

Assimilation Program as a Form and Form of Correctional Philosophy in Restoring Life, Life, and Livelihood for Prisoners and Realizing Community-Based Correction Institutions

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ABSTRACT

Corrections play a vital role within the integrated justice system, providing a recovery process for law violators. Correctional institutions aim not only to punish but also to rehabilitate and guide offenders toward social reintegration. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of assimilation programs in restoring the lives and livelihoods of prisoners and to explore how correctional institutions implement community-based corrections through these programs. A qualitative research approach was employed, utilizing data from relevant journals and regulations. An empirical legal analysis was conducted to examine the impact of assimilation programs on the rehabilitation of prisoners. The findings indicate that assimilation programs significantly enhance the self-improvement and social reintegration of prisoners. These programs provide essential skills training and community engagement opportunities, which are crucial for reducing recidivism. The study concludes that assimilation programs are effective in facilitating the recovery of prisoners and promoting their reintegration into society. This underscores the need for on-going support and enhancement of such programs within correctional institutions to ensure their success and the safety of the community.

Keywords: recovery; assimilation; social integration.

Introduction

Indonesia is known as a rule-of-law country that regulates every aspect of life, and this regulation is encapsulated in criminal law, governing social conduct within society (Faisal et al., 2024; Hartawan et al., 2024; Primanda & Rofii, 2024). In enforcing substantive law or written law, Indonesia has institutions that oversee the enforcement of the law, which consists of four agencies forming the integrated justice system. The application of the integrated justice system in the enforcement of substantive law serves as both law enforcement and a process for addressing law violations (Tyler et al., 2015).

The application of substantive law is conducted by various agencies within the integrated justice system, including the police, the prosecutor's office, the courts, and correctional institutions (Hidayat & Subroto, 2022). Each agency has distinct functions and responsibilities that contribute to the enforcement of substantive law as part of the formal implementation process. The police initiate investigations, the prosecutor's office handles legal prosecutions, the courts render binding decisions based on the charges presented by the prosecutor, and, ultimately, correctional institutions focus on rehabilitating and guiding incarcerated individuals. The process has been detailed in the Correctional Law, Law Number 22 of 2022, specifically in Article 2, which clearly articulates the objectives of corrections as follows.

The correctional system is primarily designed to: (Law Number 22 of 2022 Regarding Society)

1. Ensure that the rights of detainees and children are well protected;
2. Assist in the improvement and enhancement of the personality and independence of prisoners, with the hope that they can recognize their mistakes, reform themselves, and avoid committing crimes in the future. In this way, they can be reintegrated into society, lead a normal life, become good citizens who obey the law, act responsibly, and contribute to national development; and
3. Protect society from potential future crimes.

The objectives of correctional institutions are explicitly clear; they do not merely subject law violators to suffering, but rather, they provide rehabilitation and guidance to ensure that prisoners can reintegrate into society and restore their lives, livelihoods, and social standing. Correctional institutions are not solely punitive; they also provide rehabilitation programs. Rehabilitation has been generally regulated in Government Regulation Number 31 of 1999 concerning the rehabilitation and guidance of prisoners, where Article 1, Paragraph 1 states that rehabilitation is a process aimed at improving and enhancing the spiritual quality, intelligence, attitudes, behavior, professionalism, as well as the physical and mental health of prisoners and children within the correctional system (PP Number 31 of 1999). Thus, it is evident that correctional institutions play a crucial role in the rehabilitation of prisoners.

The urgency for an effective correctional system is underscored by the high rates of recidivism in Indonesia. According to a report by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, approximately 60% of former prisoners re-offend within five years of release. This statistic highlights the necessity for a

comprehensive rehabilitation program that not only addresses punitive measures but also facilitates social integration. As noted by Rachmawati (2020), the philosophy of corrections should focus on the restoration of individuals to become productive members of society rather than mere punishment.

Previous research has identified various factors affecting the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs within correctional institutions. For instance, studies by Khan et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of individualized rehabilitation strategies tailored to the unique needs of prisoners. Despite this, many correctional facilities still rely on traditional punitive approaches, neglecting the potential for reform and reintegration.

This research aims to explore the assimilation program as a form of correctional philosophy that addresses the urgent need for effective rehabilitation. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on community-based corrections, analyzing how assimilation programs can bridge the gap between incarceration and reintegration. By examining the effectiveness of these programs, this research seeks to contribute to the discourse on correctional practices, offering insights into their role in transforming the lives of prisoners.

Research Method

The research method used for this writing is qualitative, employing studies from several related journals and correlating them with relevant regulations. The data sources include governmental regulations, academic journals, and empirical case studies related to the assimilation program and rehabilitation practices in correctional institutions.

An empirical legal approach is utilized, which examines legal aspects and connects them with past experiences. The title of this writing is "The Assimilation Program as a Form and Manifestation of Correctional Philosophy in Restoring Life, Living, and Livelihood for Prisoners, and Realizing Community-Based Corrections in Correctional Institutions."

For data analysis, thematic analysis is employed to identify and interpret patterns within the qualitative data. This involves coding the data into themes that reflect the objectives of the study, such as the effectiveness of assimilation programs and their impact on prisoners' reintegration into society. This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of how these programs facilitate recovery and social integration.

Result and Discussion

Effectiveness of Providing Assimilation Programs to Prisoners as a Form of Recovery of Life, Living, and Livelihood?

Correctional institutions, as part of the integrated justice system, have the role of providing hardships to law violators while still respecting the human rights of prisoners. The hardships imposed on prisoners are limited to restricting their movement and other rights typically enjoyed in social environments. In addition to imposing hardships, prisoners are also provided with rehabilitation and guidance from correctional staff.

The rehabilitation provided to prisoners aims to fulfill their rights as individuals, asserting that the state is not entitled to make prisoners worse than before. This statement reveals a humanistic perspective centered on recovery within fairness, implying that the essence of the criminal justice system surpasses mere punishment. Instead, it focuses on rehabilitation, education, and reintegration of prisoners into society, with hopes that they will develop into individuals who contribute positively. Within this framework, justice is defined not merely through punitive lenses, but through transformative efforts that promote growth and change within prisoners.

The rehabilitation process is expected to empower prisoners to reintegrate into society and actively participate in their communities. Correctional institutions provide not only personal development and independence training but also prepare specific programs designed for prisoners, enabling them to transition back into society. One of these programs is assimilation, which is specifically arranged and prepared for prisoners who will undergo social integration upon release, as regulated by Government Regulation No. 32 of 1999 concerning the rights of prisoners.

Overall, the assimilation program is prepared by correctional staff to facilitate the integration process between prisoners and society. Many societal stigmas toward prisoners necessitate this assimilation process. The designed programs for prisoners include various activities aimed at facilitating their reintegration into society, such as skills training, formal and non-formal education, participation in community service projects, and other character development initiatives that can be conducted both independently or in collaboration with external entities, including in open correctional facilities.

The primary objective of the assimilation program, aligned with the broader aims of the correctional system, is to assist inmates in reflecting on their past errors (Sidauruk & Subroto, 2022). It fosters self-improvement and crime prevention while promoting successful social integration, enabling them to

contribute positively to society and function as responsible community members.

In practice, the rehabilitative approach within correctional institutions should be tailored to the specific characteristics of individual prisoners, including gender, religious beliefs, education level, type of crime committed, and duration of their sentence. This approach aims to ensure the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs in achieving rehabilitative goals by accommodating the specific needs and circumstances of each prisoner, maximizing the assimilation process, and significantly affecting the success of their social reintegration.

If we associate the assimilation program with the correctional philosophy aimed at restoring life, living, and livelihood, we can state that the assimilation program effectively helps prisoners improve themselves and facilitates their integration into society. It is crucial considering that many prisoners re-offend due to failures in social integration. It is expected that through the assimilation programs aimed at fostering independence for prisoners, they can continue their lives by implementing the rehabilitation programs provided during their time in correctional institutions once they are released (Byrne, 2020; James, 2014; Kipkemboi, 2023).

The assimilation program, as an aspect of correctional institutions, does not merely impose suffering on prisoners but also engages in the recovery process, enabling them to continue their lives, lives, and livelihoods. The procedures for prisoners to participate in the assimilation program are outlined in the Minister of Law and Human Rights Regulation No. 3 of 2018, which specifies several criteria those prisoners, must meet to be eligible for the assimilation program. The requirements include:

1. Prisoners may be granted assimilation (Paragraph 1).
2. Prisoners who may be granted assimilation must meet the following needs (Paragraph 2):
 - a. Demonstrate good behavior, evidenced by not receiving any disciplinary punishment in the last 6 (six) months.
 - b. Actively participate in and sincerely follow rehabilitation programs.
 - c. Have served at least half (1/2) of their total sentence.

Implementation of Correctional Institutions in Realizing Community-Based Corrections in Assimilation Programs for Prisoners?

Correctional institutions serve as the final process of the integrated justice system, where they provide consequences for law violators. Correctional institutions have undergone significant evolution, transcending the conventional imprisonment model that predominantly emphasized punishment from a retributive framework (Khan et al., 2023). The traditional approach often focused solely on punitive measures, neglecting both the rights of inmates and their potential futures. In contrast, modern correctional strategies prioritize rehabilitation and support, aiming to address the root causes of criminal behavior while promoting the well-being and reintegration prospects of offenders.

After prisons transitioned from confinement to correctional practices, the treatment of prisoners has shifted to a rehabilitative approach, moving away from a retributive model toward restorative justice and social integration. It allows prisoners to receive rehabilitation and guidance from correctional staff to continue their lives, living, and sustenance. The purpose of the correctional system is detailed in Article 2 of the Correctional Law, which outlines its objectives of the correctional system is guided by three fundamental objectives

Firstly, to ensure safety and protect the rights of detainees and minors who are classified as prisoners or detainees. The second objective is to foster the independence and individuality of prisoners, enabling them to recognize their mistakes, grow personally, and avoid future criminal behavior. This development is intended to facilitate their reintegration into society, allowing them to lead productive lives as responsible, law-abiding citizens who contribute positively to social progress. Additionally, the third goal is to safeguard the surrounding community from the potential return of criminal activities that could disrupt law and order.

The transition from imprisonment to a correctional system has led to many changes, including the establishment of programs that support prisoners in achieving social integration with the community so they can actively participate in society (Morenoff & Harding, 2014). Additionally, community-based corrections seek to integrate prisoners into the community and involve society in the processes and programs of supervising prisoners. The execution of Community-Based Correction (CBC) serves not only as an alternative to incarceration but also as a supportive framework for prisoner rehabilitation (Arditti et al., 2020; Gisler et al., 2018; Hines, 2024). The CBC program aims to aid prisoners in reintegrating into society by ensuring their acceptance by the

surrounding environment. The primary goal of community-based development is to connect prisoners with the community and help them secure stable employment. Consequently, when prisoners are released from correctional institutions, they have the opportunity for utilization and can contribute positively to society.

To facilitate the implementation of community-based corrections (CBC), it is essential to establish open correctional facilities. Open prisons are designed for inmates nearing the end of their sentences, requiring minimal security supervision. From a philosophical standpoint, correctional practices reflect a system of punishment that has evolved from theories of retribution, deterrence, and social reintegration. Today, punishment is no longer intended to inflict suffering as a vengeance or deterrence instrument. Correctional institutions increasingly recognize that inmates can successfully reintegrate into society.

In the concept of correctional practices, prisoners are not seen as objects to be punished but as subjects who need assistance to reintegrate back into society. Therefore, the correctional system emphasizes rehabilitation and social reintegration for prisoners rather than merely imposing physical punishment. Correctional practices align with the philosophy of social reintegration, which assumes that crime represents a conflict between the convicted individual and society (Ward & Heffernan, 2017). Thus, punishment aims to rectify this conflict and reunite the convicted individual with their community (reintegration). Prisoners do not simply serve their sentences; they are also equipped to be accepted and play positive roles within society after completing their sentences.

According to Richard W. Snarr, the concept of community-based corrections refers to patterns of social reintegration that involve various activities with community participation aimed at reintegrating prisoners into society (Nugraha, 2020). Rehabilitation of prisoners occurs not only outside prison but also within correctional institutions while fully involving the community. Community participation is essential for establishing this concept. The social reintegration model is expected to change prisoner behavior through interactions with societal values, thereby helping to restore the relationship between prisoners and society. Following the philosophy of social reintegration, alternative philosophies such as community-based corrections and restorative justice have emerged, closely related to the objectives of correctional practices—namely, facilitating the reintegration of prisoners into society.

Conclusion

The assimilation program effectively embodies the philosophy of correctional practices, focusing on the holistic recovery of prisoners' lives, including aspects of living, livelihood, and sustenance. This program aligns with the objectives of community-based corrections, aiming to reintegrate prisoners into their social environments. Through assimilation, prisoners gain opportunities for gradual integration into society, such as pursuing education, skill training, or employment.

By addressing the urgent need for effective rehabilitation and social reintegration, this research highlights the importance of assimilation programs in preventing recidivism and facilitating positive contributions to society. Ultimately, the findings emphasize that the assimilation program not only supports the recovery of prisoners but also benefits the community by fostering safer and more integrated social environments. This underscores the necessity of continuing to enhance and implement such programs within correctional institutions.

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