



## PROCEDURAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF VICTIM RESTITUTION RIGHTS

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### Abstract

This paper examines public perceptions of restitution rights for victims of crime within criminal justice processes. Restitution is framed as a victim centered entitlement linked to offender responsibility for measurable losses, while punishment addresses the public wrong. The paper explains how acceptance depends on public meanings of justice, responsibility, and victim dignity. It maps key perception domains: understanding of restitution versus compensation or charity, beliefs about the relationship between repayment and sentencing, and judgments about procedural fairness during reporting, charging, and adjudication. The discussion highlights how narratives about victims and offenders shape moral evaluations, including concerns that repayment may be misread as buying leniency. Institutional legitimacy, clarity of decisions, and comprehensible legal language are treated as central to public trust in restitution outcomes. The paper argues that perceptions influence whether victims seek restitution, whether families and communities offer support, and whether court decisions are regarded as fair. It concludes that restitution gains stable acceptance when it is understood as complementary accountability, communicated clearly, and embedded in procedures that respect victims and ensure equal treatment.

Keywords: victim rights, restitution, public perceptions, procedural justice, institutional legitimacy, criminal justice, victim dignity.

## Introduction

The rights of victims of criminal acts within the criminal justice system are evolving, demanding serious attention to restoration rather than focusing solely on punishing the perpetrator. Restoration in this context encompasses the recovery of material losses, psychological well-being, a sense of security, and dignity. Among the instruments frequently discussed is restitution the recovery of victim losses through payment obligations imposed on the perpetrator or parties legally responsible. Restitution positions the victim as a subject with recognized claims, rather than merely a source of information for the case. However, public acceptance of the restitution concept is not always uniform. Some citizens view restitution as a logical consequence of crime, as the perpetrator caused losses that ought to be rectified (Hakim, 2020). Others view restitution as a private matter that should be resolved outside of criminal proceedings, or as an element that might obscure the purpose of sentencing. This divergence in understanding forms a spectrum of public perception that influences social support for victim restoration policies. In this regard, legal protection for victims demands a strong perspective within the Indonesian criminal justice system so that victims' rights are not marginalized (Pratama et al., 2022).

In daily social experience, society often recognizes the consequences of criminal acts through the direct losses suffered by victims and their families (Marasabessy, 2016). Such losses may include loss of property, medical expenses, loss of income, damage to reputation, and impairment of well-being. At the same time, society also observes how legal processes focus on proving the perpetrator's guilt, determining sanctions, and fulfilling procedures. This focus is essential to guarantee justice for all parties, yet it often creates the impression that the victim's needs come second. This is where the concept of restitution becomes relevant as it offers a bridge between the proof of criminal acts and victim restoration. However, that bridge only functions if the public understands the meaning of restitution and assesses that it aligns with their sense of justice. Ethical principles in legal advocacy serve as the main pillar for maintaining justice within an adversarial system, ensuring that professional integrity is upheld for the rights of the injured party (Saktiawan et al., 2021). If public perception is blurred, restitution is easily misunderstood as ordinary

compensation that can be negotiated, rather than as a right inherent to the victim within the framework of justice.

Public perception of restitution does not stand alone; it is connected to how society interprets victims, perpetrators, and the function of the state. Victims can be understood as parties in need of protection, or as parties that must be strong enough to face social risks. Perpetrators can be understood as parties that must be severely punished, or as parties that still have the opportunity to be rehabilitated through proportional sentencing. The state can be understood as a protector that is obligated to restore, or as an overseer whose main task is to impose sanctions. How society interprets these three elements influences its attitude toward restitution. For example, if society equates justice with imprisonment, then restoration through payment may be perceived as a form of leniency. Conversely, if society views justice as including the recovery of actual losses, then restitution is perceived as an integral part of accountability. Furthermore, society also assesses the legitimacy of the process whether victims are given a voice, whether they are treated with respect, and whether the ruling is easily understood. Procedural justice and negotiation in daily interactions, whether between leaders and subordinates or in law enforcement, are crucial determinants in shaping perceptions of legitimacy and justice (Gani, 2022). Such perceptions determine whether.

Restitution is also closely linked to social values concerning responsibility, restoration, and economic morality. In daily life, losses are often resolved through replacement, apologies, and the repair of social relationships. However, criminal acts place losses within the framework of violations against public norms, rendering the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim no longer equal. In specific cases, such as criminal acts committed by children, the justice system must integrate restorative, protective, and social reconstruction principles to ensure legal processes do not merely culminate in punishment (Al Haibah et al., 2024). Here, society may hold dual perceptions. On one hand, society wants the perpetrator to take concrete responsibility. On the other hand, society may doubt the system's ability to calculate and collect payments fairly. Such doubts can diminish expectations regarding restitution. Skepticism may also arise from the belief that perpetrators are often unable to pay, leading restitution to be viewed as a mere formality. However, normative research does not aim to

test success rates, but rather to unravel the structure of perceptions that explain why restitution is viewed as important or, conversely, as unrealistic.

In public debate, restitution is often conflated with compensation, social assistance, or relief, despite the importance of conceptual distinctions. Restitution originates from the perpetrator's accountability to the victim, whereas compensation and assistance may stem from state policy or social solidarity (Mareta & Kav, 2018). When terms are blurred, society may misplace restitution as a "gift" rather than a demandable right. This misconception impacts how society treats victims. Victims may be encouraged to accept whatever is offered rather than to pursue their rights procedurally. Furthermore, the political participation of citizens in electoral democracy and the dynamics of civil society movements demonstrate that awareness of rights and obligations is heavily influenced by active citizen engagement in public spaces (Rojak et al., 2021). Conceptual confusion can affect how society evaluates verdicts. Restitution rulings may be perceived as a form of transaction, especially if society assumes that payments can replace criminal sanctions.

The prominent issue in this topic is the ambiguity of public perception regarding the position of restitution as a victim's right within the criminal justice system. This ambiguity is evident in the various ways society refers to restitution, the differing ways it assesses its suitability, and the varying ways it distinguishes restitution from other restorative mechanisms. Furthermore, within the criminal justice system, legal protection for juvenile offenders through diversion, development, and social reintegration is a critical concern to ensure justice is achieved holistically (Utama et al., 2024). Within a normative framework, perceptual ambiguity risks producing delegitimization, as a right that is not understood will be difficult to accept as a component of justice. This issue must be unraveled as a problem of social knowledge about law, namely how citizens build an understanding of legal instruments through experience, everyday language, and moral expectations.

Another issue is the gap between the hope for victim restoration and the public's understanding of the procedures that realize the right to restitution. Society may agree in principle that victims need to be restored, yet fail to understand that restoration through restitution requires clear claims, proof of loss, and executable decisions. When procedures are

perceived as complex, society may judge restitution as impractical, suggesting that victims should instead accept non-legal assistance. This assessment can diminish the victim's position in criminal proceedings because they are steered away from the path of asserting their rights. Furthermore, society may consider the discussion of victim losses to be a civil matter that should be separated from criminal proceedings (Wijaya & Purwadi, 2018). This separation influences public support for merging restitution claims within criminal proceedings.

This study aims to construct a conceptual framework that explains how society understands the right to restitution and how that understanding shapes acceptance of victim restoration within the criminal justice system. Such a framework is necessary because restitution is not merely a written norm, but an instrument that relies on social support, process legitimacy, and legal language that citizens can comprehend. By organizing concepts of perception, procedural justice, and legitimacy, this writing can clarify why some citizens view restitution as part of accountability, while others view it as a private matter or as an element that interferes with the goals of sentencing. This urgency is also practical because public perception influences how victims decide to pursue their rights, how families provide support, and how society evaluates court verdicts. Within the framework of a rule-of-law state, victim restoration requires social acceptance so that it is not perceived as an alien policy. Therefore, this normative study is important for strengthening conceptual understanding, which can serve as a basis for outreach, legal communication, and the formulation of victim service guidelines.

The objective of this writing is to develop a conceptual description regarding public perception toward the right of restitution for crime victims and to explain how such perception influences the acceptance of victim recovery within the criminal process. This writing aims to map the forms of public understanding of restitution, including the distinction between restitution, compensation, and assistance, as well as public assessment of the relationship between restitution and criminal sanctions. Theoretically, the writing clarifies the relationship between legitimacy, procedural justice, and the recognition of victim rights. Practically, the writing provides a basis for clearer legal communication for victim services

and for the formulation of handling guidelines that preserve victim dignity. This writing is normative in nature and does not rely on field data.

## Method

This study employs a qualitative literature review to construct a normative synthesis regarding public perception toward the right of restitution for crime victims. The materials used include works on social research methodology, theories of perception and compliance, and legal sources discussing victim rights, recovery, and procedural justice. The selection of sources is conducted by screening for relevance to the problem formulation, conceptual clarity, and consistency of argumentation. Bailey (2008) is used to affirm the discipline of searching and theme development, particularly in organizing research problems, determining units of discussion, and maintaining coherence between questions and conclusions. Gorard and Taylor (2004) are utilized to strengthen precision in unifying concepts from various social science traditions without rendering the writing a loose combination of ideas. Within the sphere of normative research, the unification of concepts is necessary so that restitution is discussed both as a legal right and as an object of social perception that shapes public acceptance.

The processing of materials is carried out through systematic reading and thematic coding that groups ideas into themes of the definition of restitution, the structure of justice perception, the legitimacy of the criminal process, and the implications of perception for the social behavior of victims and the community. Arfa and Marpaung (2016) are used as a reference to affirm the workings of normative research, particularly in treating norms as primary material, constructing concept-based argumentation, and distinguishing prescriptive descriptions from social descriptions. Variations in citation styles are applied appropriately, such as narrative forms like Gorard and Taylor (2004) and parenthetical forms like (Bailey, 2008), to ensure the narrative flow remains smooth. Conceptual validity is maintained through the consistency of terminology, the avoidance of claims requiring empirical verification, and the alignment of each theme with the problem formulation. With this approach, the results of the study are presented as a conceptual framework that explains the formation of public perception and its consequences for the acceptance of the right to restitution.

## Result and Discussion

The right to restitution is the right of a victim of a criminal act to obtain compensation for loss of property, suffering, or treatment costs incurred as a result of a crime, which is charged to the perpetrator based on a court decision. The primary legal foundation for this is stipulated in Law Number 31 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Law Number 13 of 2006 concerning the Protection of Witnesses and Victims, which explicitly places restitution as one of the victim's constitutional rights. This regulation ensures that the focus of criminal justice is not only on punishing the perpetrator but also on restoring the victim's condition through legally valid and measurable compensation mechanisms.

Technical implementation regarding the procedures for filing and determining restitution is governed in more depth through Government Regulation Number 43 of 2017 concerning the Implementation of Restitution for Children Who Are Victims of Criminal Acts, as well as Government Regulation Number 7 of 2018 concerning the Provision of Compensation, Restitution, and Assistance to Witnesses and Victims. Under these rules, restitution covers the reimbursement of medical expenses, loss of income, and even immaterial losses suffered by the victim or their heirs. It is important to note that restitution applications can be submitted through the Witness and Victim Protection Agency (LPSK) for verification before being forwarded to the public prosecutor in the case file.

In the judicial realm, the Supreme Court has also issued Supreme Court Regulation (PERMA) Number 1 of 2022 concerning Procedures for the Settlement of Applications and Provision of Restitution and Compensation to Victims of Criminal Acts (Ramdhani et al., 2024). This PERMA serves as a guideline for judges in examining, adjudicating, and supervising the implementation of restitution payments by the convict. One crucial point in the latest regulation is the obligation for law enforcement officials to inform victims of their right to restitution from the investigation stage, ensuring that victims have sufficient opportunity to compile their details of loss before the case is decided in court.

Specifically for sexual violence crimes, regulations have been further strengthened by the presence of Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning the Crime of Sexual Violence (UU TPKS). In this law, there is a legal breakthrough in the form of a victim trust fund that can be utilized if the

confiscated assets of the perpetrator are insufficient to pay restitution (Gulo et al., 2024). This provision aims to close legal loopholes where perpetrators often choose to serve substitute imprisonment rather than pay compensation, ensuring that the victim's right to economic restoration can still be fulfilled through more progressive state mechanisms.

The restitution filing process involves synergy between the police, the prosecutor's office, the LPSK, and the court to ensure that the value of the claimed loss is accurate and realistic. Victims must include supporting evidence such as medical receipts, proof of property damage, or letters confirming loss of employment so that judges can determine a fair nominal amount of restitution in their verdict (Apriandi et al., 2024). This systematic governance is expected to minimize the impact of prolonged trauma and provide a more complete sense of justice for those who have become victims of crime.

Juridically, restitution differs from compensation, where restitution is the direct responsibility of the criminal perpetrator, while compensation is indemnity provided by the state in cases of gross human rights violations or terrorism (Kusyandi, 2024). With the existing regulatory framework, the Indonesian justice system now prioritizes a restorative approach that balances criminal sanctions with the restoration of the victim's civil rights. This reinforces that the state's presence is not merely to imprison perpetrators, but also to ensure that victims do not bear the burden of loss alone as a result of the criminal acts committed against them.

The right to restitution for victims of criminal acts can be understood as a normative statement that victim loss is a consequence that must be accounted for, rather than a mere side effect to be ignored (Alm, 2019). In this framework, restitution positions the victim as a rights-holder whose claims can be articulated within the criminal process. Public perception of this right is shaped by how citizens understand the purpose of criminal justice—whether it is understood primarily as retribution, deterrence, or restoration. If restoration is understood as a legitimate goal, restitution tends to be accepted as a component of justice. If justice is understood solely as corporal punishment, restitution may be perceived as an unnecessary additional element. At this point, perception is not merely an opinion, but a framework of judgment that influences social support for victims when they exercise their rights. Perception also influences how society evaluates law enforcement officials, whether they are considered fair for attending to

victim loss or criticized for exceeding the focus of criminal proceedings. Therefore, the discussion on restitution must organize the relationship between rights, the purpose of sentencing, and social acceptance. By organizing these relationships, it becomes clear why the right to restitution may be considered reasonable by some citizens, yet deemed alien by others, even though both groups desire for the victim to be restored.

Public perception often begins with a simple understanding of justice: the perpetrator must bear the consequences. Those consequences may be understood as criminal sanctions, or they may be understood as the restoration of loss (Kirchengast, 2016). When justice is understood as equity, citizens may judge that victims who have suffered loss must receive compensation so that their equilibrium is restored. When justice is understood as state firmness, citizens may judge that imprisonment is sufficient and that the matter of loss is a separate issue. These two patterns of judgment produce different perceptions of restitution. Perceptions that accept restitution tend to emphasize concrete accountability that addresses the victim's needs. Perceptions that reject restitution tend to emphasize the simplicity of criminal objectives and a concern that payment might be construed as an "expiation." However, the legal framework of restitution does not intend to replace sanctions, but rather to complement accountability. Here lies the importance of public understanding regarding the distinction between punishment and restoration. When that distinction is understood, restitution can be perceived as a mechanism that strengthens the sense of justice. When that distinction is misunderstood, restitution risks being perceived as a transaction. Normative discussion affirms that the quality of perception depends on the clarity of the concepts circulating in the social space.

The distinction between restitution, compensation, and social assistance is the key to mapping public perception. Restitution is inherent in the accountability relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, whereas compensation is often understood as a form of state responsibility toward the victim under specific circumstances, and social assistance is understood as solidarity (García-Godos, 2018). When these terms are conflated, society may judge that victims should be grateful for receiving assistance, even though restitution is a right. This distinction also affects how society evaluates the reasonableness of demands. Claiming a right is

often considered aggressive when citizens understand it as a request for help. Consequently, victims may face social pressure to remain silent. On the other hand, if restitution is understood as a consequence that must be fulfilled by the perpetrator, society finds it easier to support the victim in making claims. Mapping perception also requires attention to how society evaluates the source of payment. If the payment originates from the perpetrator, citizens may assess it as corrective justice. If the payment is perceived to come from the state, citizens may assess it as a public burden. Perceptions of public burden can trigger rejection if citizens believe the state should focus on law enforcement. Therefore, the discussion of restitution requires conceptual clarity regarding who is responsible and for what purpose. This clarity helps explain why restitution may gain moral support in one social situation but face resistance in another. Such resistance is often not a rejection of the victim, but a rejection of a mistaken understanding of the restoration instrument.

Public perception of the victim influences the acceptance of restitution. Victims can be understood as parties who are weak and in need of support, but they can also be understood as parties who should have been cautious, leading their losses to be viewed as a part of risk (Rui-jun, 2011). When victims are perceived as having contributed to the situation, support for restitution may decline. When victims are perceived as being purely harmed, support increases. This judgment often operates through moral categories, such as whether the victim is considered worthy of being defended. Within a normative framework, these moral categories are problematic if they make the victim's rights dependent on sympathy. Rights should not depend on the assessment of a victim's character, yet public perception often links the two regardless. The same applies to types of criminal acts. Crimes that result in physical loss often elicit strong empathy, while crimes resulting in economic loss may be perceived as a transactional risk. Differences in empathy affect support for restitution. Therefore, the discussion on public perception must note that support for restitution is not always consistent across types of cases. The quality of social acceptance can change according to the portrayal of the victim shaped through public narratives. By understanding this mechanism, it can be explained why restitution as an equal right can be perceived differently in different social spaces.

Public assessment of the perpetrator also determines how restitution is evaluated. If the perpetrator is perceived as having the means to pay, restitution is viewed as realistic and fair (Gladfelter et al., 2018). If the perpetrator is perceived as incapable, restitution is seen as a symbolic ruling that provides no actual recovery. However, perceptions regarding the ability to pay are often intertwined with moral judgments. Citizens may decide that perpetrators remain obligated to pay as a form of accountability, even if it is difficult. Citizens may also decide that recovery must be prioritized, necessitating state intervention to ensure victims do not wait indefinitely. In normative discussion, what matters is how perceptions of financial ability shape expectations of the process. Low expectations can make victims reluctant to claim restitution. Excessively high expectations can leave the public disappointed when payment does not occur immediately. Furthermore, there is a perception that perpetrators might use restitution to obtain social leniency, for instance, by being seen as having "redeemed" themselves. Such perceptions can lead the public to reject restitution for undermining the function of sanctions. At this point, it is necessary to affirm that restitution does not erase guilt, but rather addresses the consequences. However, the acceptance of this affirmation depends on how society understands criminal liability and civil liability as two realms that can coexist.

Procedural justice is a critical dimension in public perception of restitution. Procedural justice refers to the assessment that a process is orderly, transparent, and respectful of the parties involved (Gladfelter et al., 2018). In cases involving victims, the public observes whether victims are given the space to articulate their losses, whether they are treated with respect, and whether the rationale for a ruling is understandable. If the process is perceived to sideline the victim, the public may judge restitution as merely a norm on paper. If the process provides a fair space, restitution is perceived as more tangible. Procedural justice is also linked to predictability whether victims can understand the steps required. When steps are unclear, the public judges that rights are difficult to access. This assessment can diminish the legitimacy of the restitution instrument. Within a normative framework, legitimacy is not just legal validity, but the ability to be accepted as fair by the citizens. The perception of procedural justice influences whether citizens are willing to support the victim, for

example, by helping prepare documentation of losses or attending the proceedings. Such social support can strengthen the victim's position. Therefore, the discussion of restitution must place procedure as a component of public perception, rather than merely a technical aspect. Procedures shape experiences, and experiences shape public judgment.

The legitimacy of law enforcement institutions also shapes public perception of restitution. If institutions are perceived as clean and consistent, the public tends to trust that restitution claims will be handled fairly (Mudrika et al., 2023). If institutions are perceived as inconsistent, the public tends to doubt that restitution can be pursued without burdensome social or economic costs. This doubt affects the willingness of victims to submit applications. In a normative framework, doubt can decrease the utilization of rights. Society may choose informal pathways, such as direct negotiation, because the formal path is perceived as exhausting. However, direct negotiation does not always protect the victim, especially where there is a power imbalance. Public perception of inequality also determines support for restitution. If the public views the victim as unlikely to prevail against a powerful perpetrator, the public will judge restitution as a right that is difficult to realize. Moreover, institutional legitimacy is influenced by how institutions communicate. Clear communication helps the public understand that restitution is not a gift, but a right. Vague communication leads the public to consider restitution an option dependent on mercy. Thus, public perception of restitution is intertwined with public perception of institutions, because institutions are the medium that translates rights into concrete experiences for the victim.

Perceptions regarding the proof of loss are a component that influences social acceptance of restitution. Society may judge that proving loss is important so that claims are fair and not excessive (Crook, 2023). However, society may also judge that overly stringent proof potentially burdens the victim. In the social space, victims are often perceived as already suffering, so demands for extensive documentation can be viewed as insensitive treatment. These differing assessments create a perceptual tension between accuracy and accessibility. Within a normative framework, accuracy is necessary for justice for the perpetrator and for the legitimacy of the verdict, but accessibility is necessary so that rights can be exercised. When society views the system as overemphasizing formal accuracy, support for restitution may weaken because

rights are considered difficult to attain. When society views the system as too lax, support may weaken because the public fears abuse. Therefore, public perception of restitution relates to an image of balance. Citizens seek a balance between victim protection and legal order. In normative discussion, this balance can be explained as the need to maintain public trust. Public trust becomes the foundation for the acceptance of restitution verdicts, especially when verdicts require time to be executed.

Public perception regarding the relationship between restitution and sentencing is often the center of debate. There is a view that sentencing must be harsh to create a deterrent effect, such that attention to restitution is considered a distraction (Brooks, 2017). There is also a view that sentencing without victim restoration leaves a palpable injustice. Within a normative framework, both views can be reconciled by asserting that sentencing and restitution have different objectives. Sentencing governs the state's response to violations of public norms, while restitution governs the restoration of the victim's loss. However, public understanding of this distinction is not always strong. Many citizens view the criminal process as a single package, leading them to conclude that any reduction in imprisonment implies financial compensation. This conclusion reinforces the perception of restitution as a transaction. Therefore, public perception depends on the system's ability to explain that payment does not erase guilt; payment affirms responsibility. In the public moral space, responsibility is often understood through concrete action. Restitution provides that concrete action. However, if restitution is understood as an "escape route" for the perpetrator, the public rejects it. Herein lies the importance of conceptual explanation regarding the position of restitution. Normative studies can show that restoration-oriented justice does not conflict with legal firmness, provided that sanctions and restoration are placed proportionally and separated conceptually.

Household economic dimensions also influence perception toward restitution. Citizens often evaluate victim restoration through the lens of living needs. Losses that disrupt income are perceived as a restoration priority. In this framework, restitution is viewed as relevant because it directly relates to the costs that the victim must bear. However, this perception can change if citizens view the process of collecting restitution as requiring additional costs. If citizens believe that claiming restitution

requires a long process, they may judge that it is better for the victim to focus on personal recovery through other sources. This assessment can reduce support for the path of rights. Furthermore, society may judge that victims who file for restitution will be perceived as materialistic. Such negative perceptions can pressure victims into silence. Within a normative framework, stigmatization against victims who claim their rights is a problem of social acceptance. The right to restoration is perceived as a "moral burden" if society judges that the victim should prioritize forgiveness or fortitude. Discussion on restitution must position this issue as a conflict of values, not as a weakness of the victim. By unraveling value conflicts, it can be explained why victims often need social support to dare to claim their rights, and why communication about restitution must emphasize the moral legitimacy of recovering losses. Practical obstacles in legal procedures often affect the effectiveness of rights fulfillment for injured parties in various cases (Wahyudi et al., 2023).

Public perception of restitution is also linked to the conflict resolution patterns that exist within social environments. In many communities, conflict resolution is often carried out through deliberation, informal mediation, and consensus. This pattern can support restitution because restitution aligns with the idea of compensation. However, this pattern can also shift restitution into a private agreement that fails to consider the weak position of the victim. When consensus becomes the primary norm, victims can be pressured to accept a certain amount for the sake of maintaining harmony. Within a normative framework, this kind of social pressure can obscure the right to restitution that should protect the victim. Society may judge that victims who bring cases to the formal path have damaged social relationships. This assessment can reduce support for the victim. On the other hand, society may support the formal path if they consider the perpetrator dangerous and in need of official accountability. Thus, public perception fluctuates between two orientations: social harmony and legal order. Restitution sits at the meeting point of both because it touches upon economic restoration as well as formal processes. Normative studies need to explain that public perception of restitution will differ depending on the dominant value orientation, whether it is the value of harmony or the value of enforcement. This explanation helps in understanding variations in acceptance without requiring statistical data. The application of ethical principles in legal advocacy becomes a primary pillar

for maintaining justice and ensuring that professional integrity is upheld in every dispute resolution process (Saktiawan et al., 2021).

The aspect of victim dignity influences how society views the need for restitution. Dignity includes the recognition that a victim has been harmed and is entitled to restoration. If restitution is perceived as an acknowledgment of dignity, the public tends to accept it. If restitution is perceived merely as money, the public may reject or belittle it. Within a normative framework, the money in restitution is not a symbol of materialism, but an instrument of recovery linked to the actual costs resulting from the crime. However, society may assign a different symbolic meaning. Some citizens may judge that providing money cannot restore suffering, leading them to view restitution as something superficial. This assessment can cause restitution to lose moral support. Normative discussion needs to affirm that restitution does not claim to restore all losses, but to restore losses that can be stated as claims. Other losses may require other services, such as psychological support. When society understands this division of function, restitution is more easily accepted. Furthermore, restitution can increase a victim's sense of being valued because the state recognizes their loss. This recognition influences the victim's psychological recovery. Therefore, public perception that views restitution as an acknowledgment of dignity can strengthen social support. Social support is an essential element for victims to endure the process. Thus, dignity must be positioned as a dimension of public perception toward restitution. Citizen awareness of rights and active participation in public spaces are determining factors in strengthening social support and influencing the dynamics of civil society movements in demanding justice (Rojak et al., 2021).

Distributive justice is also present in public perception regarding restitution. Distributive justice relates to the question of who bears the burden of restoration. When the perpetrator bears it, the public may view the burden as being placed on the correct party. If the public believes that restoration will shift into a burden on the state, some citizens may judge that as unfair, especially if they feel the state has other priorities. However, that perception depends on the public's understanding of restitution as a perpetrator's obligation. When that understanding is blurred, society may reject a policy that actually demands the perpetrator to pay. Furthermore, the public may question justice when the perpetrator is unable to pay. In such a situation, society may be divided between those who demand the

perpetrator remain responsible and those who demand the state intervene so that the victim is not abandoned. This division shows that public perception of restitution is inseparable from views on the state's function in protecting its citizens. Normative studies can map out that there are two competing logics: the logic of perpetrator accountability and the logic of state responsibility. Restitution resides in the former, but it can intersect with the latter when implementation becomes difficult. Public perception of this intersection determines whether restitution is viewed as an adequate policy. Thus, distributive justice needs to be explained as a dimension of perception that influences public support and expectations. Modern justice systems must be able to harmonize the protection of victim rights with the rehabilitation of perpetrators through appropriate mechanisms (Utama et al., 2024; Al Haibah et al., 2024).

Public perception of rights is often formed through experiences encountering legal services. Rights that are easy to understand and use tend to be considered real. Rights that are difficult to understand tend to be considered formalities. Restitution risks falling into the second category if its legal language is complex. Within a normative framework, legal language mediates social acceptance. If the term "restitution" is understood as a technical term far from everyday language, society will replace it with terms like "indemnity" or "compensation." Replacing terms can aid understanding, but it can also alter legal meaning. When the meaning shifts, society may create expectations that are mismatched. When expectations are not met, legitimacy declines. Therefore, public perception of restitution cannot be separated from legal communication. Good legal communication does not merely explain definitions but explains the position of restitution within the framework of accountability. Furthermore, legal communication must explain that victims have the right to be heard, the right to obtain information, and the right to demand restoration. When society understands this range of rights, restitution is perceived as part of a system that respects victims. If society does not understand, restitution is perceived as an optional choice that can be ignored. Thus, legal communication becomes a component that shapes public perception and ultimately forms social acceptance of restitution. Adherence to rules and organizational transparency are the main foundations for policies to be implemented clearly for the public (Darmawan et al., 2024; Irfansyah et al., 2024).

Public perception of restitution is also influenced by concepts of fault and intent in criminal acts. Citizens often distinguish between crimes committed with malicious intent and events considered to be unintentional errors. This distinction affects the assessment of the obligation to pay. When malicious intent is perceived as strong, the public supports heavier obligations, including full restitution. When the fault is perceived as lighter, the public may judge that a large financial obligation is too harsh. Within a normative framework, restitution aims to restore the victim's loss regardless of the public's moral judgment regarding intent, because the loss persists. However, public support for restoration is often influenced by moral judgments toward the perpetrator. This indicates that public perception operates through two dimensions: the dimension of victim loss and the dimension of perpetrator character. When the perpetrator's character dimension dominates, restitution can become controversial. Therefore, normative discussion needs to emphasize that victim restoration is not identical to granting leniency to the perpetrator. Restoration is the fulfillment of obligations arising from harmful acts. This affirmation helps explain how public perception can be directed by the clarity of accountability concepts. However, acceptance remains dependent on citizens' social experiences and beliefs about appropriate justice. Criminological perspectives emphasize the importance of a deep understanding of the background of criminal acts to ensure targeted law enforcement (Lukmantara et al., 2022).

Perception of equality before the law influences social acceptance of restitution. Citizens assess whether victims' rights are applied equally without regard for social status, access, and proximity to institutions (Martin & Fowle, 2020). If the public believes that certain victims find it easier to obtain restitution, then restitution is perceived as an unequal right. Perceptions of inequality undermine legitimacy. Within a normative framework, legitimacy requires procedural equality. Procedural equality means victims receive the same information, the same opportunities, and the same treatment. When equality is perceived to be absent, other victims will be reluctant to claim their rights because they feel they lack the opportunity. Furthermore, the public may view restitution as a tool that benefits certain groups. This view reduces social support and lowers the moral pressure on perpetrators to pay. Moral pressure is important because payment often requires the perpetrator's willingness. When moral pressure

is weak, enforcement becomes more difficult. Thus, the perception of equality becomes a factor connecting institutions and social behavior. Normative studies can explain that the perception of equality is shaped by information transparency, the clarity of verdicts, and procedural consistency. Although this writing does not present data, this framework explains why restitution as a right can be accepted or rejected depending on public judgment regarding equality.

In the public sphere, restitution also faces perceptions regarding policy priorities. Some citizens may judge that the state should focus more on crime prevention and the arrest of perpetrators (Martin & Fowle, 2020). Other citizens judge that victim restoration is the measure of the legal system's humanity. These differing priorities influence how society evaluates the use of resources. Restitution can be perceived as additional work for officials or as an improvement in service quality. Within a normative framework, these two views can be united by seeing restitution as part of the state's comprehensive response to crime, namely sanctions and restoration. However, social acceptance depends on the dominant narrative. If the dominant narrative places the victim at the center of attention, restitution is better accepted. If the dominant narrative places the perpetrator at the center, restitution is considered peripheral. Normative discussion needs to organize the view that the goal of criminal justice can include restoration without reducing firmness. The quality of social acceptance also depends on whether restitution is perceived to produce tangible recovery. If the public sees victims continuing to bear losses, they judge the system as incomplete. This assessment can trigger demands for change. Thus, the perception of policy priorities is a dimension that explains why restitution may gain widespread support or, conversely, receive limited attention.

Public perception of restitution is also related to the way society understands the responsibilities of family and community toward the victim (Moss et al., 2019). In many social norms, the family is considered the victim's primary support system, leading to the belief that financial recovery is an internal family matter. This view can diminish support for restitution as a right that must be formally enforced. However, another view emphasizes that crime is a public violation, meaning victim recovery should not be burdened upon the family. Within a normative framework,

restitution shifts the burden of recovery to the party who caused the loss, thus aligning with the principle of accountability. Public acceptance of this burden-shifting depends on the extent to which citizens acknowledge that the victim should not bear the consequences alone. Furthermore, perceptions of restitution are influenced by views on victim vulnerability. If a victim is perceived as vulnerable, support increases; if perceived as capable, support declines. This perspective carries a risk, as rights become dependent on perceptions of vulnerability. Normative studies affirm that the right to restitution is inherent to the loss, not to stereotypes about the victim. By organizing these arguments, one can understand how social perceptions can strengthen or weaken the acceptance of victim rights.

Perceptions regarding the morality of payment also emerge in society. Restitution payments can be perceived as a form of measurable accountability (Faraldo-Cabana, 2016). However, payments can also be perceived as an attempt to "buy" forgiveness. This tension in perception is significant because it touches upon strong moral values. Within a normative framework, restitution is not intended to buy forgiveness, but to restore loss. Forgiveness belongs to the realm of personal relations, while restoration is in the realm of legal obligation. However, in everyday language, payment is often linked to forgiveness. If this link is dominant, the public may judge that the perpetrator can avoid punishment with money. This judgment strengthens if society does not understand that restitution can proceed concurrently with criminal sanctions. Therefore, the perception of the morality of payment needs to be mapped as part of public perception. This mapping explains that rejection of restitution sometimes stems from moral concerns, rather than a rejection of the victim. In normative discussion, these moral concerns can be addressed by affirming the position of restitution as an obligation of recovery that does not erase guilt. However, conceptual affirmation must be understood by the public to alter perceptions. Thus, the quality of public understanding becomes a key factor in the social acceptance of restitution.

Perceptions of the victim's sense of security are also related to restitution. Victims often require security from threats, intimidation, or social pressure (Wemmers, 2002). If the process of claiming restitution is perceived to increase risk to the victim, society may judge that restitution is not worth pursuing. Within a normative framework, rights must be

exercisable without sacrificing safety. Public perception of safety influences support; if citizens believe the system protects the victim, they are more likely to support the victim in claiming restitution. If citizens do not trust the system, they will encourage the victim to avoid the process. Such encouragement can weaken the fulfillment of rights. Moreover, perceptions of safety can influence how society assesses justice. For some citizens, justice is not merely payment and punishment, but the guarantee that the victim can return to a normal life. If restitution is perceived as unrelated to safety, the public may deem it secondary. Here, it must be explained that victim restoration is multidimensional. Restitution restores losses that can be quantified, while security requires other protective measures. By understanding this division of functions, society can assess restitution appropriately. Thus, the perception of safety is a dimension that influences how society weighs restitution within the overall rights of the victim.

Public perception of court verdicts also determines the acceptance of restitution. Verdicts that explain the reasoning and the method of loss calculation tend to be more easily accepted (Gregory et al., 2023). Verdicts that appear brief and technical tend to be difficult to understand, causing the public to fill in the gaps with assumptions. These assumptions may include the belief that the amount is unfair or that it was determined without any basis. Within a normative framework, the comprehensibility of a verdict is a part of accountability. Accountability strengthens legitimacy. Legitimacy strengthens compliance with the verdict, including the perpetrator's compliance to pay. Public perception of accountability is also related to the belief that the victim is treated as an important party. If a verdict is seen to pay attention to the victim's losses, the public judges that the victim is acknowledged. If the verdict ignores the victim's losses, the public judges that the victim is neglected. This assessment affects the image of the criminal justice system. In normative discussion, the system's image is not merely a reputation, but a source of public trust in using legal channels. If the image is positive, other victims will be encouraged to exercise their rights. If the image is poor, other victims will choose to remain silent. Thus, perception of verdicts is a dimension that connects restitution to public trust more broadly.

Public perception of the right to restitution can be organized into several interrelated assessment categories. First, the assessment category of objective whether restitution is understood as a component of justice. Second,

the assessment category of morality whether payment is understood as responsibility or as expiation. Third, the assessment category of procedure whether the process is understood as fair, clear, and respectful of the victim. Fourth, the assessment category of institution whether the institution is understood as consistent and trustworthy. Fifth, the assessment category of practicality whether restitution is understood as realistic and useful. In the context of legal protection, these categories become highly relevant when applied to specific cases, such as legal protection for online motorcycle taxi drivers who are victims of fictitious orders, where the clarity of the victim's rights status often clashes with practical realities in the field (Wahyudi et al., 2023). These categories address the problem formulation by demonstrating how perception shapes acceptance. Acceptance is not determined by a single element, but by a combination of categories. For example, citizens may accept restitution morally but reject it practically because they consider payment impossible. Citizens may accept it practically but reject it morally due to fears of transactional elements. Citizens may accept it in terms of objective but reject it procedurally because they deem the process unfair. Thus, public perception is layered. Normative studies can explain these layers and the relationships between them. By understanding these layers, it becomes clear why public support for restitution can fluctuate in accordance with changes in experience, public narratives, and the quality of legal communication.

Public perception of the right to restitution forms an ecosystem of social acceptance that influences the exercise of rights by victims. If restitution is perceived as a legitimate, fair, and dignified right, victims are more likely to pursue it with the support of their families and communities. If restitution is perceived as a private matter, victims will tend to be encouraged to resolve it outside of formal channels. Criminological perspectives in criminal law enforcement, as seen in cases of human trafficking, show that public understanding of victim rights is often influenced by how legal instruments provide space for tangible restoration and protection (Lukmantara et al., 2022). If restitution is perceived as a transaction that benefits the perpetrator, the public will reject restitution verdicts even if the victim needs them. Therefore, public perception is a normative element that determines the success of victim restoration policies in terms of social acceptance. Social acceptance influences legitimacy, and legitimacy influences the trust to use the system.

This study affirms that restitution needs to be understood as part of a restoration-oriented accountability; however, acceptance of it depends on the clarity of its distinction from other mechanisms, on the understanding of the relationship between restitution and sanctions, and on procedural experiences that respect the victim. Thus, the conceptual answer to the problem formulation is that public perception shapes the acceptance of restitution through assessments of objectives, morality, procedures, institutions, and the realism of recovery. Such assessments.

## Conclusion

Public perception of the right to restitution for crime victims is formed through an evaluative framework that encompasses the objectives of criminal justice, the morality of accountability, procedural justice, institutional legitimacy, and the realism of recovery. Restitution tends to be accepted when it is understood as a part of concrete accountability that complements criminal sanctions and recognizes the dignity of the victim. Restitution tends to be doubted when it is perceived as a transaction that can redeem guilt, as a private matter separate from criminal law, or as a right that is difficult to exercise due to misunderstood procedures. Social acceptance is also influenced by how the public interprets victims and perpetrators, including moral judgments that sometimes cause support for the right to depend on sympathy. The developed conceptual framework demonstrates that public perception is multi-layered and can vary across different types of cases due to differences in empathy, varying methods of assessing loss, and differing expectations of institutions. Therefore, discussing restitution as a victim's right requires a firm conceptual organization so that recovery is understood as a legitimate part of justice.

The implications and suggestions emphasize the need for legal communication that explains the distinction between restitution, compensation, and social assistance, while also clarifying that restitution does not replace criminal sanctions. Such explanations need to be conveyed in easily understandable language so that the public does not perceive restitution as a form of leniency for the perpetrator. Services provided to victims must emphasize respect, procedural comprehension, and transparency regarding decision rationales, as the perception of procedural justice shapes legitimacy. Furthermore, it is important to

develop loss-explanation guidelines that balance the need for precision with accessibility for the victim, ensuring the public sees the right as reasonably exercisable. Strengthening institutional legitimacy requires consistency in treatment and equality of information for victims, so that perceptions of inequality can be suppressed. At the social level, public education regarding victim rights can reduce the stigmatization of victims who demand recovery and can strengthen community support. Through these steps, social acceptance of restitution can increase as a component of victim recovery within the criminal process.

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