International Journal of Social Science and Human Research

ISSN (print): 2644-0679, ISSN (online): 2644-0695

Volume 09 Issue 11 November 2026

DOI: 10.47191/ijsshr/v9-i11-48, Impact factor- 8.361

Page No: 9753-9758

The Transformation of Restorative Justice From A Partial Regulatory Framework to a Model of Coordination Amongst Law Enforcement Agencies

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to examine how restorative justice has evolved from a piecemeal approach to a model of coordination amongst law enforcement agencies; prior to the enactment of Law No. 20 of 2025 on the Code of Criminal Procedure (KUHAP 2025), each law enforcement agency or official implemented restorative justice by referring to their respective internal regulations, which often led to differences in perception regarding its implementation. This type of legal research is a comparative and prescriptive normative legal study. The research approach employed in this study utilises the statutory approach, the conceptual approach and the comparative approach. The legal materials used consist of primary and secondary legal sources. The method of collecting legal materials employed is a literature review. The techniques used to analyse the legal materials in this legal study are qualitative and comparative, employing a deductive line of reasoning. Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the transformation of restorative justice from a partially regulated framework to a model of coordination amongst law enforcement agencies following the amendment of the Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) constitutes a refinement and harmonisation of perceptions regarding the mechanisms of restorative justice amongst law enforcement agencies, so that law enforcement agencies, when applying restorative justice, no longer rely solely on internal regulations but must adapt and implement restorative justice as stipulated in the 2025 Criminal Procedure Code.

KEYWORDS: Restorative Justice; The Code of Criminal Procedure; Law Enforcement Agencies

I. INTRODUCTION

According to A.A.G. Peters, the law is not to be used to achieve objectives set arbitrarily, even if such policies are enshrined in written or unwritten regulations. The law should be used as a guide towards the realisation of justice and legitimacy, oriented towards legal principles and values, in accordance with the 'living law' that exists within society, so that there are efforts to reactualise and revitalise the customary justice system that is still alive in society.[1]

Law enforcement agencies, comprising the police, the public prosecutor's office and the courts, are the main pillars of law enforcement in Indonesia; synergy amongst these agencies will foster a safe, tranquil, orderly and peaceful society, whilst safeguarding the country's stability in various respects. However, if the LEAs lack a fundamental framework for carrying out any of their duties, functions and powers, this will inevitably lead to varying standards and criteria due to such piecemeal regulation. Therefore, the LEAs must base the performance of their duties and functions on a single overarching framework, which will subsequently serve as a reference for the internal regulations drawn up by each law enforcement agency.

Prior to the enactment of the 2025 Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP), where restorative justice was regulated in a piecemeal manner by each law enforcement agency, these separate regulations led to the fragmentation of restorative justice implementation, as each agency had its own standards and criteria. This often resulted in disparities in the handling of criminal cases and had the potential to undermine justice and legal certainty for the public.

On 17 December 2025, Law No. 20 of 2025 on the Code of of the Republic of Indonesia in the State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Year 2025 Number 188, which explicitly regulates, in Chapter IV, Articles 79 to 88, the Mechanisms of Restorative Justice, both at the investigation and inquiry stages within the Police, the prosecution stage at the Public Prosecutor's Office, and the trial stage in court.

A significant transformation has taken place with the enactment of the 2025 Code of Criminal Procedure, which explicitly regulates and institutionalises restorative justice as an integral part of the criminal justice system. The introduction of this legislation

[1] Peters, A. A., *Hukum Sebagai Proyek. In A. A. G. K. S. Peters (Ed.), Hukum Dan Perkembangan Sosial, Buku Teks Sosiologi Hukum Buku III*, Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1990, p.323.

marks a shift from piecemeal regulation towards a model of coordination amongst law enforcement agencies, ensuring that the application of restorative justice no longer operates in isolation but within a uniform and integrated legal framework.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

Legal research is a scientific activity aimed at discovering coherent truth. In other words, legal research seeks to assess whether the applicable legal rules are consistent with legal norms, whether norms containing commands or prohibitions are in harmony with legal principles, and whether a person's actions comply with legal norms and legal principles, rather than merely conforming to the text of the legal rules.[2]

In compiling this research, the author has employed normative legal research. According to Peter Mahmud Marzuki, the term 'normative legal research' is, in fact, unnecessary. This is because the term 'legal research'or 'rechtsonderzoek' in Dutch—is, by its very nature, always normative. In other words, legal research is, by its very nature, oriented towards legal norms, so the addition of the term 'normative' is superfluous.[3] Furthermore, Johny Ibrahim explains that normative legal research is conducted by examining literature or studying documents. This research focuses on primary legal sources, such as legislation and court rulings, as well as secondary legal sources in the form of legal doctrines, theories and the opinions of legal experts. Consequently, normative legal research does not utilise field data, but rather relies on the analysis of legal texts and relevant literature to find answers to the legal issues under investigation.

The types of legal sources used by the author are primary legal sources, namely Law No. 20 of 2025 on the Code of Criminal Procedure, Regulation of the Indonesian National Police No. 8 of 2021 on the Handling of Criminal Offences Based on Restorative Justice (Police Regulation No. 8 of 2021), the Attorney-General's Regulation No. 15 of 2020 on the Discontinuation of Prosecution Based on Restorative Justice (Attorney-General's Regulation No. 15 of 2020) and the Supreme Court Regulation No. 1 of 2024 on Guidelines for Adjudicating Criminal Cases Based on Restorative Justice (Supreme Court Regulation No. 1 of 2024). Secondary legal materials consist of all publications on law that are not official documents. Publications on law include textbooks, legal dictionaries, legal journals and commentaries on court decisions.[4] The method of collecting legal materials used in this study was a literature review or documentary study. In this context, the researcher employed the statutory approach, the conceptual approach and the comparative approach.

III.RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The principle of deliberation leading to consensus is applied when formulating an agreement on the form of sanctions to be imposed on the perpetrator. By upholding the cultural traditions of the Indonesian people, which prioritise deliberation leading to consensus, the dispute resolution mechanism encourages the parties to compromise in order to reach an agreement.[5] The theory of legal culture explains that the law is not merely a set of written provisions, as set out in various forms of legislation, but should be viewed as a phenomenon that can be observed in society through the behavioural patterns of its citizens.[6] This means that the law is greatly influenced by non-legal factors such as values, attitudes and societal views, commonly referred to as legal culture. It is the existence of this legal culture that leads to differences in the enforcement of the law between one society and another.[7]

Howard Zehr, regarded as the 'Father of Restorative Justice', states that restorative justice is a framework that views criminal offences as breaches against people and social relationships; consequently, their resolution must focus on redressing harm, reconciliation and reintegration.[8]

Miriam Liebman defines restorative justice as: "Restorative justice has become the term generally used for an approach to criminal justice that seeks to repair the harm caused by crime by involving victims, offenders, and the community in the resolution process."[9] Meanwhile, the United Nations (UN) defines restorative justice as "a way of responding to criminal behavior by balancing the needs of the community, the victims, and the offenders." That means, restorative justice is a way of responding to criminal offences by striking a balance between the needs of the victim, the offender and society.[10] Furthermore, according to Soerjono

[2] Soerjono Soekanto, *Pengantar Penelitian Hukum*, Jakarta: UI Press, 1986, p.42.
[3] Peter Mahmud Marzuki, *Penelitian Hukum*, Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2005, p.35.
[4] Peter Mahmud Marzuki, *op. cit*., p.181.
[5] Fathurokhman, *The Necessity of Restorative Justice on Juvenile Delinquency in Indonesia, Lessons Learned from The Raju and AAL Cases*, Procedia Environmental Sciences, Vol. 17, 2013, pp.967-975
[6] Ishaq, Dasar-dasar Ilmu Hukum, Jakarta: Sinar Grafika, 2008, p.110.
[7] Loc.cit;
[8] Howard Zehr, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*, Intercourse: Good Books, 2002, p.5.
[9] Miriam Liebman, "Restorative Justice: An Alternative Approach to Criminal Justice," *Journal of Law and Policy*, Vol. 22, No. 2, 2014, p.285.
[10] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Handbook on Restorative Justice Programmes*, Vienna: UNODC, 2020, p.7.

Soekanto, restorative justice is an approach within criminal law that emphasises the restoration of relationships between the offender, the victim and the community, rather than merely punishment.[11]

The true aim of restorative justice is to restore harmony between the victim and the offender. For the victim, this means addressing both physical and psychological harm. For the offender, it means taking responsibility, facing up to their shame, and regaining their dignity. This concept is growing rapidly, with a major new conceptual development: the integration of the community's role.[12]

Prior to the amendment of the Criminal Procedure Code, restorative justice was regulated in part by each law enforcement agency; restorative justice within the Police was governed by Regulation of the Indonesian National Police No. 8 of 2021, within the Public Prosecutor's Office by Regulation of the Public Prosecutor's Office No. 15 of 2020, and within the courts by Supreme Court Regulation No. 1 of 2024. Regulating the application of restorative justice based on the internal regulations of each law enforcement agency will result in inconsistent standards and criteria, as well as the potential for sectoral self-interest due to a lack of effective coordination amongst law enforcement agencies.

Restorative justice may be applied by the police where the loss is less than Rp5,000,000 (five million rupiah) and provided that two requirements are met, namely formal and material requirements. The material requirements, as set out in Article 4, are as follows:

a. Does not cause anxiety amongst the public.
b. Does not contribute to interpersonal conflict.
c. Does not cause national division.
d. Is not separatism or radicalism.
e. Is not a repeat offender as determined by a court judgement.
f. It is not a crime against life, a crime against national security, a crime of corruption, or a crime of terrorism.

The formal requirements are as follows:

a. Both parties have reached a settlement.
b. The victim's rights have been upheld and the suspect has accepted responsibility.

In the process of resolving criminal cases through a restorative justice approach, one of the key requirements is the existence of a peace agreement signed by the parties. This document serves as formal evidence that reconciliation has genuinely been achieved. Furthermore, the victim's rights must be upheld, whilst the suspect's obligations are fulfilled through the provision of compensation, whether in the form of the return of property, reimbursement of costs incurred, or the restoration of the victim's psychological well-being following the criminal offence.

The application of restorative justice within the police system was first introduced through Circular Letter No. SE/8/VII/2018 of the Chief of the Indonesian National Police (Kapolri), General Tito Karnavian, dated 27 July 2018. This provision was subsequently reinforced by Article 12(a) and (b) of the Regulation of the Chief of the Indonesian National Police No. 6 of 2019 on the Criminal Investigation Division. Subsequently, the Indonesian National Police issued Police Regulation No. 8 of 2021, which provides a more comprehensive framework for the handling of criminal cases based on the principles of restorative justice. This Police Regulation serves as the legal basis for investigators to terminate preliminary investigations (SPP-Lidik) or full investigations (SP3) on legal grounds based on restorative justice.[13]

In practice, there are a number of guidelines that must be followed, including:

1. Requests for a settlement from both parties are verified in advance.
2. A request for approval is submitted to the investigator's superior.
3. Once approved, a time is set for the signing of the settlement agreement.
4. A conference is held, concluding with the signing of the agreement by all relevant parties.
5. The investigating officer submits an official memorandum requesting a special case review with the aim of discontinuing the case.
6. The case review is attended by the complainant/family, community representatives, the investigating officer, the supervisor and, where necessary, government officials.
7. A report on the outcome of the case review is drawn up, together with supporting documents.
8. Based on these results, a warrant to discontinue the investigation and an official decision are issued.

[11] Soerjono Soekanto, *op. cit.*, p.42.
[12] John Braithwhite, *Restorative Justice: Assessing an Immodest Theory and a Pessimistic Theory Draft to be summitted to Crime and Justice : Review of Research*, University of Chicago, Press, p.5.
[13] Djohan Burhanuddin, M. Zamroni, Bambang PanjI Gunawan, *Pelaksanaan Restorative Justice Di Tingkat Kepolisian, Kejaksaan, dan Peradilan Umum*, Jurnal Reformasi Hukum : Cogito Ergo Sum, Volume 6, Nomor 2, 2023, p.53.

9. Investigators at National Police Headquarters, Provincial Police Headquarters, District Police Stations or Local Police Stations carry out the orders issued by the Director of Criminal Investigation.
10. The case is declared closed after being recorded in the B-19 register as a case resolved through restorative justice.

The Attorney General's Office has issued Regulation of the Attorney General's Office of the Republic of Indonesia No. 15 of 2020 concerning the Discontinuation of Prosecution Based on Restorative Justice (Regulation of the Attorney General's Office No. 15 of 2020), which embodies justice for the underprivileged. Furthermore, it serves as a response to the problems of a backlog of cases and overcrowding in the courts. Under this regulation, public prosecutors are granted the right to discontinue prosecution against defendants in connection with certain criminal offences, provided that the parties have reached a settlement. [14]

In the context of managing drug addicts and those who misuse illicit drugs, these guidelines set out provisions regarding a restorative justice approach to the resolution of cases involving the misuse of illicit drugs. According to the public prosecutor, the requirements for restorative justice are as follows:

1. It is the first time the offence has been committed.
2. The financial loss amounts to less than Rp2,500,000 (two million five hundred thousand rupiah); and
3. The suspect and the victim have reached an agreement.

The Public Prosecutor's Office must be creative in implementing restorative justice programmes in order to reduce the number of cases resolved out of court.[15]

Judges work within an organisation known as the judiciary or the courts. Officials with the legal authority to adjudicate cases are known as judges. The series of actions undertaken by a judge to accept, examine and adjudicate criminal cases in accordance with the principles of freedom, honesty and impartiality, and in the manner prescribed by law, is what is meant by 'adjudication'. In criminal cases, the legal process takes place across three levels: the first instance, conducted by the District Court (PN); the second instance, conducted by the High Court (PT); and the cassation stage, conducted by the Supreme Court (MA). Decisions that have attained the force of law, such as those handed down by the Supreme Court, may still be subject to a Review (PK). However, a review will not be able to halt or prevent the enforcement of a final and binding judgement.[16]

Supreme Court Regulation No. 1 of 2024 provides guidelines for judges in adjudicating criminal cases using a restorative justice approach. The regulation emphasises that the application of restorative justice must be based on the principles of restoring the status quo, strengthening victims' rights, the defendant's responsibility, punishment as a last resort, consensus, and transparency and accountability.[17]

The requirements for restorative justice set out in this Supreme Court Regulation include:

1. The existence of a peace agreement between the victim and the defendant, entered into voluntarily.
2. The victim's rights must be restored, whether in the form of material compensation or psychological rehabilitation.
3. The defendant acknowledges their wrongdoing and is willing to take responsibility for their actions.
4. The case in question must not involve a serious criminal offence or one that causes widespread public concern.
5. The restorative justice process must be carried out with the involvement of the community or relevant parties to ensure transparency.[18]

Thus, Supreme Court Regulation No. 1 of 2024 affirms that restorative justice is not merely an alternative means of resolving cases, but a legitimate legal mechanism for restoring victims, repairing social relationships, and avoiding the use of criminal sanctions as the primary instrument. This is in line with Howard Zehr's view that restorative justice is a framework that places restoration at the heart of the criminal justice system.[19]

In light of the above explanation, the application of the concept of restorative justice in the resolution of criminal cases within the Indonesian criminal justice system has, to date, been implemented. At the investigation stage (police) through Police Regulation No. 8 of 2021; at the prosecution stage (Public Prosecutor's Office) through Public Prosecutor's Office Regulation No. 15 of 2020; and at the judicial stage (Supreme Court) through Supreme Court Regulation No. 1 of 2024, the policies and regulations formulated and issued contain inconsistencies or discrepancies, both regarding the criteria for criminal cases that can be resolved through restorative justice and concerning their implementation. It would therefore be preferable to incorporate the substance of restorative justice directly into the Draft Bill Amending the Code of Criminal Procedure (RUU KUHAP), which is currently governed by Act

[14] Fathur Rochman, Peraturan Kejaksaan Nomor 15 Tahun 2020 Dinilai Jadi Jawaban Suara Keadilan Rakyati, 2020.
[15] Ibid, p.55.
[16] Dr. Jonlar Purba, S.H., *Penegakan Hukum Terhadap Perkara Pidana Bermotif Ringan Dengan Restorative Justice*, Jakarta: Jala Permata Aksara, 2017, p.74.
[17] Peraturan Mahkamah Agung Republik Indonesia Nomor 1 Tahun 2024 tentang Pedoman Mengadili Perkara Pidana Berdasarkan Keadilan Restoratif, Pasal 2.
[18] Ibid., Articles 4-6.
[19] Howard Zehr, *op. cit*., p.5.

No. 20 of 2025. In addition to promoting the spirit of regulatory simplification, integrating provisions on restorative justice into the Code of Criminal Procedure will facilitate its application, particularly for law enforcement officials, and will also contribute to the realisation of an Integrated Criminal Justice System.[20]

The provisions on restorative justice mechanisms in the 2025 Code of Criminal Procedure mark a significant change in Indonesia's criminal justice system. Whereas previously restorative justice was governed solely by internal regulations of law enforcement agencies, the 2025 Code of Criminal Procedure now provides a clear legal framework regarding the conditions and procedures for its implementation.[21]

Under the 2025 Code of Criminal Procedure, restorative justice may only be applied if a number of substantive and procedural requirements are met. Firstly, there must be a peace agreement between the victim and the offender, entered into voluntarily and without coercion. Secondly, the victim's rights must be restored, whether through material compensation or psychological rehabilitation. Thirdly, the offender must acknowledge their wrongdoing and be willing to take responsibility for the consequences of their actions. Fourthly, the criminal offences that may be resolved through restorative justice are minor or moderate offences, not serious crimes or those that cause widespread public concern.[22] Furthermore, the 2025 Code of Criminal Procedure emphasises that restorative justice must be carried out with the involvement of community leaders or relevant parties to ensure transparency and accountability. Thus, restorative justice under the 2025 Criminal Procedure Code serves not only as an alternative means of resolving cases, but also as a legitimate legal mechanism to strengthen justice and legal certainty, reduce the caseload in the courts, and reaffirm the principle that criminal punishment is the last resort. When compared with other countries that follow a civil law system similar to Indonesia's—such as the Netherlands—the application of restorative justice has long been institutionalised within the criminal justice system. In Dutch criminal procedure law, restorative justice is known through the mechanism of 'mediation in criminal cases', which allows victims and offenders to engage in mediation with a facilitator appointed by the court.[23] The principles applied are the same as in Indonesia, namely the restoration of the victim's situation and compensation for their losses, and the reintegration of the offender; however, in the Netherlands, restorative justice is more fully integrated into the justice system from the outset. In Germany, restorative justice is known as 'Täter-Opfer-Ausgleich' (TOA) or 'offender-victim reconciliation'. This mechanism is regulated under the German Code of Criminal Procedure and allows for the discontinuation of proceedings if an amicable settlement is reached between the victim and the offender.[24] Similar to Indonesia's 2025 Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP), the TOA emphasises victim rehabilitation and offender accountability; however, its application in Germany is broader, as it can be applied to various types of minor offences as well as other criminal offences, subject to certain conditions. Thus, this comparison shows that the 2025 Criminal Procedure Code in Indonesia is beginning to establish restorative justice as an integral part of the criminal justice system, as has previously been implemented in civil law countries such as Germany and the Netherlands, as well as other countries with civil law systems. The main difference lies in the level of integration: in Indonesia, restorative justice has only recently been institutionalised through the 2025 Criminal Procedure Code, whilst in Germany and the Netherlands, restorative justice has long been an established part of criminal procedure law.

CONCLUSIONS

The transformation of restorative justice in Indonesia reflects a fundamental shift from merely partial provisions within the internal regulations of individual law enforcement agencies towards a more systematic approach to coordination. In the early stages, the implementation of restorative justice was governed solely by the Regulations of the Indonesian National Police, the Regulations of the Attorney General's Office of the Republic of Indonesia, and the Regulations of the Supreme Court; consequently, it was fragmented in nature and often led to differences in standards and criteria between law enforcement agencies. With the introduction of the 2025 Criminal Procedure Code, restorative justice now enjoys stronger legitimacy as an integral part of the criminal justice system. This necessitates synchronisation and coordination amongst law enforcement agencies so that the application of restorative justice no longer proceeds in a piecemeal manner, but rather within a consistent legal framework. This transformation also reflects a paradigm shift in the enforcement of criminal law, moving away from a purely punitive orientation towards the protection of victims' rights, the restoration of social relationships and the accountability of offenders. Through a clear, integrated and coordinated

[20] Odie Faiz Guslan, *Harmonisasi Pengaturan Restorative Justice Dalam Sistem Peradilan Pidana di Indonesia*, Badan Pembinaan Hukum Nasional, Kementerian Hukum Republik Indonesia, 2025, p.47.
[21] Gunawan Sembiring, *Aturan Restorative Justice di KUHAP 2025: Syarat dan Cara Penyelesaian Perkara Tanpa Pengadilan*, Jakarta: Legalinfo Lawyers, 2025, p.12.
[22] Mohammad Arif Nahumbang Harahap, *Mekanisme Keadilan Restoratif dalam KUHAP 2025: Titik Terang Checks and Balance di Tahap Peradilan*, Jakarta: Bayumedia, 2026, p.45.
[23] Ivo Aertsen & Robert Mackay, *Restorative Justice and Criminal Justice: Competing or Reconcilable Paradigms?*, Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2004, p.112.
[24] Tony Peters, "Restorative Justice in Europe: Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands," *European Journal of Crime, Criminal Law and Criminal Justice*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1999, p.234.

approach, restorative justice is expected to deliver justice and legal certainty, reduce disparities in case handling, and strengthen public confidence in the criminal justice system in Indonesia.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to express gratitude to colleagues at the Faculty of Law, Diponegoro University, for being invaluable discussion partners in the preparation of this journal. The author would like to thank the reviewers and editors for their efforts in shaping this paper.

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