, Indian laws actually encourage the growth of ideas like ODR. Section 89 of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 (CPC) promotes the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) between parties. Similarly, Order X, Rule 1A of the CPC gives courts the power to direct parties involved in a lawsuit to pick an ADR method to settle their conflict. This broad scope naturally extends to include ODR as well. Likewise, the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2015 takes an open-minded approach by allowing arbitral tribunals to use mediation, conciliation, or similar methods during arbitration to help parties reach a settlement. The arbitration law also gives parties significant freedom to decide where and how they want to resolve their disputes.

When it comes to the legal validity of proceedings held on digital platforms and whether electronic evidence is acceptable, the Information Technology Act, 2002, along with the Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023, makes it clear that electronic evidence is recognized and can be presented in Indian courts. The Supreme Court in the case of *Grid Corporation of Orissa Ltd v. AES Corporation* (2002) 7 SCC 736, Para 23 made an observation that "*when an effective consultation can be achieved by resorting to electronic media and remote conferencing, it is not necessary that the two persons who are required to act in consultation with each other must necessarily be together at one place unless it's a requirement of law or a contract between the parties*"¹¹

In the case of *State of Maharashtra v. Dr. Praful B. Desai* (2003) 4 SCC 601¹², the Supreme Court of India recognized video conferencing as a valid method for recording witness testimony. In this case, the witness was based in the United States and could not travel to

¹¹*Grid Corporation of Orissa Ltd v. AES Corporation*, (2002) 7 SCC 736 Para 23

¹² *State of Maharashtra v. Dr Praful B. Desai*, (2003) 4 SCC 601

India, though his testimony was crucial to the proceedings. To ensure justice was not delayed, the Court directed that his evidence be recorded through video conferencing, establishing an important precedent for the use of technology in Indian courts.

In *Trimex International FZE Ltd. v. Vedanta Aluminum Ltd* 2010 (1) SCALE 574,¹³ the Supreme Court of India held that a valid contract can exist even without a formally signed agreement, as long as mutual consent is evident from exchanges such as emails, letters, or other communications. The Court recognized that unconditional acceptance conveyed through electronic means fulfills the requirements of Sections 4 and 7 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, and Sections 2(1)(b) and 7 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996, thereby affirming the legal validity of electronic agreements.

Both *Justice Ramana* as well as *Chief Justice Bobde* has openly recognized the growing need for Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) and its potential to handle cases involving consumers, families, businesses, and commercial matters. *Justice Bobde* has particularly stressed on the importance of virtual court hearings and highlighted that mediation agreements should carry legal weight. He has also supported the use of international arbitration and artificial intelligence (AI) as effective alternatives. ‘SUVAS’ an excellent example of AI-based translation tool that helps makes court proceedings more accessible.

The conversation around ODR in India formally began with the Nilekani panel’s 2019 report, which suggested setting up ODR systems to handle complaints related to digital payments. These systems would combine automated and human processes, along with an option to appeal. The urgency brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated interest in ODR. For instance, NITI Aayog, together with Agami and Omidyar Network India, organized meetings to highlight how ODR can help resolve small and medium-sized disputes efficiently. As more people see how ODR can improve access to

¹³ *Trimex International Fze ltd v. Vedanta Aluminum ltd* 2010 (1) SCALE 574

justice and support economic recovery, it's clear that it's on track to become a major method of settling disputes in India.¹⁴

The saying "*justice delayed is justice denied*" highlights a fundamental legal principle: when justice is not delivered on time, it is almost the same as being denied altogether. Unfortunately, this concern has long been visible in the Indian judicial system, which continues to struggle under the weight of an enormous backlog of cases. As a result, both higher and lower courts face significant delays in dispensing justice.

Adding to this challenge is the high cost of litigation, which makes the legal process even more burdensome for ordinary people. Together, these issues have weakened public trust in the judiciary, discouraging many from approaching courts to resolve their disputes. This growing lack of confidence has, in turn, encouraged the rise of alternative mechanisms like Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and Online Dispute Resolution (ODR). These approaches have proven effective in not only reducing case backlogs but also cutting costs, with success stories seen in both developed and developing nations.

Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) in India is still in its early stages but continues to grow steadily. The journey began after the year 2000, when the Information Technology Act gave formal recognition to e-commerce and e-governance. Even traditional laws were updated to align with global standards for instance, the Arbitration and Conciliation Act of 1996 was revised to meet UNCITRAL requirements, and amendments to the Code of Civil Procedure in 1908 introduced Section 89 to promote ADR methods.

X. ODR INITIATIVES IN INDIA

In India, disputes can be settled either through the traditional adversarial justice system or alternative dispute resolution methods, depending on what the parties choose. This section reviews how ICT is currently used in both systems mainly focusing on the adversarial model before suggesting a new, more efficient ODR framework. To design a

¹⁴Justice N.V. Ramana, 'Delay reduction at different tiers of the court system, pre-trial settlement (use of conciliation procedures for dispute resolution) – The experience of the Supreme Courts of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) countries' accessed 20 Jan 2024

cost-effective, time-saving, and inclusive justice model, it's essential to understand the government's existing efforts to tackle delays and enhance digital access in the legal system. Examining these recent digital initiatives helps identify how technology can further improve access to justice for everyone.

1. The *Courts of Tomorrow* framework, introduced in 2009 by the National Informatics Centre and the CBI, laid the foundation for an Integrated Criminal Justice System in India. Drawing from this concept, many High Courts and the Department of Law and Justice launched the Model Courts Scheme. The Delhi High Court and the Department of Posts are also collaborating to ensure that summons is delivered within seven days. Additionally, the National Informatics Centre proposed a comprehensive *integrated e-Criminal Justice System* to speed up pending cases by digitally connecting courts, police, prosecution, and prisons through initiatives like e-Courts, CCTNS, and e-Prisons. Plans are underway to include forensic labs, hospitals, and postal services in this digital integration as well.
2. *YesSettle*, ¹⁵launched on September 19, 2015, is India's first online dispute resolution (ODR) platform, currently in its beta stage. It focuses on resolving conflicts through online negotiation and mediation. The platform, managed by an LLP consisting of legal experts, retired judges, accountants, and senior professionals, helps users settle disputes globally in a quick and amicable way. By promoting mutual understanding, *YesSettle* aims to reduce the time spent by customer service and legal teams on court cases. As per its website, around 300 cases have been resolved since its launch. Although still operating as a private service, its detailed ODR features remain unspecified. Nonetheless, such platforms mark a timely step toward digital dispute resolution in India.
3. ***Presolv360*** ¹⁶is a legal-tech platform designed to handle commercial disputes entirely online. It provides an easy, affordable, and time-saving alternative to

¹⁵*YesSettle : The People's Platform to settle dispute out of court.* <https://yessettle.com/>

¹⁶ <https://www.presolv360.com/>

lengthy court proceedings. Through an annual subscription averaging around ₹800 users can settle conflicts via negotiation, mediation, or arbitration at no extra cost. The platform promises dispute resolution within 45 days, allowing individuals and businesses to resolve issues conveniently from their computer or phone. By combining accessibility, efficiency, and low cost, *Presolv360* has positioned itself as a pioneering step in digital dispute resolution in India.

4. Although groups like *Perry4Law*¹⁷, which founded the Techno Legal Centre of Excellence for Online Dispute Resolution (TLCEODRI), collaborate with legal-tech firms to promote easy ODR solutions, India still lacks a fully developed and unified ODR network.

XI. OBSTACLES TO ODR IN INDIA

A. Lack of Trust

People still trust traditional courts more than online systems. Many hesitate to rely on computers and the internet for justice. Sometimes, one party wants ODR, but the other refuses, creating roadblocks.

B. Poor Technology Support

India lags behind in internet access, advanced software, and reliable connectivity. Misconceptions about technology also reduce people's confidence, and proper ODR platforms are still missing.

C. Shortage of Experts

Many lawyers are used to traditional practices. There aren't enough trained professionals or public awareness about how to use ODR tools effectively.

¹⁷<https://perry4law.org/odr-india-portal/>

D. Legitimacy Issues

ODR is not yet seen as a fully reliable system. The absence of clear rules, community standards, and proper guidelines for mediators and arbitrators limits its acceptance.

E. Low Digital Literacy

With a significant portion of the population still struggling with literacy, understanding virtual systems is difficult. Many prefer face-to-face interaction over online platforms.

Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) in India is still struggling to gain public acceptance, mainly due to low awareness and limited trust. To overcome this, efforts must focus on spreading awareness through NGOs, government bodies, and academic institutions, while also offering training programs for lawyers, judges, and professionals. Building proper infrastructure, improving internet access, and adopting advanced technology are equally important for its success. The government should officially recognize ODR service providers and maintain a uniform system to ensure credibility. With the right support and resources, ODR can become a trusted and effective method of resolving disputes in India.

XII. SUGGESTIONS TO PROMOTE ODR IN INDIA

To make Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) more effective and accessible in India, several key steps are needed:

1. Public Awareness about ODR must be increased through campaigns by government bodies, NGOs, and academic institutions so that people understand its benefits and reliability. Regular training programs and workshops should be organized for judges, lawyers, and mediators to develop professional expertise in online proceedings.
2. Strong Technological and Infrastructural Support is essential. This includes better internet access, secures digital platforms, and updated communication tools. The government should formally recognize and regulate ODR service providers to ensure uniformity and credibility across platforms. Establishing a centralized

ODR portal for e-commerce, consumer, and family disputes would also improve accessibility and transparency.

3. India needs to invest in ODR software and mobile applications, incorporating artificial intelligence and multilingual support to expand reach. ODR should be integrated into e-governance initiatives so that citizens can resolve grievances quickly and efficiently through digital channels.
4. Data Protection and Privacy must be a top priority. All platforms should follow strict security standards, using encryption and digital signatures to safeguard user information. A healthy balance between private ODR institutions and the judicial system is also crucial to maintain accountability.
5. Uniform Standards and Regulations must be developed at the national level to ensure fairness, transparency, and impartiality in ODR practices. Adopting globally recognized rules, such as those from UNCITRAL or WIPO, can help align India with international best practices. Legal reforms especially amendments to the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996, are also needed to explicitly include ODR and regulate the role of service providers within the legal framework.

XIII. CONCLUSION

Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) is steadily becoming the backbone of the future of *Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)* in India, marking a significant shift in how justice is delivered and accessed. By combining technology with traditional dispute resolution methods like mediation, arbitration, and conciliation, *ODR* provides an effective way to tackle India's persistent issues of delayed justice, expensive litigation, and limited accessibility. With *ODR* platforms, individuals, companies, and government bodies can settle disputes conveniently without being restricted by location or time, thereby making the justice system more inclusive and efficient.

Over the past few years, several developments have fueled the growth of *ODR* in India. The government's push for digital transformation, the expansion of e-courts, and

innovative private sector initiatives such as AI-assisted negotiation tools and online mediation systems has collectively strengthened the *ODR ecosystem*. The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated this shift by normalizing virtual hearings and digital communication in legal proceedings. Alongside, the increasing acceptance of e-signatures, online documentation, and secure digital transactions has reinforced the reliability and practicality of *ODR* platforms.

Still, the path ahead for *ODR* in India is not without challenges. The absence of a standardized legal framework, the digital divide especially in rural regions and growing concerns around data protection and cyber security pose serious hurdles. Moreover, there remains a cultural preference for traditional, face-to-face dispute resolution among many lawyers and litigants. Issues surrounding the enforceability of online settlements and the need for explicit judicial recognition of *ODR* decisions also demand attention through clear laws and policies.

Looking forward, the success of *ODR* in India will depend on strong collaboration between the government, judiciary, legal professionals, and technology innovators. Building robust digital infrastructure, improving awareness about *ODR*, and training legal practitioners in digital tools will be crucial. If these efforts are implemented effectively, *ODR* can revolutionize the Indian dispute resolution process by offering faster, more affordable and transparent justice. Ultimately, it can help build greater public confidence in the legal system and bring India in line with global standards in alternative dispute resolution

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