

Research Article

Legal Transformation in the Perspective of Criminology and Victimology as a Victim Protection-Based Crime Prevention Strategy

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Abstract: The current criminal law system is still oriented towards the perpetrator, with minimal protection for victims. Ideally, the law should prioritize justice for victims through a criminological and victimological approach. Therefore, legal reform, officer training, and integrated services are needed so that crime prevention is more effective and just. This study aims to explore the transformation of criminological and victimological perspectives that can be the basis for developing a crime prevention strategy based on victim protection. The method uses a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the transformation of criminology and victimology perspectives in crime prevention strategies based on victim protection. Data were collected through literature studies and analyzed thematically. The results are expected to provide conceptual and practical recommendations to strengthen the legal system and social policies that are responsive to victims. The results of this study show that the transformation of criminological and victimological perspectives reflects a shift from a perpetrator-centric legal approach to a more holistic and victim-centric one. This integration strengthens the legal system and social policies to better protect, restore and empower victims, and to develop effective crime prevention strategies. With a more humane and restorative justice approach, this transformation becomes an important foundation for reducing crime rates and forming responsive and sustainable public policies.

Keywords: Criminology; Legal Transformation; Victim Protection; Victimology.

1. Introduction

In its historical development, criminology has highlighted many factors that influence criminal behavior and policies that can reduce crime rates. However, this approach tends to focus on perpetrators and the legal system that processes them, while the role of victims is often less considered in its studies and practices. The lack of attention to victims causes a gap in handling the impact of crime as a whole, including the psychological, social, and legal protection needs of victims which are often neglected.

This science highlights how victims are often the forgotten part in the process of handling crimes. Victimology studies the various types of victims, characteristics of victims, patterns of victimization, and the recovery mechanisms needed by victims. Moreover, victimology discusses the phenomenon of revictimization, which is a situation where victims experience repeated trauma due to inappropriate treatment during the legal process or social stigma. The study of victimology demands a paradigm shift in the justice system to pay greater attention to victims so that they receive proper protection and adequate assistance.

Criminology focuses on the perpetrators and causes of crime, while victimology places the victim as the main subject who deserves protection and recovery. This integrated approach opens up space for a more comprehensive analysis of how crime occurs, who the perpetrators and victims are, and how society and the legal system should respond to both in a balanced manner. The absence of this integration in studies and practices actually causes inequality in handling crime which ultimately has a negative impact on victims and the effectiveness of crime prevention.

Received: April 25, 2025

Revised: May 10, 2025

Accepted: May 24, 2025

Online Available: May 26, 2025

Curr. Ver.: May 26, 2025



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Crime now occurs not only in physical space, but also in the increasingly dynamic digital and social realms. The old paradigm that is solely oriented towards perpetrators and prosecution is no longer effective enough in facing these challenges. Therefore, the paradigm of criminology and victimology is now undergoing a significant transformation by adopting a more holistic approach, namely by paying great attention to protecting victims and reducing the risk of repeated victimization. This new approach is expected to accommodate the needs of victims while reducing crime rates more effectively.

Crime prevention cannot only focus on law enforcement against perpetrators, but must also pay attention to the recovery and protection of victims so that they do not experience prolonged trauma. Victims who receive adequate protection tend to be better able to recover and return to functioning in society, thereby reducing their risk of becoming repeat victims or even perpetrators of crime. This is an important reason why the justice system and prevention policies must seriously integrate the victimology perspective.

The study by Fattah and Sacco emphasizes the importance of combining the study of perpetrators and victims to get a complete picture of crime and its impact. This approach not only enriches theory but also paves the way for more humane and effective policies in reducing crime rates and improving the welfare of victims. This holistic approach is widely accepted in many countries and has become the standard in modern criminal justice systems.

In Indonesia, the protection of crime victims still faces various complex challenges. Although there are laws that regulate the rights of victims, their implementation has not been optimal due to limited resources, a legal culture that is not fully responsive, and low awareness among law enforcement officers. This condition causes victim protection to be less than optimal and results in various negative impacts, such as revictimization and injustice. Therefore, a study is needed that can provide concrete recommendations to improve the victim protection system through the integration of comprehensive criminology and victimology perspectives.

Victim protection covers various aspects ranging from psychological recovery, legal protection, to adequate compensation. However, the reality on the ground shows that these aspects have not received adequate attention in the criminal justice system in Indonesia. The long legal process and complicated bureaucracy often make victims feel neglected. This condition has an impact on low victim trust in the legal system and reduces their participation in the law enforcement process. Therefore, crime prevention strategies need to prioritize efforts to protect victims in a comprehensive and integrated manner.

Revictimization is a condition where the victim experiences additional trauma due to an inhumane legal process, social stigma, or lack of support from the surrounding environment. The victimology approach demands reform of the legal and social systems so that victims receive fair treatment, are not discriminated against, and have access to adequate recovery services. If revictimization is not addressed, the negative impacts on the victim can continue and even worsen, affecting the victim's quality of life and overall social integration.

This paradigm shift also influences how crime prevention strategies are designed and implemented. Prevention that is only oriented towards monitoring and taking action against perpetrators is less effective if it is not accompanied by protection for victims. Strategies that combine victim protection can prevent recurrence of crimes, strengthen social resilience, and provide a more comprehensive deterrent effect. This approach is in line with the concept of restorative justice that prioritizes recovery and reconciliation between perpetrators, victims, and the community.

By understanding vulnerable groups and the conditions that increase the risk of becoming victims, appropriate interventions can be made to prevent similar incidents in the future. This approach places victims at the center of attention in the prevention process, so that interventions are not only repressive but also preventive and promotive. This is very important to strengthen the social system and reduce the inequality of protection in society.

Theoretically, the integration of criminology and victimology produces a richer multidimensional analysis. This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the causes of crime as well as its impact on victims and the wider community. This multidisciplinary study not only strengthens the academic foundation but also opens up opportunities for the development of more effective, humane, and inclusive legal policies and practices. This integration is key to creating a justice system that is just and responsive to the needs of all parties.

With this new paradigm, law enforcement agencies and policy makers are expected to be able to develop programs that not only reduce crime rates but also improve victim protection and recovery. This is important so that the justice system is not just a tool for

punishment, but also an instrument for fair social recovery. Capacity building and training of related officers are very necessary so that this paradigm can be optimally implemented in the field.

This study aims to explore the transformation of criminology and victimology perspectives that can be the basis for developing a crime prevention strategy based on victim protection. This study will examine the latest theories and policy practices both globally and in the Indonesian context, with the hope of producing relevant and applicable recommendations. The main focus is on how the integration of these perspectives can improve the legal system and social policies in order to increase victim protection and reduce crime rates effectively.

The understanding and implementation of this integrated approach is expected to strengthen the Indonesian criminal justice system, increase protection for victims, and reduce the risk of re-victimization. Thus, not only the perpetrators are the focus of law enforcement, but also the victims as parties who must receive justice and recovery. This approach is expected to encourage the creation of a more just, effective, and humane legal system, and support the realization of sustainable social security in Indonesia.

2. Research Methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of exploring the transformation of criminology and victimology perspectives in building a crime prevention strategy based on victim protection. Data were collected through literature studies from various primary and secondary sources such as books, scientific journals, laws and regulations, and reports related to criminology and victimology.

Data analysis was conducted thematically by identifying key themes related to the integration of criminology and victimology, challenges in victim protection, and the implementation of crime prevention strategies. Researchers also reviewed relevant case studies and policies to provide a comprehensive picture of the condition of victim protection in Indonesia.

The research results are expected to provide conceptual and practical recommendations in developing crime prevention strategies that are more responsive to victims' needs and strengthen legal and social systems.

3. Discussion

Criminology, as the study of crime, its perpetrators, causes, and impact on society, has undergone significant transformation in recent decades. Initially, the main focus of criminology was on the perpetrators of crimes, but over time, attention was also given to the victims as an important element in understanding the phenomenon of crime holistically. This change reflects a paradigm shift from a perpetrator-oriented approach to a more inclusive approach, taking into account the role and experiences of victims in the crime and law enforcement process.

Victimology emerged as a branch of criminology that focuses on the study of crime victims. This science studies various aspects related to victims, such as identity, the impacts experienced, and the factors that influence someone to become a victim. With a multidisciplinary approach, victimology combines theories from criminology, psychology, sociology, and law to analyze the phenomenon of victimization in a social and legal context. This allows for a deeper understanding of victims' experiences and how the legal system can be more responsive to their needs.

Integration between criminological and victimological perspectives is important to obtain a more complete picture of crime and its impacts. While criminology studies the aspects of perpetrators and causes of crime, victimology focuses on victims as subjects who also need attention and protection. This integrated approach allows for a more comprehensive analysis of the crime phenomenon, which in turn can support the development of more effective policies in crime prevention and victim protection.

Victimology plays an important role in identifying victims' needs and developing policies that are responsive to those needs. By understanding the impact experienced by victims, victimology can provide recommendations regarding necessary support services, such as counseling, legal aid, and compensation. In addition, victimology also helps in designing policies that prevent revictimization and ensure that victims receive fair treatment in the criminal justice system.

Restorative justice is an approach that emphasizes restoring relationships between victims, perpetrators, and the community. In this context, victimology makes an important contribution in designing processes that actively involve victims, enabling them to articulate the impact they have experienced and participate in the resolution process. This approach not only focuses on punishment for the perpetrator, but also on the recovery and empowerment of the victim, which is in line with the principles of victimology.

An effective crime prevention strategy must consider victim protection as an integral part of those efforts. By understanding the factors that make individuals vulnerable to victimization, victimology can help design more targeted prevention programs. For example, public education regarding victims' rights, training for law enforcement officers to handle victims' cases sensitively, and the development of support systems that are easily accessible to victims.

Re-victimization occurs when victims experience additional suffering as a result of an insensitive or unfair legal process. This can worsen the psychological condition of the victim and hinder their recovery process. Victimology highlights the importance of changes in the criminal justice system to ensure that victims are treated with respect and given adequate protection during the legal process.

Involving victims in the legal process not only gives them a voice in determining the outcome, but can also speed up their healing process. Victimology supports approaches that enable victims to actively participate, such as in restorative justice processes, where they can express the impact they have experienced and contribute to finding solutions that are fair to all parties.

Legal protection for victims of crime is a crucial aspect of the legal system that provides justice to those directly affected by criminal acts. The victimology perspective provides an important perspective in understanding the experiences of crime victims and evaluating the effectiveness of legal protection systems. With this approach, weaknesses in existing systems can be identified and solutions developed that are more responsive to victims' needs.

In Indonesia, although there are various regulations governing victim protection, their implementation still faces obstacles such as lack of awareness among law enforcement officers, limited resources, and a legal culture that is not fully responsive to victims. A victimology approach can help identify these obstacles and provide recommendations for improvement, such as training for law enforcement officers, improving support facilities for victims, and changing legal procedures that are more sensitive to victims' needs.

The integration of criminological and victimological perspectives creates a more holistic approach to understanding and addressing crime. On the one hand, criminology explains the causes and characteristics of the perpetrator, while victimology focuses on the experiences, suffering, and needs of the victim. When the two are combined, the legal system is not only focused on punishing the perpetrator, but also on reparation for the victim, which is a fundamental aspect of social justice .

One of the important contributions of this integration is strengthening the position of victims in the legal system. In conventional justice practices, victims are often passive, even forgotten, parties in the legal process. Through a victimology perspective, the legal system can be redesigned to be more responsive to the rights and needs of victims. This includes access to legal aid, witness protection, compensation, and psychosocial support during the court process .

The implementation of restorative justice is a concrete form of this integration. This approach prioritizes dialogue between the perpetrator, victim, and community in order to find a fair resolution and restore relationships. Victims have the opportunity to express their feelings, losses, and hopes directly to the perpetrator. This process has been proven to reduce traumatic impacts, increase a sense of justice, and accelerate victim recovery .

Socially, the integration of criminology and victimology also helps shape more preventative public policy. By understanding patterns of victimization, including who is most vulnerable and under what conditions, governments can develop community-based interventions that prevent crime before it occurs. This includes community education, economic empowerment of vulnerable groups, and the development of safe and inclusive environments. In addition to primary prevention, this integration also improves secondary and tertiary prevention. Secondary prevention is done by dealing with individuals or groups who are at high risk of becoming victims or perpetrators, while tertiary prevention focuses on the rehabilitation of perpetrators and the recovery of victims so that they do not experience re-victimization or become subsequent perpetrators .

This transformation also improves the approach of law enforcement officers to criminal cases. With victimology insight, police, prosecutors, and judges can better understand the importance of treating victims humanely, including avoiding questions that blame the victim (victim blaming), and creating procedures that minimize re-traumatization (revictimization).

In the field of social policy, this integrated approach can be used as a basis for developing long-term programs, such as social services for victims of violence, skills training for crime survivors, and the creation of penal mediation institutions. In addition, this approach encourages synergy between legal, health, education, and social welfare institutions in a collective effort to eradicate crime and support victims.

In terms of public trust, a legal system that prioritizes victim protection will increase the legitimacy of the law in the eyes of the public. When citizens see that victims are not ignored and perpetrators are processed fairly, trust in legal institutions will grow. This has a direct impact on public participation in reporting crimes and cooperation with authorities.

Furthermore, this integration encourages the use of victim-based data as a basis for policy. In many traditional legal systems, crime statistics only record official reports or convicted offenders. By combining data from victim surveys, law enforcement agencies can gain a more realistic picture of the types of crimes, hot spots, and patterns of victimization that often go unreported.

This integrated approach is in line with the principles of social justice and human rights. Victims of crime have the right to fair treatment, protection and reparation. By strengthening the victimology dimension in criminal policy, the state demonstrates its commitment to the principles of humanism and inclusivity in criminal law.

Therefore, this transformation of perspective is not only about science, but also about siding with those who have been marginalized in the legal system. Crime not only impacts individuals, but also weakens social cohesion. By placing victim protection at the heart of crime prevention strategies, this approach contributes to building a more just, safe, and civilized society.

4. Conclusion

The transformation of criminology and victimology perspectives marks an important shift from an offender-centered legal approach to a more holistic and victim-centric approach. The integration of these two perspectives allows the legal system to focus not only on prosecuting perpetrators, but also on protecting, restoring, and empowering victims. Thus, crime prevention strategies can be formulated more effectively, because they include identifying risk factors for victimization and concrete steps to protect vulnerable groups.

Through the integration of criminology and victimology perspectives, the legal system and social policies can be transformed to be more humane, fair, and restorative justice-oriented. This approach contributes to a sustainable reduction in crime rates by building social resilience, strengthening public trust in the law, and reducing the potential for revictimization. Therefore, this transformation is not only academically important, but also essential as a foundation for effective and responsive public policy.

Suggestion

The government and law enforcement agencies need to strengthen the legal and institutional framework that supports victim protection, including through the establishment of integrated victim service units in the police, victim-friendly courts, and providing victimology training to law enforcement officers. This is important so that the legal approach does not only punish the perpetrators, but also ensures proper recovery for the victims.

Closer integration between legal, social, and educational institutions is needed in developing community-based crime prevention strategies. Public education programs on victims' rights, safe reporting mechanisms, and anti-stigmatization campaigns need to be developed to create a legal culture that cares about victims and systematically reduces crime rates.

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