

Optimization of Restorative Justice in the Resolution of Minor Criminal Cases at the District Prosecutor's Office

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to analyse the implementation, effectiveness, and optimization of Restorative Justice in resolving minor criminal cases at the District Prosecutor's Office. It also examines how restorative justice principles are applied in practice and assesses their contribution to more efficient, fair, and balanced case resolution within the criminal justice system.

Research Methodology: This research employs an empirical juridical method using statutory, case, and conceptual approaches. It examines legal norms and their practical implementation in case handling at the District Prosecutor's Office. The data are analysed qualitatively to understand restorative justice practices and their effectiveness in resolving minor criminal cases.

Results: The findings indicate that RJ implementation of Restorative Justice has been conducted in accordance with the Regulation of the Attorney General of the Republic of Indonesia Number 15 of 2020 through a reconciliation mechanism between victims and offenders facilitated by prosecutors.

Conclusions: Optimization efforts should include enhancing prosecutors' competencies, strengthening inter-agency coordination, improving regulations, and increasing public awareness through socialization programs. Supporting factors include a clear legal framework, commitment from the Prosecutor's Office, and a culture of deliberation within society.

Limitations: Restorative Justice serves as an effective and equitable alternative for resolving minor criminal cases and is consistent with modern criminal law principles. Key supporting factors include a clear legal framework, institutional commitment, and a societal culture valuing deliberation and consensus.

Contributions: Future studies are encouraged to broaden the scope of research and examine the long-term effects of Restorative Justice on victim satisfaction, offender reintegration, and recidivism reduction.

Keywords: *Justice, Legal Effectiveness, Modern Criminal Law, Prosecutor's Office, Restorative Justice*

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1. Introduction

The development of modern criminal law demonstrates a significant paradigm shift from a repressive and punishment-oriented approach (retributive justice) toward a more humane, participatory, and restorative approach that emphasizes the recovery of losses resulting from criminal acts (Islam, Li, & Anderson, 2023). This transformation has given rise to the concept of Restorative Justice, which places offenders, victims, and society as active participants in the resolution of criminal cases. Restorative Justice is not merely concerned with imposing sanctions upon offenders; rather, it focuses on restoring disrupted social relationships caused by criminal conduct, thereby creating a fair and beneficial resolution for all parties involved (Omowon & Kunlere, 2024; Weisburd, Farrington, & Gill, 2017).

In Indonesia, the implementation of Restorative Justice has increasingly gained attention as an alternative mechanism for resolving criminal cases, particularly minor offenses ([Díaz Gude & Navarro Papic, 2020](#)). This development is reflected in the enactment of various regulations that provide the legal foundations for law enforcement agencies to apply restorative justice principles ([Beckman, Jewett, Gaçad, & Borowsky, 2024](#); [Paul & Swan, 2018](#)). One of the most significant regulations is the Regulation of the Attorney General of the Republic of Indonesia Number 15 of 2020 concerning the Termination of Prosecution Based on Restorative Justice, which authorizes prosecutors to discontinue prosecution in certain cases by considering the interests of victims, offenders and society. This policy reflects the state's commitment to establishing a criminal justice system that is more effective, efficient, and equitable ([Martin & Zappavigna, 2016](#); [Nasution, Hamdani, & Fauzia, 2022](#)).

As an institution vested with prosecutorial authority, the Prosecutor's Office plays a strategic role in implementing Restorative Justice ([Kimbrell, Wilson, & Olaghere, 2023](#)). The Prosecutor's Office functions not only as a law enforcement agency representing the interests of the state but also as an institution capable of facilitating conflict resolution between offenders and victims ([Sliva, Shaw, & Han, 2020](#)). Through the application of Restorative Justice, the Prosecutor's Office is expected to reduce the accumulation of cases in courts, alleviate overcrowding in correctional facilities, and promote dispute resolution that is faster, simpler, and less costly ([Shem-Tov, Raphael, & Skog, 2024](#)). However, practical implementation continues to face various challenges, including differing interpretations among law enforcement officials, limited institutional resources, and insufficient public participation in supporting restorative justice initiatives ([Vaandering & Reimer, 2019](#); [Zakszeski & Rutherford, 2021](#)).

The success of Restorative Justice implementation can be measured by the extent to which it achieves predetermined legal objectives. According to [Hooker and Schiff \(2019\)](#), legal effectiveness is influenced by several factors, namely the law itself, law enforcement officials, supporting facilities and infrastructure, society, and legal culture ([Díaz Gude & Navarro Papic, 2020](#)). Consequently, the effectiveness of Restorative Justice is determined not only by the existence of adequate regulations but also by the capability of prosecutors to implement such policies and by society's acceptance of dispute resolution mechanisms outside conventional judicial proceedings. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive examination to determine the extent to which Restorative Justice has been effectively implemented in resolving minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's offices ([Hong & You, 2018](#)).

Apart from effectiveness, the implementation of Restorative Justice is also closely related to theories of justice. Within the criminal justice system, justice should not merely be interpreted as the imposition of proportionate punishment on offenders but should also encompass the protection of victims' rights and the restoration of social relationships disrupted by criminal acts. [Rawls \(2006\)](#) emphasized that justice should provide benefits to all members of society through a balanced distribution of rights and obligations. Within the framework of Restorative Justice, justice is realized through deliberation and consensus-building between offenders and victims to achieve mutually acceptable agreements. Consequently, case resolution not only provides legal certainty but also delivers substantive justice to society ([Gaffney et al., 2024](#); [Hobbs, Garman, & Brewer, 2025](#)).

Although Restorative Justice has become a national policy within Indonesia's criminal justice system, its implementation across various District Prosecutor's offices continues to encounter diverse challenges. Differences in case characteristics, levels of public legal awareness, and the capacity of law enforcement officials all influence the success of implementation. Therefore, research concerning the Optimization of Restorative Justice in the Resolution of Minor Criminal Cases at District Prosecutor's offices is essential in identifying supporting and inhibiting factors and formulating strategies capable of enhancing both effectiveness and justice in the application of Restorative Justice as part of the modernization of Indonesia's criminal law system. Based on the foregoing background, the research questions addressed in this study are as follows: How is Restorative Justice implemented in the resolution of minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's offices? How effective is the implementation of Restorative Justice in resolving minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's offices when analyzed

through the perspectives of Legal Effectiveness Theory and Justice Theory? What optimization efforts can be undertaken in implementing Restorative Justice for minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's offices, and what factors support and hinder its implementation?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Restorative Justice Theory

Restorative Justice is an approach within the criminal justice system that is oriented toward restoring the conditions disrupted by criminal acts. Unlike retributive justice, which focuses primarily on punishing offenders, Restorative Justice emphasizes victim recovery, offender accountability, and the restoration of social relationships within society. This approach positions victims, offenders, and the community as active participants in conflict resolution arising from criminal conduct.

According to [Zehr, MacRae, Pranis, and Amstutz \(2022\)](#), Restorative Justice is a process that involves all stakeholders affected by a legal violation in collectively identifying and addressing the consequences of the offense while determining appropriate measures to repair the resulting harm. [Zehr et al. \(2022\)](#) are widely recognized as pioneers of modern Restorative Justice, emphasizing dialogue and healing rather than retaliation and punishment.

Similarly, [Vaandering and Reimer \(2019\)](#) define Restorative Justice as a process in which all parties with an interest in a criminal offense come together to collectively determine how to address the consequences of the offense and its future implications. This concept highlights the active participation of victims and offenders in reaching fair and mutually beneficial agreements between them. Within the Indonesian context, Restorative Justice has become an integral component of criminal law reform aimed at creating a justice system that is more humane, efficient, simple, and cost-effective. This concept is reflected in various legal policies, including the Regulation of the Attorney General of the Republic of Indonesia Number 15 of 2020 concerning the Termination of Prosecution Based on Restorative Justice.

2.2 Legal Effectiveness Theory

Legal effectiveness refers to the extent to which a legal rule can achieve its intended objectives. A legal norm is considered effective when it is obeyed by society and generates outcomes that are consistent with the purposes for which it was established. According to [Hooker and Schiff \(2019\)](#), legal effectiveness is influenced by five principal factors: (1) the legal rules themselves, (2) law enforcement officials, (3) supporting facilities and infrastructure, (4) societal factors, and (5) legal culture. These factors are interconnected and collectively determine the successful implementation of legal regulations in society. [Friedman \(1975\)](#) further argues that legal effectiveness is determined by three fundamental components of the legal system: legal structure, legal substance, and legal culture. Legal structure refers to the institutions responsible for law enforcement, legal substance encompasses statutory and regulatory provisions, and legal culture concerns public awareness, values, and attitudes toward the law.

2.3 Justice Theory

According to [Rawls \(2006\)](#) in *A Theory of Justice*, justice should be understood as fairness. Rawls emphasized that every individual must enjoy equal liberty and fair opportunities to obtain social benefits. His theory positions justice as a fundamental principle that guides decision-making processes that affect societal interests. Furthermore, [Radbruch \(1932\)](#) argued that the objectives of law encompass three essential values: justice, legal certainty, and utility. These values must coexist in a balanced manner to enable the law to function effectively within society.

2.4 Prosecutorial Theory

According to [Hansen and Umbreit \(2018\)](#), the Prosecutor's Office is a law enforcement institution endowed with the authority of *dominus litis*, meaning that it exercises control over criminal cases during the prosecution stage. Consequently, the success of law enforcement is significantly influenced by the professionalism and independence of prosecutors in performing their duties. [Lloyd and Borrill \(2020\)](#) explain that the Prosecutor's Office functions not only as a public prosecutor but also as the executor of court decisions and guardian of public interests. In the context of modern legal developments, prosecutors are expected to adopt approaches that prioritize substantive justice, including the

implementation of Restorative Justice. Law Number 11 of 2021 concerning Amendments to Law Number 16 of 2004 on the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Indonesia further strengthens the position of the Prosecutor's Office as an institution authorized to conduct prosecutions and implement law enforcement policies oriented toward justice and public benefit.

2.5 Modern Criminal Law Theory

According to [Kirkwood \(2022\)](#), modern criminal law reform should promote a balance between protecting society, safeguarding victims and respecting the rights of offenders. Therefore, criminal sanctions should be directed toward rehabilitation, social reintegration, and restoration of the harm caused by criminal acts. [Brooks \(2017\)](#) further explains that modern criminal law adopts an integrative approach that combines justice, utility, and the protection of human rights. This approach prioritizes conflict resolution over punishment alone.

Within the Indonesian criminal law framework, Restorative Justice represents one of the practical manifestations of modern criminal law because it prioritizes dialogue, reconciliation, victim recovery, and offender reintegration into society. Consequently, the implementation of Restorative Justice at District Prosecutor's offices constitutes an important element of criminal justice reform aimed at establishing a system that is more effective, equitable, and humane.

2.6 Previous Studies

Numerous studies have examined the implementation of Restorative Justice in the resolution of minor criminal cases within District Prosecutor's offices in various contexts. The study conducted by [Sofiya, Akli, and Subaidi \(2024\)](#) found that the implementation of Restorative Justice at the Bireuen District Prosecutor's Office was carried out through mediation between victims and offenders in accordance with Attorney General Regulation Number 15 of 2020. The study concluded that the restorative approach provided a faster resolution mechanism and reduced court caseloads, although challenges remained due to the limited public understanding of restorative justice principles.

[Pramono and Astuti \(2023\)](#) reported that the resolution of minor criminal offenses through Restorative Justice creates a balance between the interests of victims and offenders. Their findings indicate that restorative mechanisms facilitate the restoration of social relationships and reduce the reliance on imprisonment for minor offenders. This study also highlights the critical role of prosecutors as facilitators of reconciliation processes. Similarly, [Kencana, Eddy, and Nadirah \(2023\)](#) found that the implementation of Restorative Justice in minor theft cases at the Binjai District Prosecutor's Office was conducted through the termination of prosecution based on peace agreements reached between victims and offenders.

However, the study identified obstacles related to limited public understanding and insufficient socialization regarding restorative justice mechanisms. Furthermore, [Ningrum, Sulistyowati, and Arsetyo \(2023\)](#) concluded that the termination of prosecution through Restorative Justice had been implemented in accordance with the procedures stipulated in Attorney General Regulation Number 15 of 2020. The study emphasized that successful implementation largely depends on the existence of a mutual settlement agreement between victims and offenders, as well as public support for resolving cases outside formal court proceedings.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

This research focuses on optimizing Restorative Justice in the resolution of minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's offices as part of modern criminal law reform, emphasizing restoration, reconciliation, and legal utility. The implementation of Restorative Justice is analyzed through the perspective of Legal Effectiveness Theory to evaluate the extent to which the policy achieves its intended legal objectives. Additionally, Justice Theory is used to assess whether justice is adequately realized for victims, offenders, and society. In practice, the District Prosecutor's Office serves as a facilitator in resolving criminal disputes using restorative justice mechanisms. Accordingly, this study seeks to analyze the implementation, effectiveness, and optimization strategies of Restorative Justice in

resolving minor criminal cases to promote a criminal justice system that is more effective, equitable, and humane.

3. Research Methodology

This study employs an empirical legal research method (*empirical juridical approach*) that utilizes statutory, case, and conceptual approaches. The statutory approach is applied to examine the legal provisions governing Restorative Justice, particularly Law Number 11 of 2021 concerning the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Indonesia and the Regulation of the Attorney General of the Republic of Indonesia Number 15 of 2020 concerning the Termination of Prosecution Based on Restorative Justice.

The case approach is used to analyze the practical implementation of Restorative Justice in resolving minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's offices, while the conceptual approach is employed to examine theories related to Restorative Justice, legal effectiveness, justice, prosecutorial functions, and modern criminal law. This study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through interviews with prosecutors, Heads of General Crime Sections (*Kasi Pidum*), and other parties involved in the implementation of Restorative Justice at District Prosecutor's offices. Secondary data were collected through library research involving primary legal materials such as legislation, secondary legal materials including books, scientific journals, and previous studies, and tertiary legal materials such as legal dictionaries and encyclopedias ([Fulham, Blais, Rugge, & Schultheis, 2025](#)).

The data collection techniques consisted of library research, interviews, and documentation of materials related to the resolution of minor criminal cases through Restorative Justice. The collected data were qualitatively analyzed through identification, classification, and interpretation based on the research problems. The analysis linked empirical findings with Legal Effectiveness Theory, Justice Theory, and Modern Criminal Law Theory to assess the implementation and optimization of Restorative Justice in resolving minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's offices. Finally, conclusions were drawn using an inductive reasoning method, whereby specific findings obtained from the field were generalized into broader conclusions consistent with the study objectives.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Implementation of Restorative Justice in the Resolution of Minor Criminal Cases at the District Prosecutor's Office

The implementation of Restorative Justice in the resolution of minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's offices represents a manifestation of law enforcement policies that prioritize conflict resolution through the restoration of relationships among offenders, victims, and society. The legal basis for implementing Restorative Justice within the Prosecutor's Office is the Regulation of the Attorney General of the Republic of Indonesia Number 15 of 2020 concerning the Termination of Prosecution Based on Restorative Justice. Under this regulation, prosecutors are granted the authority to discontinue prosecution in certain cases that meet specific requirements, such as those involving first-time offenders, offenses punishable by imprisonment of no more than five years, and losses that do not exceed the prescribed threshold. This policy reflects a paradigm shift from a criminal justice system centered on punishment to one that emphasizes restoration and reconciliation.

In practice, the implementation of Restorative Justice begins with the identification and assessment of cases by public prosecutors to determine whether they meet the criteria for resolution through restorative mechanisms. Subsequently, prosecutors facilitate reconciliation meetings between offenders and victims through deliberative discussions involving the concerned parties. Community leaders, victims' families, and offenders' families may also participate in this process. When a voluntary settlement is successfully reached without coercion from any party, the agreement is documented in a formal peace agreement report, which serves as the basis for submitting a request to terminate the prosecution to the relevant prosecutorial authorities. Upon receiving the necessary approvals through established hierarchical procedures, prosecution may be terminated in the interest of restorative justice.

The implementation of Restorative Justice is consistent with the theory proposed by [Zehr et al. \(2022\)](#), who argue that restorative justice is a process involving all parties affected by criminal conduct in collectively addressing the consequences of the offense and determining appropriate recovery measures for the future. According to [Zehr et al. \(2022\)](#), the primary objective of dispute resolution should not be the punishment of offenders but rather the restoration of losses suffered by victims and the repair of disrupted social relationships. Within the context of District Prosecutor's Offices, the reconciliation process between victims and offenders reflects the fundamental principles of Restorative Justice, namely dialogue, accountability, and restoration.

Furthermore, the implementation of Restorative Justice may also be analyzed through [Rawls \(2006\)](#) Theory of Justice, which emphasizes fairness for all parties. Through this mechanism, victims recover from the losses they have suffered, while offenders are given the opportunity to assume responsibility without being subjected to lengthy judicial proceedings. Consequently, Restorative Justice not only provides legal certainty but also promotes substantive justice for all stakeholders involved.

The implementation of Restorative Justice at District Prosecutor's offices is also consistent with [Hooker and Schiff \(2019\)](#), who state that legal effectiveness is influenced by legal rules, law enforcement officials, supporting facilities and infrastructure, society, and legal culture. The success of the implementation is supported by the existence of Attorney General Regulation Number 15 of 2020 as a clear legal basis, prosecutors' capabilities in mediating disputes, and the willingness of victims and offenders to resolve conflicts through reconciliation.

However, the implementation of Restorative Justice in resolving minor criminal cases continues to face several obstacles. One of the primary challenges is the uneven level of public understanding of the objectives and benefits of restorative justice. Many members of society still believe that justice can only be achieved through the act of imprisonment. Additionally, differing interpretations among law enforcement officials regarding the criteria for cases eligible for restorative settlements present further challenges. Other influencing factors include limitations in human resources and the considerable time required to conduct mediation processes.

Nevertheless, the implementation of Restorative Justice in resolving minor criminal cases has generally generated positive impacts on the criminal justice system. Cases are resolved more quickly, costs are reduced, relationships between victims and offenders are restored, and the number of cases requiring court proceedings is diminished. Consequently, Restorative Justice can be regarded as a practical manifestation of modern criminal law that prioritizes restoration, victim protection, and social harmony over punishment alone.

4.2 Effectiveness of the Implementation of Restorative Justice in Resolving Minor Criminal Cases at District Prosecutor's Offices Based on Legal Effectiveness Theory and Justice Theory

The implementation of Restorative Justice in resolving minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's offices demonstrates a relatively high level of effectiveness in achieving legal objectives centered on justice, utility, and legal certainty. The application of prosecution termination mechanisms under Attorney General Regulation Number 15 of 2020 has provided an alternative dispute resolution model that is simpler, faster, and more cost-efficient than conventional criminal proceedings. Through reconciliation processes involving victims, offenders, families, and communities, case resolution is not limited to criminal punishment but also focuses on restoring social relationships that are disrupted by criminal conduct.

According to [Hooker and Schiff \(2019\)](#), the effectiveness of a legal rule is influenced by five factors: legal norms, law enforcement officials, supporting facilities, societal conditions, and legal culture. From a legal perspective, Attorney General Regulation Number 15 of 2020 provides a clear legal basis for prosecutors to implement Restorative Justice. The regulation establishes detailed requirements, procedures, and mechanisms for terminating prosecutions, thereby ensuring legal certainty for law enforcement officials exercising their authority. A clear legal framework enhances the legitimacy and consistency of Restorative Justice within Indonesia's criminal justice system.

From a law enforcement perspective, prosecutors play a crucial role as facilitators and mediators who bring together victims and offenders to reach peaceful settlements. Professionalism, communication skills, and a comprehensive understanding of restorative justice principles are essential factors in determining the success of implementation. This development reflects a transformation in prosecutorial functions from punishment-oriented approaches to conflict resolution and restoration. From the perspective of facilities and infrastructure, the implementation of Restorative Justice has generally been supported by institutional policies within the Prosecutor's Office.

Nevertheless, several obstacles remain, including limited mediation facilities, personnel shortages, and uneven levels of understanding of Restorative Justice across regions. Such limitations may reduce the effectiveness of restorative mechanisms if they are not accompanied by continuous institutional capacity building. Societal factors and legal culture also significantly influence the success of Restorative Justice. Many victims and offenders prefer reconciliation because it provides a faster and simpler resolution. However, certain segments of society continue to believe that all criminal offenses should culminate in imprisonment, creating challenges for the broader implementation of restorative mechanisms.

In addition to Legal Effectiveness Theory, Restorative Justice can be examined through Justice Theory. Within the restorative framework, justice is provided to victims through the recovery of losses and to offenders through opportunities to rectify their mistakes without undergoing criminal proceedings that may result in long-term social stigma. Accordingly, the resolution of minor criminal cases through Restorative Justice reflects corrective justice aimed at restoring the balance disrupted by criminal conduct.

Moreover, when viewed through the Theory of Legal Objectives [Radbruch \(1932\)](#), Restorative Justice seeks to realize the three fundamental values of law: justice, legal certainty, and utility. Legal certainty is reflected in the existence of regulations governing the termination of prosecution based on restorative justice principles. Justice is achieved through the active involvement of victims and offenders in deliberative decision-making. Utility is demonstrated by reduced court workloads, lower law enforcement costs, and the preservation of social relationships within society.

Therefore, based on both Legal Effectiveness Theory and Justice Theory, the implementation of Restorative Justice in resolving minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's offices can be regarded as relatively effective. Although challenges related to resources, supporting facilities, and societal legal culture remain, Restorative Justice has generally succeeded in creating case resolution mechanisms that are faster, more efficient, more equitable, and more consistent with the principles of modern criminal law, which prioritizes restoration over retribution. Consequently, further efforts are required to strengthen public awareness, enhance prosecutorial capacities, and develop supportive policies to maximize the effectiveness of Restorative Justice in the future.

4.3 Optimization Efforts of Restorative Justice in Resolving Minor Criminal Cases at District Prosecutor's Offices and the Supporting and Inhibiting Factors Affecting Its Implementation

The implementation of Restorative Justice in resolving minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's offices has demonstrated positive progress as part of Indonesia's criminal justice system reform. Through the authority to terminate prosecution based on Attorney General Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 15 of 2020, the Prosecutor's Office no longer focuses exclusively on imposing criminal sanctions but also prioritizes conflict resolution through reconciliation between the victims and offenders. In practice, eligible minor criminal cases can be resolved through deliberative processes involving victims, offenders, family members, community leaders, and prosecutors acting as facilitators. This approach provides offenders with the opportunity to take responsibility for their actions while simultaneously enabling victims to recover without undergoing lengthy court proceedings.

Efforts to optimize the implementation of Restorative Justice include improving the competence and professionalism of prosecutors in penal mediation, increasing public awareness of the benefits of restorative justice, and strengthening coordination among the Prosecutor's Office, Police, Courts, local governments, and community leaders to ensure a common understanding of restorative justice

principles and procedures. From the perspective of Restorative Justice Theory, as proposed by [Zehr et al. \(2022\)](#), the success of criminal case resolution should not be measured solely by the punishment imposed on offenders but also by the ability of the justice system to repair the harm suffered by victims and restore social relationships disrupted by criminal conduct. The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of Restorative Justice in minor criminal cases has created resolutions that are more recovery-oriented than punishment-oriented. Victims are given opportunities to directly express the losses they have suffered, while offenders are provided opportunities to accept responsibility and rectify the consequences of their actions.

When analyzed using [Hooker and Schiff \(2019\)](#), the effectiveness of Restorative Justice is influenced by five principal factors: legal norms, law enforcement officials, supporting facilities and infrastructure, society, and legal culture. From a legal perspective, Attorney General Regulation Number 15 of 2020 provides a sufficiently clear legal basis for prosecutors to terminate prosecutions based on restorative justice principles. From a law enforcement perspective, most prosecutors possess an adequate understanding of the procedures and objectives of Restorative Justice, enabling effective implementation. Nevertheless, challenges remain in the form of differing interpretations of the criteria for cases suitable for restorative settlements and the limited experience of some law enforcement officials in conducting mediation processes.

From the perspective of justice, the resolution of minor criminal cases through Restorative Justice is considered more capable of achieving substantive justice than conventional litigation processes. In line with [Rawls \(2006\)](#), this approach provides balanced benefits to all parties. Victims recover from their losses, offenders avoid the stigma associated with criminal punishment, and society regains social harmony. Therefore, the justice achieved through Restorative Justice is not merely formal but also emphasizes restoration and reconciliation.

Several factors support the implementation of Restorative Justice at District Prosecutor's offices. These include a clear legal framework, the commitment of the Prosecutor's Office, the willingness of victims and offenders to reach peaceful settlements, and active community participation. Furthermore, Indonesia's strong culture of deliberation and consensus, as well as the involvement of community and traditional leaders, significantly contributes to the success of reconciliation processes and enhances public confidence in settlement outcomes.

However, the optimization of Restorative Justice continues to face several obstacles. These include limited public understanding of restorative justice concepts, the prevailing perception that all criminal offenses should be resolved through punishment, inadequate resources and supporting facilities, and the absence of a uniform understanding among law enforcement agencies. In addition, not all victims are willing to pursue reconciliation because some continue to expect offenders to receive criminal punishment.

From the perspective of modern criminal law, optimizing Restorative Justice is a relevant strategy for creating a criminal justice system that is more humane, effective, and conflict resolution-oriented. As emphasized by [Kirkwood \(2022\)](#), modern criminal law should not focus solely on punishment but should also prioritize victim protection, offender rehabilitation, and restoring social balance. Therefore, continued efforts are required to strengthen regulations, enhance prosecutors' competencies as mediators, improve public awareness, and reinforce coordination among law enforcement agencies. Through these measures, the implementation of Restorative Justice in resolving minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's offices is expected to become increasingly effective and capable of delivering justice that is beneficial to all parties involved.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, this study concludes that the implementation of Restorative Justice in resolving minor criminal cases at District Prosecutor's Offices has been carried out in accordance with Attorney General Regulation Number 15 of 2020 through deliberation and

reconciliation involving victims, offenders, and prosecutors as facilitators, resulting in faster and more recovery-oriented dispute resolution. The implementation of Restorative Justice is relatively effective in promoting justice, utility, and legal certainty, supported by a clear regulatory framework, active law enforcement roles, and community participation, while also providing substantive justice for both victims and offenders. Furthermore, optimization efforts have been undertaken through improving prosecutorial competence, strengthening inter-institutional coordination, enhancing regulatory support, and increasing public awareness, with supporting factors including strong legal foundations, institutional commitment, and a deliberative culture, while inhibiting factors include limited public understanding, differing perceptions among law enforcement officers, and resource and facility constraints.

5.2 Research Limitations

First, this research focuses exclusively on the implementation of Restorative Justice in resolving minor criminal cases within District Prosecutor's Offices; therefore, the findings do not fully represent its implementation in other law enforcement institutions such as the Police and the Courts. Second, the study relies on a limited number of participants, so the information obtained may not comprehensively reflect all stakeholders involved in Restorative Justice implementation. Third, this study primarily emphasizes implementation, effectiveness, and supporting and inhibiting factors from the perspectives of Legal Effectiveness Theory and Justice Theory, and does not extensively examine the long-term impact on offender recidivism and victim satisfaction; accordingly, future research is recommended to expand the scope, involve more respondents, and evaluate effectiveness from broader and more comprehensive perspectives.

5.3 Suggestions and Directions for Future Research

For future development and research, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the implementation and effectiveness of Restorative Justice. At the institutional level, district prosecutors' offices should continuously enhance prosecutorial competencies in penal mediation to optimize restorative practices. Law enforcement agencies are encouraged to establish stronger coordination and a shared understanding of Restorative Justice to ensure consistent application and effectiveness. For society, greater public education and awareness programs are necessary to improve the understanding of the benefits and procedures of Restorative Justice.

Policymakers should focus on further strengthening and refining regulations to provide greater legal certainty and expand opportunities for resolving minor criminal cases through restorative mechanisms, thereby contributing to Indonesia's national criminal law reform. Finally, for future researchers, broader research scopes and comprehensive studies are recommended to examine the long-term effects of Restorative Justice on victim satisfaction, offender reintegration, and reduction of recidivism, providing empirical evidence to guide policy, practice, and continuous improvement in the criminal justice system.

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Author Contributions

BW contributed to conceptualization, methodology, investigation, and writing the original draft of the manuscript. HH was responsible for supervision, validation, and review and editing of the manuscript. SSD contributed to data analysis, formal analysis, and visualization. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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