

Criminological Review of Armed Robbery (Begal) Crimes Using Sharp Weapons Within the Jurisdiction of Belawan Port Police Resort

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Abstract

Armed robbery (begal) involving the use of sharp weapons has become one of the most disturbing criminal phenomena within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police Resort. This study aims to analyze the factors contributing to the occurrence of armed robbery crimes, the modus operandi employed by offenders, as well as the countermeasures implemented by the police and the obstacles encountered in their enforcement efforts. This research employs an empirical juridical (sociological law) approach using qualitative methods. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with investigators from the Criminal Investigation Unit (Satreskrim) of the Belawan Port Police Resort and with offenders and victims. Secondary data were collected through literature studies and police report documentation.

The findings indicate that the primary factors driving armed robbery crimes include economic hardship, particularly unemployment; adverse social environments and peer influences; low levels of education; and the high prevalence of narcotics abuse, especially methamphetamine (shabu-shabu), among adolescents. The most common modus operandi involves surveilling victims in isolated areas, forcibly intercepting their vehicles, and threatening or injuring them with sharp weapons in order to seize motorcycles and other valuable property.

Countermeasures undertaken by the Belawan Port Police Resort include preventive strategies such as large-scale patrol operations (Enhanced Routine Activities/KRYD) in crime-prone areas, as well as repressive measures through firm and proportional law enforcement actions against perpetrators. The principal obstacles faced by law enforcement authorities include limited personnel resources, inadequate public street lighting infrastructure, and insufficient community participation in reporting indications of criminal activities.

Based on these findings, the study recommends strengthening cross-sectoral coordination between law enforcement agencies and local government authorities to improve public infrastructure, as well as revitalizing community-based neighborhood security systems (Siskamling) to enhance crime prevention efforts.

Keywords: Criminological Review, Armed Robbery, Sharp Weapons, Belawan Port Police Resort.

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Introduction

Medan Belawan District holds strategic national significance as one of the most important economic gateways in the Province of North Sumatra. However, the region is confronted with complex social challenges, one of which is the prevalence of street robbery crimes. The coastal area of Belawan is surrounded by pockets of slum settlements, densely populated coastal communities, and a highly heterogeneous population resulting from urbanization and the mobility of migrant workers. The striking social disparity between the modern industrial port sector and the structural poverty experienced by surrounding communities has created a fertile social incubator for the emergence of criminal behavior. This critical phenomenon has become increasingly visible within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police Resort.

From both geographical and sociological perspectives, the Belawan Port area possesses unique and complex characteristics compared to other police jurisdictions in North Sumatra. As one of Indonesia's largest international seaports and the primary logistics gateway to Sumatra Island, Belawan serves as a center of intense maritime economic activity.

Indonesia is a state governed by the rule of law, guaranteeing protection, security, and public order for all citizens as mandated by the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. One manifestation of this protection is the guarantee of safety from all forms of criminal threats and violence in public spaces. However, alongside modernization, technological advancement, and evolving socio-economic conditions, social problems have likewise become increasingly complex. One of the most significant negative consequences of these developments is the rise in both the quantity and sophistication of criminal activities, particularly street crimes.

Among various forms of street crime, violent theft commonly known in Indonesia as *begal* (street robbery) has become one of the most feared offenses. Legally, such acts are categorized under Article 365 of the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP), which regulates theft accompanied by violence. The nature of this crime has become increasingly alarming because perpetrators no longer merely seize property covertly; instead, they openly arm themselves with sharp weapons such as machetes, sickles, and samurai swords to threaten, injure, or even kill victims in order to obtain valuable property, particularly motorcycles.

This situation is clearly reflected within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police Resort. As a strategic maritime and logistics gateway in North Sumatra, the Belawan coastal region exhibits heterogeneous socio-economic characteristics, high population density, and numerous slum settlements. According to internal police data from early 2026, the Belawan Port Police Resort successfully uncovered 211 general criminal cases within a relatively short period, with violent theft (street robbery) constituting one of the most prominent categories. A series of brutal robbery incidents involving sharp weapons, including attacks against motorists in Medan Marelan and several fatal incidents in crime-prone locations, confirms that the escalation of street robbery in this area has reached an alarming level.

Based on public security and order reports within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police Resort, the incidence of armed street robbery demonstrates a highly fluctuating yet generally increasing trend. Areas such as Medan Belawan, Medan Labuhan, Medan Deli, and Medan Marelan frequently serve as epicenters of violent robbery activities. The modus operandi employed by perpetrators in these areas is highly organized and audacious. Offenders typically operate in groups ranging from two to six individuals using multiple motorcycles. They systematically monitor isolated logistics routes with poor lighting during vulnerable hours between midnight and dawn (00:00–05:00 WIB), forcibly intercept victims, knock them from their vehicles, and immediately attack with sharp weapons whenever victims attempt to resist.

From a criminological perspective, crime does not emerge in a vacuum. Modern criminological theories regard criminal behavior as a product of failed social interaction and structural pressures. In Belawan, the proliferation of armed robbery is driven by multiple

interconnected factors. The first is economic hardship, particularly high unemployment among productive-age individuals. The second involves adverse social environments and negative peer associations, exacerbated by widespread narcotics abuse, particularly methamphetamine (*sabu-sabu*). Dependence on addictive substances motivates many adolescents and young adults to engage in violent robbery as a means of obtaining immediate funds to finance drug consumption. Furthermore, Belawan's geographical conditions, characterized by numerous isolated routes, inadequate public street lighting, and vulnerable time periods during the early morning hours, provide favorable opportunities for offenders to execute their criminal activities.

The growing public anxiety within Belawan has generated demands for enhanced security measures, including the involvement of institutions beyond the police force in combating street gangs and organized criminal groups. Street robbery has evolved beyond a conventional criminal justice issue and has become a form of social terror that systematically undermines public safety, disrupts nighttime economic activities, and damages social order.

Although the Belawan Port Police Resort and related agencies have repeatedly intensified integrated patrol operations targeting burglary, robbery, and vehicle theft (3C Crimes) and have implemented firm law-enforcement measures against violent offenders, the intensity of these crimes has not significantly diminished. Repressive law-enforcement measures alone have proven insufficient to address the underlying criminological causes of the problem.

The Belawan Port Police Resort and its subordinate police precincts have actively implemented various crime prevention strategies. Preventive measures include Large-Scale Patrol Operations, Blue Light Patrols, and Enhanced Routine Activities (*Kegiatan Rutin yang Ditingkatkan* KRYD) designed to limit offenders' mobility in identified crime hotspots. Repressive measures involve firm and proportionate law-enforcement actions, including the use of firearms against offenders who resist arrest or pose serious threats to public safety, as a means of creating a deterrent effect. In addition, anti-thuggery and antistreet crime operations have involved collaborative security efforts with external institutions.

Despite extensive law-enforcement actions and the imprisonment of numerous offenders, armed street robbery within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police Resort continues to persist. Criminal justice policies focused primarily on post-offense punishment have failed to eliminate the root criminological causes of the problem. A significant gap exists between the intensity of police enforcement efforts and the sustainable reduction of crime rates in the field. Crime prevention initiatives continue to face several structural challenges, including limited police personnel relative to the size of the jurisdiction, inadequate integration of public surveillance systems (CCTV), and low levels of community participation due to fear of intimidation or retaliation by criminal groups.

This dilemma underscores the necessity for a comprehensive, objective, and empirically grounded scientific study. The phenomenon must be examined not merely from a normative legal perspective concerning violations of criminal law provisions but also through an empirical socio-legal approach capable of identifying the criminological dynamics underlying these violent offenses. A critical evaluation of the effectiveness of the criminal policies implemented by the Belawan Port Police Resort is required, alongside the formulation of collaborative non-penal strategies involving local government institutions and community-based social resilience initiatives.

From the perspective of criminal law, armed robbery involving sharp weapons constitutes the offense of violent theft as regulated under Article 365 of the Indonesian Criminal Code. Nevertheless, a purely legal approach is insufficient for understanding and addressing this phenomenon comprehensively. A criminological approach is necessary to analyze the social, economic, cultural, and environmental factors that contribute to the occurrence of such crimes.

The complexity of robbery-related crimes within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police Resort is closely associated with the characteristics of coastal communities, which are marked by high mobility and significant socio-economic disparities. These conditions create both opportunities and motivations for criminal activities. Moreover, rapid urbanization and population growth further contribute to rising crime rates, including violent robbery.

From the perspective of criminal sociology, Belawan's high demographic heterogeneity resulting from labor migration has weakened informal social control mechanisms that traditionally function effectively in homogeneous communities. Neighborly relationships in densely populated areas tend to be transactional and individualistic, thereby reducing the effectiveness of community-based supervision. Consequently, vulnerable adolescents who have dropped out of school are more likely to adopt deviant subcultures, organize themselves into radical motorcycle gangs, and internalize violence as a symbol of masculinity and social legitimacy. Modified sharp weapons are no longer viewed merely as tools of self-defense but rather as primary instruments for creating psychological terror and facilitating robbery through the domination of fear.

Belawan is often perceived by the public as a disadvantaged and underdeveloped area. This perception is reflected in inadequate sanitation, poor urban planning, and high population density that is not matched by sufficient formal employment opportunities. Such structural contradictions have contributed to persistent poverty along the coastal region, where many residents depend on unstable informal occupations such as traditional fishing, ship-cleaning labor, and port porter services. These vulnerable socio-economic conditions generate deep frustration among young people and gradually erode the collective efficacy of local communities in preventing deviant behavior.

Therefore, an in-depth scientific inquiry is required to examine this phenomenon not merely through the lens of normative law but from the perspective of empirical criminology. Such a study should comprehensively map the etiological factors of crime, analyze emerging patterns and modus operandi, and evaluate the effectiveness and limitations of crime-control policies implemented by law enforcement authorities. Based on the complexity of the issues outlined above, this research is conducted under the title:

“A Criminological Review of Armed Robbery Crimes Involving Sharp Weapons within the Jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police Resort.”

Research Methodology

This study employs a **descriptive research design** with an **empirical juridical approach**. Descriptive research aims to provide a clear and systematic description of the criminological review of armed robbery involving the use of sharp weapons within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Harbor Police Resort (Polres Pelabuhan Belawan). The empirical juridical approach is utilized because the study not only examines applicable legal provisions but also investigates how those legal norms are implemented in practice. This approach connects legal rules with facts occurring in society, particularly regarding the handling of armed robbery cases by law enforcement authorities.

A research approach constitutes the method employed by researchers to examine a particular issue in order to obtain data and information consistent with the objectives of the study. In the research entitled “*A Criminological Review of Armed Robbery Involving the Use of Sharp Weapons within the Jurisdiction of the Belawan Harbor Police Resort*,” the study adopts a **socio-juridical approach** combined with a **qualitative research method**.

The socio-juridical approach examines law not merely as a set of written norms embodied in statutory regulations (*law in books*), but also as a social institution operating within society (*law in action*). This approach is employed because the study not only discusses legal regulations concerning the duties and authority of the police in addressing criminal acts but also directly investigates the practical implementation of crime-control measures undertaken by the Belawan Harbor Police Resort. Through the juridical perspective, this study

analyzes various legal provisions related to the handling of armed robbery offenses within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Harbor Police Resort.

The legal basis for this study is **Article 365 of the Indonesian Criminal Code (Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Pidana/KUHP)** concerning theft accompanied by violence (*pencurian dengan kekerasan*). Article 365 stipulates a maximum penalty of nine years' imprisonment. If the offense results in serious bodily injury, the maximum penalty increases to twelve years; if it results in death, the maximum penalty becomes fifteen years. Furthermore, where the offense is committed collectively or involves a planned killing, the penalty may reach twenty years' imprisonment or even capital punishment.

The juridical approach is employed to identify the legal foundations, duties, authorities, and forms of action available to law enforcement officers in addressing armed robbery crimes within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Harbor Police Resort. Meanwhile, the sociological approach is used to understand the social conditions that contribute to the occurrence of armed robbery and to examine community responses to police intervention efforts. This approach is essential because armed robbery constitutes a social phenomenon influenced by various factors, including peer-group environments, family economic conditions, low levels of legal awareness, social media influence, drug abuse, and alcohol consumption.

Through the sociological approach, researchers are able to obtain a realistic understanding of the patterns of armed robbery occurring in the Belawan area, the factors triggering such crimes, and the effectiveness of measures implemented by the Belawan Harbor Police Resort. In addition to the socio-juridical approach, this study also employs a qualitative methodology. The qualitative approach is chosen because the research seeks to understand social phenomena in depth based on empirical facts found in the field.

Qualitative research emphasizes the understanding of the behavior, actions, and experiences of research subjects through direct data collection. Through this approach, researchers can explore comprehensive information from informants regarding the factors causing armed robbery, the preventive, pre-emptive, and repressive measures implemented by the Belawan Harbor Police Resort, the obstacles encountered by law enforcement authorities, the role of families and communities in preventing armed robbery, and the impact of such crimes on public security and social order.

The qualitative approach also provides researchers with flexibility to interact directly with informants, thereby enabling the collection of deeper, more objective, and contextually accurate data. In this study, the socio-juridical approach was selected because it is considered the most appropriate framework for examining armed robbery, a phenomenon that is closely related not only to legal issues but also to the social conditions of the Belawan community. By employing this approach, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive description of crime-control efforts undertaken within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Harbor Police Resort, as well as the challenges encountered in their implementation.

Furthermore, this research approach aims to ensure that the findings are not merely theoretical but also provide practical contributions to law enforcement agencies, governmental institutions, and society in formulating more effective strategies for preventing and combating armed robbery in the future. The study was conducted within the jurisdiction of the **Belawan Harbor Police Resort, North Sumatra**. This location was selected because the area experiences a relatively high incidence of armed robbery cases, making it highly relevant to the research topic. Moreover, the Belawan Harbor Police Resort plays a significant role in maintaining public security and order while implementing various preventive and enforcement measures against armed robbery offenses.

The data utilized in this study consist of **primary data** and **secondary data**. Primary data refer to information obtained directly from first-hand sources in the field. Such data include interviews, observations, and documentation involving parties relevant to the study, such as personnel of the Belawan Harbor Police Resort, community leaders, and members of the public who possess knowledge regarding robbery incidents. Primary data also encompass

observations of environmental conditions and crime-control activities, as well as information obtained from individuals familiar with the issue under investigation.

Secondary data consist of information derived from library materials and documents relevant to the study, including legal and criminological textbooks, academic journals, statutory regulations, police reports, and official documentation. The data collected in this study were analyzed qualitatively through several stages. First, data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation were compiled. Second, data reduction was conducted by selecting and simplifying information relevant to the research objectives. Third, the data were presented systematically in descriptive form. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on the findings.

The collection of legal materials was conducted through **library research**, involving the inventory, identification, classification, and examination of various legal sources according to their relevance to the research object. Subsequently, legal materials were analyzed qualitatively using a **deductive reasoning approach**, whereby arguments are derived from general legal norms and applied to the analysis of concrete issues concerning the handling of armed robbery offenses within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Harbor Police Resort. Through this methodology, the research is directed toward producing systematic, objective, rational, and prescriptive legal arguments regarding a more measurable and proportional model for the exercise of investigators' discretion, consistent with the principles of legal certainty, utility, and substantive justice in handling armed robbery cases. Accordingly, the study is expected to contribute academically to strengthening the parameters governing investigative discretion and harmonizing the application of restorative justice in armed robbery cases within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Harbor Police Resort, particularly in situations involving ambiguity concerning the legal classification of offenders.

The research was conducted within the jurisdiction of the **Belawan Harbor Police Resort (Polres Pelabuhan Belawan), North Sumatra**, encompassing several high-risk districts, including **Medan Belawan, Medan Labuhan, Medan Deli, and Medan Marelan**. The research site was selected purposively on the grounds that Belawan possesses unique geographical characteristics as a coastal and logistics-port region while simultaneously experiencing a significant escalation of armed robbery cases involving sharp weapons, thereby making it an ideal empirical setting for this study.

In this qualitative research, data are classified into two principal categories: primary data and secondary data. Primary data are obtained directly from fieldwork and constitute first-hand information collected through direct interaction between the researcher and informants at the research site. These data include interview transcripts, field observation notes, and field documentation. Secondary data are derived from library research and consist of supporting information obtained indirectly from official documents, literature, and archival materials. These secondary data are further categorized into three types of legal materials: **primary legal materials, secondary legal materials, and tertiary legal materials**.

Primary legal materials in this study include the **Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP)**. Secondary legal materials consist of criminology textbooks, sociology of law literature, empirical legal research journals, theses, and scholarly articles related to armed robbery crimes. Tertiary legal materials include dictionaries, legal dictionaries, and encyclopedias used to clarify legal concepts and terminology employed in the study.

Research informants were selected using a **purposive sampling technique**. Informants were intentionally chosen based on specific criteria, expertise, and direct involvement with the research subject to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the data collected. The informants included law enforcement officers, armed robbery offenders, victims of armed robbery, and representatives of informal social control mechanisms.

The law enforcement informants consisted of two investigators or assistant investigators from the Criminal Investigation Unit (*Satuan Reserse Kriminal/Satreskrim*) of the Belawan Harbor Police Resort responsible for handling general criminal offenses and street crimes.

Two armed robbery offenders whose cases were under investigation or who were being detained at the Belawan Harbor Police detention facility were interviewed to explore internal motivations, personal backgrounds, histories of drug abuse, and criminal *modus operandi*.

Additionally, two victims of armed robbery, or members of victims' families, who had directly experienced attacks involving sharp weapons within the Belawan jurisdiction were interviewed to provide insight into attack patterns and psychological impacts. Informants representing informal social control consisted of two neighborhood heads or community leaders from high-risk areas such as Marelán and Labuhan, who provided perspectives on local sociological and environmental conditions. Data collection was conducted through a triangulation strategy combining three techniques: **in-depth interviews, field observations, and document and archival studies**. In-depth interviews were conducted using a semistructured format. Researchers utilized interview guidelines while maintaining sufficient flexibility to explore sensitive information emerging during fieldwork.

Field observations involved direct, non-participant observation of the physical and infrastructural conditions of areas vulnerable to armed robbery, including Belawan's logistics arterial roads, poorly illuminated public spaces, and escape routes frequently used following criminal incidents. Document and archival studies involved the collection and examination of secondary data, including statistical records of armed robbery cases, police reports (*Laporan Polisi/LP*), and criminal case files concerning the use of sharp weapons provided by the Criminal Investigation Unit of the Belawan Harbor Police Resort.

Data analysis was conducted through three stages: **data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing**. Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw field data. Informant statements deemed irrelevant were excluded, while essential data were grouped according to thematic categories.

Data presentation involved organizing the reduced data into narrative matrices and systematic descriptive texts to facilitate the identification of relationships among causal factors, criminal *modus operandi*, and obstacles encountered by law enforcement authorities.

Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns, regularities, and configurations within the data and subsequently verifying them against criminological theories. This process enabled the researcher to formulate valid conclusions capable of addressing the research questions comprehensively.

Results Criminological Factors Contributing to Armed Robbery Involving Sharp Weapons within the Jurisdiction of Belawan Port Police (Criminal Etiology Analysis)

Based on the findings of this empirical study, armed robbery involving sharp weapons within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police does not arise from a single causal factor. Rather, it represents the manifestation of multiple interconnected social variables. This phenomenon is analyzed through several clusters of factors, including economic conditions, drug abuse, and geographical circumstances.

The economic Factors: Poverty, Unemployment, and Economic Hardship

The Belawan Port area serves as the primary maritime logistics hub in North Sumatra. However, sociological realities indicate significant disparities in welfare and economic opportunity. Interviews conducted with criminal investigators and offenders revealed that the majority of robbery perpetrators originate from coastal slum settlements in Belawan, Labuhan, and Deli districts. High school dropout rates have resulted in many local youths lacking the qualifications necessary to compete in the formal labor market associated with the port industry.

From the perspective of **Shaw and McKay's Social Disorganization Theory**, social disorganization occurs when community institutions fail to regulate residents' behavior due to poverty and economic decline. Economic frustration caused by the absence of stable income

encourages young people in Belawan to pursue illegal shortcuts. Robbery is consequently perceived as the fastest means of obtaining substantial cash through the sale of stolen motorcycles to networks of illegal receivers.

Narcotics Abuse and Deviant Subculture

One of the most destructive factors identified during field research is the widespread circulation and abuse of methamphetamine (*sabu*) among Belawan's youth population. Examination of criminal case files at the Criminal Investigation Unit revealed that nearly 90 percent of arrested robbery offenders tested positive for narcotics consumption prior to committing their crimes.

According to **Deviant Subculture Theory**, methamphetamine functions as a dual catalyst in violent crime. First, addiction creates an urgent and continuous need for money, compelling offenders to commit robbery in order to finance drug purchases. Second, the drug impairs cognitive functioning, diminishes empathy, and generates a false sense of courage and euphoria. These effects help explain why offenders frequently exhibit extreme brutality and readily use modified sharp weapons such as machetes, samurai swords, and sickles against victims who offer even minimal resistance.

Geographical Conditions and Inadequate Public Infrastructure

Environmental and spatial conditions within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police significantly facilitate the execution of street crimes. Major arterial routes such as Belawan Port Road, the Medan–Belawan arterial highway, and isolated areas of Medan Marelan are commonly used by logistics vehicles and night-shift workers. These routes are often surrounded by swamps or narrow residential alleys.

According to **Cohen and Felson's Routine Activity Theory**, crime becomes more likely when there is an absence of a capable guardian. In Belawan, guardianship is weakened by inadequate street lighting, the absence of integrated public CCTV systems, and the considerable distance between police posts. Offenders exploit these physical vulnerabilities as “safe zones” where they can attack victims with minimal risk of detection by either law enforcement authorities or the general public.

Modus Operandi of Armed Robbery Offenders

Analysis of criminal case reconstructions, coupled with interviews with both victims and offenders, indicates that robbery operations in Belawan have evolved from spontaneous acts into strategically planned criminal activities. These operations generally consist of four stages: planning, surveillance, execution, and escape.

Planning Stage

At this stage, offenders gather in groups, often associated with motorcycle gangs. They consume methamphetamine or alcohol and prepare modified sharp weapons such as machetes or samurai swords for use during the robbery.

Surveillance Stage

Offenders typically travel in pairs or groups using two to three motorcycles. They patrol isolated roads in Belawan and Marelan between 1:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m., seeking vulnerable targets such as lone motorists or female riders.

Violent Execution Stage

Once a target is identified, offenders forcibly approach the victim's vehicle, brandish or swing sharp weapons, force the victim to fall from the motorcycle, and seize both the vehicle and other valuables.

Escape Stage

Following the robbery, offenders escape through narrow alleyways or coastal routes, subsequently selling stolen motorcycles to illegal receivers. The proceeds are then divided among group members and commonly used to purchase narcotics or finance recreational spending. From the perspective of **Rational Choice Theory**, as developed by Derek Cornish and Ronald Clarke, offenders engage in a cost-benefit analysis before committing crimes. The selection of large sharp weapons such as machetes and samurai swords represents a rational strategy intended to maximize benefits by creating immediate psychological intimidation that compels victims to surrender and minimize costs, such as the risk of intervention by local residents or pursuit by community members.

Crime Prevention Efforts and Challenges Faced by the Belawan Port Police

The Belawan Port Police have adopted two primary strategies to suppress armed robbery and other forms of street crime: preventive measures and repressive measures.

Preventive Measures

Preventive efforts are designed to deter criminal activity before it occurs. These initiatives include:

- Conducting **Blue Light Patrols** and **Enhanced Routine Activities (KRYD)** during high-risk hours, particularly between midnight and 5:00 a.m.;
- Increasing police presence along robbery-prone arterial roads;
- Organizing public awareness campaigns concerning narcotics abuse and thuggery in schools and youth communities through the Community Development Unit (Satbinmas);
- Promoting crime prevention awareness among local residents.

These preventive programs aim to reduce opportunities for crime while strengthening community vigilance.

Repressive Measures

Repressive measures focus on law enforcement and criminal prosecution. The Belawan Port Police established a specialized anti-robbery task force known as the **Belawan Tiger Team (Tim Macan Belawan)**, composed of personnel from the Criminal Investigation Unit and other police divisions.

The primary responsibilities of this task force include:

- Pursuing robbery syndicates and stolen motorcycle trafficking networks;
- Conducting targeted criminal investigations;
- Arresting suspects involved in violent street crimes.

In addition, police officers implement firm and proportionate enforcement measures, including the use of firearms against armed offenders who resist arrest or pose an immediate threat to public safety.

Obstacles Encountered in Crime Control Efforts

Despite extensive preventive and repressive initiatives, several significant obstacles continue to hinder effective crime control.

Limited Human Resources and Facilities

The number of personnel assigned to the Belawan Port Police is insufficient relative to the extensive area under its jurisdiction, which includes international port facilities, major transportation corridors, and border regions. This disparity limits the effectiveness of surveillance and patrol operations.

Inadequate Urban Infrastructure

The lack of functioning streetlights and the absence of integrated CCTV systems at crime-prone locations significantly impede police investigations. As a result, officers often rely on manual methods of suspect identification and tracking, which reduce operational efficiency.

Low Community Participation and Public Trauma

Many victims and eyewitnesses are reluctant to report incidents or provide testimony during criminal proceedings. This reluctance stems from a pervasive **fear of crime**, particularly concerns regarding intimidation or retaliation from motorcycle gangs and criminal networks that remain active in the community.

Consequently, public cooperation a crucial component of effective crime prevention and law enforcement remains limited.

Legal and Methodological Perspectives

T. Riza Zarzani, in his study concerning violent theft committed by juvenile offenders, emphasizes that the handling of robbery offenders must adhere strictly to legal principles established under Indonesian law. The principal legal basis relevant to this study is **Article 365 of the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP)**, which regulates theft accompanied by violence. The article prescribes a maximum imprisonment term of nine years. If the offense results in serious bodily injury, the maximum penalty increases to twelve years; if it results in death, the penalty may reach fifteen years. When committed collectively or involving premeditated killing, sanctions may extend to twenty years' imprisonment or even capital punishment.[1]

Furthermore, this study employs the academic work of Fitri Rafianti as a methodological foundation. Her approach positions normative legal research as an analytical instrument for examining the implementation of legal norms through juridical analysis and interpretation of legal principles in institutional practice. This framework is highly relevant for analyzing the criminological dimensions of armed robbery within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police. Meanwhile, tertiary legal materials including legal dictionaries, legal encyclopedias, and other reference sources serve as supporting materials for clarifying legal concepts employed throughout the research.[2]

Conclusion

Based on the overall findings of this study, field data analysis, and the discussions presented in the preceding chapters concerning the criminological review of armed robbery involving sharp weapons within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police, it can be concluded that the criminological factors underlying such crimes do not originate from a single cause. Rather, they are manifestations of a multidimensional interaction among socioeconomic, psychological, and spatial factors, particularly structural poverty and unemployment.

From a macro-sociological perspective, the coastal region of Belawan experiences social disorganization due to the striking disparity between the modernization of the port industry and the structural poverty experienced by local communities residing in slum areas. High school dropout rates have produced a generation of young people who lack competitiveness in the formal labor market. According to **Social Disorganization Theory**, the failure of social institutions to provide welfare and social control weakens informal community supervision. Consequently, many young people resort to illegal means, with robbery being perceived as the

quickest way to obtain income for meeting basic needs or maintaining group-oriented lifestyles.

Another significant factor is the prevalence of narcotics abuse, particularly methamphetamine (*sabu*) and alcohol consumption. At the micro-criminological level, methamphetamine abuse functions as the most destructive catalyst in the commission of robbery offenses. Drug dependency creates urgent financial pressures that cannot easily be satisfied through lawful employment. Furthermore, from a psychological-criminological standpoint, the consumption of methamphetamine prior to criminal activities impairs cognitive functions, diminishes empathy, and amplifies a false sense of courage and euphoria. These effects empirically explain why offenders in Belawan often act aggressively and brutally, inflicting serious injuries or even causing the deaths of victims through the use of sharp weapons, despite minimal resistance from the victims.

Spatial and geographical factors also play a substantial role in facilitating street crime. The physical characteristics of Belawan, which is intersected by isolated logistics corridors frequently deserted during the early morning hours, provide favorable conditions for criminal activity. This situation is exacerbated by inadequate public infrastructure, including malfunctioning street lighting systems and the absence of an integrated CCTV surveillance network. These environmental vulnerabilities create opportunities for offenders to monitor potential victims, execute attacks, and escape rapidly through narrow coastal alleyways with minimal risk of detection.

The modus operandi of armed robbery offenders within the jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police has evolved from spontaneous criminal conduct into a form of organized and strategically planned street crime. Offenders generally operate in groups ranging from two to six individuals using multiple motorcycles and are often affiliated with motorcycle gangs or deviant youth subcultures. Their attacks are typically carried out between 1:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m., targeting lone motorcyclists traveling through isolated routes. The decision to carry and display large modified sharp weapons such as machetes, sickles, or samurai swords reflects a rational cost-benefit calculation. These weapons maximize benefits by generating immediate psychological intimidation that incapacitates victims and compels them to surrender their motorcycles without resistance. Simultaneously, they minimize costs by reducing the likelihood of intervention by bystanders or pursuit by local residents who fear confronting armed offenders.

Regarding crime control efforts, the Belawan Port Police have continuously implemented criminal policy through two primary approaches: preventive and repressive measures. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these efforts remains constrained by complex structural challenges. Preventive strategies include large-scale patrol operations, Blue Light Patrols, and Enhanced Routine Activities (KRYD) conducted during high-risk periods and in crime-prone locations. Repressive measures involve rigorous law enforcement by the Special Anti-Robbery Task Force, including the implementation of firm and proportionate force against offenders who resist arrest or endanger public safety. While these measures have succeeded in reducing the activities of certain criminal groups and creating a temporary deterrent effect, they have not addressed the underlying criminogenic factors of poverty and narcotics abuse that continue to generate new offenders.

The limited effectiveness of crime prevention and suppression efforts is primarily attributable to three major structural obstacles. First, internal constraints arise from the insufficient number of police personnel and patrol units relative to the extensive jurisdiction of the Belawan Port Police, which encompasses international port facilities, major transportation routes, and regional border areas. Second, sectoral constraints stem from inadequate coordination and commitment among local government agencies responsible for maintaining public street lighting and providing integrated CCTV infrastructure. Third, cultural barriers exist in the form of low public participation and the reluctance of victims and witnesses to report crimes or cooperate with legal proceedings. This reluctance is largely

driven by the phenomenon of **fear of crime**, whereby community members experience psychological trauma and remain apprehensive about potential intimidation or retaliation from criminal networks whose members have not yet been apprehended.

Therefore, the study concludes that addressing armed robbery involving sharp weapons in the Belawan Port Police jurisdiction requires not only effective law enforcement but also comprehensive and sustainable non-penal strategies. Such strategies should include poverty alleviation programs, narcotics prevention and rehabilitation initiatives, improvements to public infrastructure, strengthened community-based security systems, and enhanced collaboration among law enforcement agencies, local government institutions, and the wider community. Only through an integrated and multidisciplinary approach can the root causes of robbery crimes be effectively addressed and long-term public security be achieved.

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