



Comparison of Causality between German and Albanian Criminal Law

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Abstract

Causality is a fundamental concept in criminal law, as it determines whether a person's actions led to a specific outcome and its associated consequences, thereby establishing the person's legal responsibility. This Article aims to compare how the causality doctrine is handled in German and Albanian law, identifying similarities and differences based on their respective legal interpretations and applications. It also shows the influence of European Law in both countries, while also showing the differences created by different branches of culture, development and legal ideas. By analyzing their legal frameworks, the paper seeks to identify both the points of convergence and divergence that may emerge in practice. It demonstrates how factors such as legal culture, institutional maturity, and varying social development led to different approaches. This Article offers a comprehensive and understandable examination of the role of causality in criminal liability, illustrating how the same logical patterns emerge in different national contexts to address common challenges.

Keywords: Causality in criminal law, *conditio sine qua non*, legal responsibility, judicial discretion, objective contribution

1. Introduction

Causality is one of the most interesting and important concepts in criminal law. It helps to understand and solve cases and is based on determining criminal liability (Roxin, 2015). In other words, it determines whether a person's actions led to a certain outcome. The German Criminal Code and the Albanian Criminal Code regulate causality, which, as a structure, appears similar but has different characteristics shaped by distinct legal traditions and historical factors. They also differ in how these rules are interpreted and applied. While both systems share the core idea that actions must lead to consequences for criminal liability to arise, they adopt different doctrinal approaches in applying these principles.

This article addresses the following question: how do German and Albanian criminal law

approach the problem of causality, and how do they differ in their doctrinal and practical application?

It examines and shows how the two systems differ in attributing causal responsibility and which of them is more clear and more convincing based on the criminal analysis from the more complex situations.

To answer this question, the article begins by presenting the main theories of causality developed in German criminal law, with particular focus on the doctrine of *conditio sine qua non*. It then examines how causality is regulated in Albanian criminal law through statutory provisions and how it is applied in judicial practice.

In the final part, the article compares the approaches of both systems and evaluates their respective strengths and limitations in relation to criminal responsibility.

2. Causality in German Criminal Law

German Criminal Law takes a detailed approach to causality, which, as mentioned, is one of the main keys to determining criminal responsibility. In German Law, causality is understood through different theories, each contributing to the legal system and making the German Criminal Law a highly perceptive and logical system. Below is an explanation of the most important theories:

2.1 Equivalence Theory- *conditio sine qua non*

The *conditio sine qua non* rule, also known as the equivalence theory, is the most fundamental and widely accepted principle in German criminal law for determining causality. In simple terms, it means that if a factor is considered a cause and is hypothetically removed, the outcome would not occur. This theory is based on a straightforward and powerful idea: if an event or action is necessary for a result to happen, then it plays a causal role.

This approach implies that even the smallest contribution, no matter how insignificant it may initially appear, can form an essential part of the overall causal chain. In other words, causality can be understood as a chain reaction in which every link plays a crucial role; if one link is removed, the entire structure may collapse, allowing us to identify which element caused the result. This logical simplicity makes the theory easy to apply and provides a clear framework for determining causality in legal analysis.

However, this theory also raises certain problems. Because it considers every condition, no matter how minor or indirect, as causally relevant, it may lead to an overly broad attribution of responsibility. Individuals could be held accountable for minimal or remote contributions to a result. To address this issue, additional theories that complement the *conditio sine qua non* principle have been developed to limit excessive attribution. Despite its weaknesses, the theory remains central to legal reasoning and continues to be widely applied, particularly in cases involving serious criminal offences.

2.2 Adequacy Theory

The adequacy theory builds upon the equivalence theory by introducing an additional normative layer. It is based on the idea that a result is only considered causally relevant if it is objectively foreseeable according to general life experience. This theory is particularly useful in cases involving rare, unusual, or highly unpredictable events, where the *conditio sine qua non* rule alone may lead to overly broad conclusions.

The primary aim of the adequacy theory is to avoid attributing liability for highly atypical or extraordinary outcomes that fall outside the scope of normal expectations. By focusing on what can reasonably be expected to occur in the ordinary course of events, the theory introduces a more pragmatic and balanced approach to causality. It ensures that individuals are held accountable only for consequences that were objectively foreseeable.

In this way, the adequacy theory contributes to maintaining fairness in the legal system by limiting liability to outcomes that are grounded in general life experience and realistic anticipation.

3. Doctrine of Objective Attribution

The doctrine of objective attribution represents a crucial development in German criminal law and marks a significant advancement in the understanding of causality. It goes beyond the mere question of whether an action caused a harmful result by examining whether the risk created by the actor is legally relevant and unacceptable, and whether that risk has materialized in the concrete result.

Accordingly, not every action that factually contributes to a harmful outcome is sufficient to establish criminal liability. For liability to arise, the conduct must have created a legally disapproved risk that subsequently materializes in the prohibited result. This approach ensures that individuals are held accountable only where their behavior has produced a meaningful and legally relevant danger, rather than where the outcome is merely the result of chance or coincidence.

3.1 Objective Attribution in Practice and the *Retterfall* Case (*rescuer case*)

German case law makes it clear that a mere factual link between conduct and result is insufficient to establish a criminal liability and create criminal liability. It is not sufficient that the act was a cause for the outcome that happened. The results must also be attributed and have a causal link to the offender. This assessment is made thanks to the use of the doctrine of objective attribution. According to this doctrine, criminal responsibility is created only if the offender has made or increased a legally unacceptable risk, and if this risk has actually led to the concrete harm. If the results occur because of other courses of events that lie outside the reach and scope of danger created by the offender, then the outcome cannot be attributed to them. This understanding and logical use is firmly established in case laws of the Bundesgerichtshof, particularly in cases where the harmful outcome is caused by the intervention and conduct of a third party.

a. *Retterfall* (rescuer case)

A clear illustration of this approach is provided by the so-called *Retterfall* (rescuer case), decided by the Bundesgerichtshof on 5 May 2021 (4 StR 19/20) (Bundesgerichtshof, 2021). In this case, the defendant created a hazardous situation through negligent conduct, thereby necessitating an emergency response. A professional rescuer intervened to eliminate the danger and, during the rescue operation, sustained fatal injuries. From a purely causal perspective, the defendant's conduct constituted a necessary condition for the fatal outcome. However, the central legal issue was not causation as such, but attribution—specifically, whether the rescuer's death could still be attributed to the defendant or whether the rescuer's independent intervention interrupted the chain of attribution.

In its decision, the Bundesgerichtshof confirmed the fundamental principles of objective attribution. The Court emphasized that not every third-party intervention breaks the chain of attribution. Attribution is excluded only where the harmful result is caused by a new and independent risk that can no longer be legally linked to the offender's conduct.

The actions of the rescuer were characterized as a normal and foreseeable response to the danger created by the defendant. The Court held that the involvement of a rescue team does not interrupt the causal course of events; rather, it represents a typical development within the scope of the original risk. Consequently, the risks faced by the rescue team were considered part of the danger created by the offender, rather than an external or independent factor.

On this basis, the Bundesgerichtshof concluded that the rescuer's death constituted a direct realization of the unlawful risk created by the defendant. The result therefore fell within the protective purpose of the violated norm and was objectively attributable to the defendant's conduct (Bundesgerichtshof, 2021).

The Court thus rejected a rigid and purely formal understanding of causation. It clarified that the decisive factor is not merely whether a third party intervened, but whether the harm can still be normatively linked to the risk originally created by the offender.

This case illustrates how the doctrine of objective attribution operates in practice. It demonstrates that the doctrine serves not only to limit criminal liability but also to justify it where harm occurs precisely in the manner that the legal prohibition seeks to prevent. At the same time, it highlights that attribution has clear limits: liability ends where the result is caused by a new and independent risk falling outside the scope of the offender's conduct.

In this way, the doctrine of objective attribution contributes to a fair distribution of criminal responsibility. It prevents an excessive extension of liability while ensuring that offenders remain accountable for harms resulting from the unlawful risks they create.

4. Interruption of the Causal Chain

One of the more complex concepts in German criminal law concerning causality is the so-called interruption of the causal chain. This concept refers to atypical or extraordinary developments that may disrupt the continuity of causation, thereby severing the link between the initial act and the final result. In such cases, the original conduct may no longer be regarded as the legally relevant cause of the outcome.

This issue becomes particularly significant where third-party interventions alter the course of events. The doctrine plays a crucial role in complex situations in which additional factors or independent actions contribute to the final result. A typical example arises where a medical professional commits a serious error while treating a victim, potentially altering the causal chain and raising the question of whether the original act or the subsequent intervention should be considered the decisive cause.

In such cases, the doctrine assists courts in determining whether liability should remain with the initial actor or shift due to the emergence of a new and independent cause. The central focus lies on the relationship between the defendant's conduct and the risks created by that conduct. In this way, the doctrine prevents individuals from being held liable for consequences they did not meaningfully cause and ensures that criminal responsibility is attributed only where it is normatively justified.

5. Causality in Albanian Criminal Law

Just as in German law and many other criminal justice systems, it is essential to establish a clear connection between a person's conduct and the resulting harm. This connection—referred to as causality—is a key element in determining whether an individual may be held criminally responsible. Without such a link, liability cannot be fairly established. This approach is based on the idea of mentally excluding each potential cause in turn. If the removal of a particular condition would prevent the result from occurring, that condition is regarded as causally relevant.

However, this theory has notable weaknesses, primarily due to its broad conception of responsibility. Treating every contributing condition as equally significant may lead to an overextension of liability. Under such reasoning, even remote or minor contributions are placed on the same level as more direct and decisive actions. For example, in a case where a person is killed with a knife, the theory could imply that not only the perpetrator, but also individuals involved in the production or sale of the knife, contributed to the outcome. Supporters of the theory argue that attention should be limited to conditions that directly influence the result, whereas critics point out the absence of a clear criterion for determining how far the causal chain should extend.

Albania has adopted an approach broadly consistent with other legal systems following the Second World War. The Criminal Code of 1952, under the section on causality, established that a person is criminally responsible only where a causal connection exists between their conduct and the harmful result. This principle was maintained in the Criminal Code of 1977. The Criminal Code of 1995 introduced a further development by clarifying that criminal responsibility requires not only a connection to the actual result, but also to the possibility that such a result might occur. This marked an important step, as it acknowledged that the law considers both actual and potential consequences of conduct.

The issue of causal connection has long been regarded as one of the most complex aspects of the general part of criminal law. In Albania, however, it has been consistently addressed in statutory provisions and judicial practice, with a stronger emphasis on practical application rather than theoretical elaboration.

In Albanian criminal law, different views exist regarding the nature of the causal link between an act and its result. The prevailing position considers this relationship to be objective, meaning that the connection between cause and effect exists independently of the individual's intentions or subjective will. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that, prior to the occurrence of the result, the individual makes a conscious decision either to act or to refrain from acting. Such actions or omissions are regarded as voluntary, reflecting the individual's control over their conduct. Criminal law places significant emphasis on these choices, as they are essential in determining whether a person should be held legally accountable for the resulting harm.

5.1 *Conditio sine qua non*

Albanian criminal law likewise adopts the principle of causation and the *conditio sine qua non* approach. Under this doctrine, a result arises from a combination of multiple conditions acting together. Each condition is indispensable, meaning that if even one were absent, the result would not occur. Every act that plays a role in producing the harmful outcome is legally relevant, since the harm would not have materialised without it. This assessment is carried out through what is known as the elimination method, which consists of hypothetically removing each potential cause in turn. If a particular factor is removed and the result would not occur, then the factor is regarded as a necessary cause.

However, this theory is often criticised for its lack of precision, and it does not provide a clear criterion for identifying what should count as a legally relevant cause. It places all causes on the same level, treating them as equally significant.

5.2 *The Meaning and Importance of Causal Link in the Context of Adequate Causation*

In Albanian criminal law, a person cannot be held criminally responsible unless there is a causal link between their conduct and the harmful consequence, or at least a concrete risk that such a consequence may occur. This fundamental principle is often expressed through the maxim *nullum crimen, nulla poena sine causa*, meaning that there can be no crime and no punishment without causation.

Based on the Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania, as well as the previous Criminal Code, it clearly recognises causation as a necessary element of criminal responsibility. Article 13 of the Criminal Code shows that the causal link is part of the objective elements of the criminal offence. This is understood as an objective connection between human conduct, whether it is action or nonaction and the harmful result, regardless of the person's individual intentions or wishes.

In reality, every event has a cause and an effect, and the connection between them is called causation, but still, criminal law does not treat every cause as legally relevant. Criminal responsibility exists only when there is a necessary and direct causal link between the conduct of a person and the harmful result. If the link is missing, then criminal liability cannot be established. In cases where death may occur from natural events such as lightning, earthquakes or other natural phenomena, then in those cases, although a cause and a result are there, it still shows no criminal responsibility because the consequence is not linked to the conduct of any identifiable person.

Causation is an objective concept because it exists independently in reality, but it cannot be completely separated from the subjective element of the offence. When a person acts or fails to act consciously and voluntarily, then, with logic, usually understands that the act or their behaviour can cause harm. For this reason, criminal responsibility requires not only an objective causal connection between the act and the result, but also a link between that connection and the offender's mental attitude.

For a long time, Albanian judicial practice has consistently required a necessary correlation and a direct causal link between the act and the consequence. Generally, in courts, they do not examine the entire chain of causes in an abstract way, but they identify the decisive cause that directly produced the harmful result. In other words, the action of the accused must be a determining factor that led to the consequence.

This way of dealing with the problem can be clearly seen in the decisions of the Supreme Court. In one important case, the Court overturned a lower court's decision and found one of the defendants not guilty. In this case, two drivers were involved in a traffic accident that resulted in death and injuries, but the Supreme Court decided that the damage was caused by the actions of one of the drivers. Based on the Supreme Court, the behaviour of the second driver did not play a decisive role in causing the result. Therefore, there was no causal connection between his conduct and the harmful outcome, and for this reason, he could not be held responsible.

This approach recognises that not every contributing circumstance can be treated as an equal cause, and the criminal law looks beyond a purely mechanical chain of events and raises the question of which factors truly matter in a human and legal sense.

For example, if a person causes a minor injury but the victim subsequently dies in hospital, the question arises whether it is fair to attribute the death to the initial offender and hold them criminally responsible for the fatal outcome.

In such situations, the traffic accident is the immediate and decisive cause of death and not the previous minor injury.

The main requirement of a necessary and direct cause is connected to the idea of an adequate and typical causation. This approach follows the logic of what normally happens in everyday life, and this is based on a common human experience. Criminal responsibility arises only when a person's conduct is generally capable of bringing about a negative result. This logic is also better captured by the Latin expression *id quod plerumque accidit*, meaning "what usually happens".

In this sense, criminal law does not treat every previous action as a cause of a harmful outcome. Life does not happen and unfold only under rigid chains of events. For example, a light physical confrontation does not typically lead to fatal consequences, and such an outcome depends on additional factors that go beyond the act itself.

The concept of necessary and direct cause should not be misunderstood as simply identifying the event that happened last or the one that happened closest in time to the final outcome. Focusing only on what occurred most recently can lead to unfair results, because it overlooks the real role played by earlier actions and other factors. For this reason, Albanian Criminal Law looks beyond timing and instead asks which act truly sets the harmful and problematic outcome in motion.

In other cases, the chain of events is interrupted by a new and independent factor. For example, a person may cause a minor injury to someone else, and this minor injury is not so dangerous in itself, but when the injured person goes to the hospital and gets treated, he dies because of a serious mistake during medical treatment. In this case, it would not be good to just hold the first person responsible for the death, since the fatal outcome resulted from a separate cause. Explaining this differently, responsibility is therefore limited to the injury that was originally caused. The same reasoning and logic apply when death occurs based on unrelated events, such as sudden medical conditions or an accident during hospitalisation, which do not lead to the initial act.

In cases where a harmful result arises from the conduct of more than one individual, criminal law seeks to identify which behaviour had a determining influence on the final outcome. What caused the final outcome is seen as important. In those situations that involve a collective or coordinated conduct, every contribution is examined separately in order to assess individual criminal responsibility and for each action, to determine an appropriate sanction.

The causation concept is not limited to active behaviours but also applies to situations with passive behaviour or failure to act. A person might be found guilty for not intervening when they were under a specific legal obligation to intervene, such as cases that entrust a duty of protection. In such circumstances, liability arises only where the failure to act can be directly connected to the harmful result.

So as stated, the existence of causation alone is not sufficient to establish a criminal responsibility. The objective causal relationship must correspond with the subjective element of the offence. This means that the individual is able, at least in general terms, to anticipate the potential development of events and the possibility that their conduct can lead to a harmful result.

5.3 *The Human Causation Theory*

The theory of human causation tries to find a middle ground between the two earlier theories. To count as the cause of the result, one cause should comply with those two rules:

1. The action was necessary for the outcome (a sine qua non condition)
2. The result wasn't caused by rare or unusual outside events.

To also decide if an action truly caused a result, this theory also uses two tests:

- The first one is a positive check: Was the Action something without which the result would not have happened?
- Then we have the negative check: Did anything unexpected and extraordinary cause the outcome instead?

The keyword here is the extraordinary event. If something extraordinary happened, then it breaks the chain of cause and effect and is considered broken. So if something happens that's totally out of the person's control, then it should not be seen as their responsibility.

5.4 *Scientific (Statistical) Causation in Criminal Law*

This theory adopts a probabilistic model of causation. It suggests that an action may be considered a cause of harm if it increases the likelihood of that harm occurring compared to a situation in which the action did not take place.

Based on this idea, it is not necessary that a harmful result must occur every time the action is taken. It is enough if the action clearly raises the risk that the harm will occur. Statistical evidence may be a good way to explain a fact, but still, in a criminal process, the standard of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt is required.

6. **Liability, Causality and Fault.**

Articles 14–16 of the Albanian Criminal Code establish the core structure of culpability. Article 14 affirms the principle that there can be no punishment without fault, thereby linking external conduct with the internal mental state of the actor. Article 15 defines intent, including both direct and conditional intent—concepts that are likewise well established in German doctrine. Article 16 addresses negligence, covering situations in which the actor either foresaw the result but relied on its non-occurrence or failed to foresee a result that should have been anticipated.

Once these preconditions are satisfied, the Criminal Code introduces mechanisms that limit liability. Articles 19–21 regulate grounds such as self-defense, necessity, and the exercise of lawful rights, functioning as normative safeguards that exclude liability even where causation and fault are present. Article 22 completes this framework by defining attempt and marking the transition from internal intent to externally manifested conduct. Taken together, these provisions illustrate an Albanian approach that is both codified and normatively structured.

In contrast, German criminal law does not confine the concept of causation to a single statutory provision but instead develops it through doctrinal analysis. The *conditio sine qua non* test serves as the starting point for establishing factual causation: if the result would not have occurred in the absence of the act, the act is considered a cause. However, due to the broad scope of this test, German doctrine supplements it with the theory of objective attribution (*Objektive Zurechnung*), according to which a result is attributable to the actor only if they created a legally disapproved risk that subsequently materialized in the protected legal interest.

As emphasized in German legal scholarship, causation is not merely a physical phenomenon but a

matter of normative evaluation. Legal responsibility arises only where the outcome reflects the realization of a risk that criminal law seeks to prevent.

Sections 13 and 15 of the German Criminal Code further develop this framework by introducing the concept of a legal duty to act (*Garantenpflicht*). Such a duty arises from specific legal relationships or positions—for example, the duty of parents to protect their children. Where such a duty exists, a failure to act may result in criminal liability if harm occurs. Importantly, this duty is not universal but arises only in legally defined circumstances.

Despite these structural differences, both systems pursue the same fundamental objective: ensuring that criminal liability is proportionate to fault.

In practice, causation rarely follows simple linear patterns. Real-life situations often involve multiple, overlapping causes rather than a single decisive act. German criminal law addresses such complexity through a refined doctrinal framework. It distinguishes, for example, between alternative causation (*alternative Kausalität*), where multiple independent acts are each sufficient to produce the result, and cumulative causation (*kumulative Kausalität*), where several contributions jointly bring about the harmful outcome. In both cases, liability may attach to each actor, provided that their contribution represents a typical and foreseeable risk.

Another complex scenario arises when an independent third-party act intervenes after the initial conduct. In German law, such cases are analysed under the concept of intervening causes (*Dazwischentreten Dritter*). The causal chain may be considered broken where the intervening act is extraordinary, unforeseeable, and independent of the original risk created by the offender.

In such situations, liability is limited in order to preserve fairness and maintain the principle of attribution.

Albanian law reflects a similar approach. The provisions of Articles 13–16 of the Criminal Code exclude liability where an intervening event is unforeseeable or lacks a sufficient causal connection to the initial act.

Ultimately, both legal systems are grounded in the same fundamental principle: causation in criminal law must not be extended beyond what is fair, foreseeable, and normatively justified.

German and Albanian criminal law both recognize causality as a key element in determining causal responsibility; however, they differ significantly in their application of this concept.

It is rooted in academic debate and relies on multiple-layered doctrines to define when an action can be considered a cause of a harmful result.

In Albanian criminal law, the same principle as *conditio sine qua non* is also applied, but here it is a less theoretical approach and focuses on a real-life case rather than building complex theoretical frameworks. Albanian criminal law focuses on a case-by-case basis, which is more practical and specific to each case.

In summary, while both systems share common foundations in causality, the German law builds more nuanced and theoretically informed frameworks based on its tradition, and the Albanian law, on the other hand, is more pragmatic and focuses on real-world application.

7. Final Comparative Assessment of Causality in German and Albanian Criminal Law

The foregoing analysis has shown that causality plays an important and unavoidable role in both German and Albanian Criminal Law, working as the essential link between human act and attribution of criminal responsibility. While both systems are grounded in the common starting point of the *conditio sine qua non* principle, they differ significantly in the way causal responsibility is understood and developed. Those divergences are not just matters of technical details but also reveal a bigger difference in doctrine evolution, judicial reasoning and legal tradition.

At the core, both legal systems agree that criminal liability implies a causal link between the offender's act and the resulting harm. This shared idea reflects a common understanding of causality as an objective condition of criminal responsibility, separated from the offender's subjective state of mind. This is one of the agreement's points, and beyond this basic point, the two systems begin to diverge and evolve in different ways, but still holding to the same root.

German Criminal Law addresses causality through a carefully structured and theory-oriented approach. The *conditio sine qua non* test serves only as a starting point, intended to establish factual causation. Because this test captures too many connections, it is purposely refined through normative criteria, which most prominently include the doctrine of objective attribution (*objektive Zurechnung*). Based on this doctrine, causality is no longer examined as a purely and solely factual question but as an assessment that asks if the offender created or increased a risk, and if the risk ultimately materialized and entered into the protected legal interest.

By following this approach, German criminal law explicitly recognizes that criminal responsibility cannot be based solely on natural causation, but must also be shaped by normative, moral, and legal evaluations, as well as by the protective purpose of criminal norms.

In contrast, Albanian criminal law adopts a more direct and straightforward approach to causality. The Criminal Code requires the existence of a causal link between the offender's conduct and the resulting harm. Judicial practice consistently emphasizes that this connection must be both necessary and direct. Rather than relying on complex doctrinal constructions, Albanian courts tend to focus on identifying the cause that produced the harmful outcome. This reflects a more pragmatic approach that prioritizes clarity and practical applicability. While this may be effective in straightforward cases, it can present challenges in more complex causal scenarios.

These methodological differences become particularly evident in cases involving complex causation. German criminal law carefully distinguishes between alternative causation, cumulative causation, and third-party interventions, applying specific doctrinal filters to determine whether the chain of attribution remains intact. As confirmed by the *Bundesgerichtshof*, attribution is excluded only where the final harm is caused by a new, independent, and unforeseeable risk that falls outside the scope of the original danger created by the offender.

Albanian law arrives at similar results, but in a more straightforward way. By requiring a necessary and direct causal link, it limits criminal liability when unusual, unforeseeable, or independent events intervene in the equation. Albanian Courts do not always explain their reasoning in formal doctrinal language, and their practical way shows a bigger concern for fairness and proportionality. The tendency is to focus on the decisive cause of the harm, so they can ensure criminal responsibility.

The two legal systems use a different theoretical language, but they still reach the same conclusions: a person can be held responsible for an omission only if their failure to act can reasonably be linked, in fact and value, to the negative outcome.

In conclusion, this comparison shows that causality in criminal law is not just a matter of facts, but also a value and a way of judgment about when it is fair to hold someone responsible. German and Albanian Law use different approaches, with one more theoretical and the other more practical, but both pursue the same basic goal, which is to impose criminal liability only when a harmful outcome can be fairly attributed to a person's conduct.

In the end, the analysis makes clear that modern criminal law must focus on a balance between doctrinal accuracy and a sense of justice, especially in cases in which causal links are more difficult to establish. Only by preserving this balance can criminal law respond accordingly to address the challenges of modern, complex cases.

8. AI Use Statement

The authors declare that artificial intelligence tools were used during the preparation of this manuscript. Specifically, AI-assisted tools were used for Reference formatting links and grammar correction. The intellectual content, analysis, interpretation of results, and final approval of the manuscript remain the sole responsibility of the authors.

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