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Implementation Of The Child Development Program At The Jakarta Class 1 Lpka Based On The Principle Of The Best Interests Of The Child: A Study Of The Gap Between Policy And Practice

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the implementation of child development programs at LPKA Class I Jakarta through the lens of the best interest of the child principle and to identify the gap between normative policy and empirical practice. A qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical case study design was employed. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants including the institution's head, development staff, clinical psychologists, social workers, and children under correctional supervision, supplemented by participatory observation and systematic document review. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed that while the institutional framework formally adopts the best interest of the child principle, daily program delivery remains generalized and does not fully accommodate individual children's needs. The policy-practice gap was determined by four structural factors: overcrowding, professional human resource shortages, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, and suboptimal inter-agency coordination. Children exposed to rights-based development approaches demonstrated superior outcomes in psychological wellbeing, behavioral change, and social reintegration readiness compared to those in conventional programs. These findings indicate that the best interest of the child principle has not been optimally operationalized in practice, necessitating comprehensive institutional reform and sustained investment in professional capacity and multi-sector coordination.

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INTRODUCTION

The protection and rehabilitation of children in conflict with the law has emerged as one of the most pressing issues in contemporary criminal justice discourse worldwide. Globally, there has been a significant paradigmatic shift from punitive, retributive approaches toward restorative and rehabilitative models that place the best interest of the child at the center of every judicial and institutional decision (Zijlstra et al., 2023). This shift is firmly grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which establishes that in all actions concerning children, the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration (United Nations, 1989). In recent years, international bodies including UNICEF, UNODC, and OHCHR have intensified advocacy efforts to align national juvenile justice systems with CRC standards, emphasizing rehabilitation, diversion, and the elimination of arbitrary detention as core principles (Campistol et al., 2022). Research consistently demonstrates that restorative justice programs reduce recidivism among juvenile offenders to a greater extent than conventional punitive responses, underscoring the practical value of child-centered approaches in correctional settings (Walgrave et al., 2023).

In the Indonesian context, this global paradigm is reflected in the enactment of Law Number 11 of 2012 on the Juvenile Criminal Justice System (SPPA), which formally adopts principles of diversion and restorative justice and mandates that imprisonment shall serve as a measure of last resort (Triwati & Kridasaksana, 2021). Indonesia ratified the CRC through Presidential Decree Number 36 of 1990, thereby assuming a legal obligation to align its national policies, including institutional child development programs, with international child rights standards (Indonesia, 1990). Despite this robust normative framework, empirical evidence suggests a persistent disconnect between policy design and on-the-ground implementation. Data from the Directorate General of Corrections, Ministry of Law and Human Rights (2023), indicates that more than 2,000 children currently reside in Special Child Development Institutions (LPKA) across Indonesia, the majority aged 15 to 18 years and involved in cases of theft, drug offenses, and violence. Reports from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI, 2022) further document systemic violations of children's rights within correctional facilities, including inadequate educational access, suboptimal healthcare services, and the absence of effective social reintegration programs, pointing to structural deficiencies that extend beyond individual

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institutions.

Several studies have examined aspects of child development and juvenile justice in Indonesia, providing important foundational insights. Putri and Santoso (2020) analyzed the implementation of Indonesia's juvenile justice system and found that while the legal framework had become progressively child-centered, its application remained constrained by limited resources and a legal culture not yet fully aligned with restorative values. Hidayat (2021) investigated the effectiveness of development programs within LPKA settings and demonstrated that formal education programs positively influenced behavioral change in children; however, the study focused narrowly on a single program type and did not examine the holistic integration of the best interest of the child principle across all program domains. Anggraini et al. (2024) also emphasized the importance of a holistic approach in understanding and responding to social phenomena involving children in institutional care, reinforcing the need for multidimensional assessments in correctional settings.

Further scholarship reveals inconsistencies in findings regarding the effectiveness of child development interventions. Sari and Nugroho (2022) highlighted the critical role of social workers in supporting child rehabilitation within LPKA, yet identified that the severe shortage of social work professionals undermined the institution's capacity to meet individual children's needs. Wibowo (2023), in a broader study on the policy-practice gap in the juvenile correctional system, confirmed the existence of systemic misalignments, though without drilling into the specific mechanisms through which the best interest principle fails to translate into daily program delivery at a particular LPKA. Zumbach et al. (2022) introduced an international perspective by demonstrating that child custody and risk evaluation frameworks across multiple countries consistently fall short in operationalizing individualized, rights-based assessments, suggesting that this gap between normative ideals and institutional realities is not unique to Indonesia but reflects a broader global challenge.

Notwithstanding this body of scholarship, a critical research gap remains. Existing studies either address normative analyses of Indonesia's legal framework, focus on a single dimension of correctional programming, or examine policy-practice gaps at a general level without specificity to any one institution. None has conducted a comprehensive, empirically grounded examination of how the best interest of the child principle is operationalized, or fails to be operationalized, across the full spectrum of development programs within a single, flagship LPKA facility. LPKA Class I Jakarta, as one of Indonesia's largest and most strategically positioned child correctional institutions, represents an ideal setting in which to conduct such an investigation. The persistence

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of overcrowding, the shortage of qualified professionals such as psychologists and social workers, the uniformity of programming that does not accommodate individual children's needs, and the inadequacy of inter-agency coordination collectively suggest that the best interest principle remains far more of a normative ideal than an operational reality (Kurniawan et al., 2021; Zumbach et al., 2022).

This study therefore aims to analyze the implementation of child development programs at LPKA Class I Jakarta through the lens of the best interest of the child principle, and to identify and explain the gap between normative policy and empirical practice. The urgency of this research is underscored by the continued presence of thousands of children within Indonesia's correctional system and the documented failure of conventional approaches to ensure meaningful rehabilitation and social reintegration, as evidenced by persistently high recidivism rates (Carmichael & Baybutt, 2025; Moran, 2021). The novelty of this study lies in its integrated, qualitative, institution-specific approach that simultaneously examines multiple program domains, including personality development, formal and non-formal education, vocational training, and spiritual guidance, while mapping the structural factors that hinder the translation of policy into practice. Theoretically, this research contributes to the literature on policy implementation theory and child rights-based approaches in correctional settings. Practically, it generates evidence-based recommendations for institutional reform, capacity strengthening, and inter-agency coordination that can serve as a model for child-centered correctional policy reform across Indonesia.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design, selected on the basis that it is most appropriate for investigating complex social phenomena that involve institutional processes, human behavior, and the implementation of policy within a specific organizational context. A qualitative methodology enables the researcher to explore meaning, process, and social dynamics in depth from the perspectives of the participants themselves, rather than measuring variables through numerical indicators (Sugiyono, 2022). The research is specifically designed as a case study, given that the inquiry is concentrated on a single institutional locus, namely LPKA Class I Jakarta, with the objective of generating contextually rich and detailed understanding of how the best interest of the child principle is operationalized in practice. Case study design is particularly suitable when the research question is oriented toward "how" and "why" a contemporary phenomenon unfolds within a bounded real-life context (Creswell & Poth,

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2023). This approach allows the researcher to capture layers of institutional reality that would remain invisible through purely quantitative measurement, while enabling a systematic and replicable analytical process (Bahroni et al., 2022). The selection of a descriptive-analytical design further ensures that findings are not merely descriptive of observable conditions but are subjected to critical analysis in relation to normative frameworks and theoretical constructs relevant to child rights and policy implementation.

The research was conducted at LPKA Class I Jakarta, which was selected purposively as the primary research site. This institution was chosen because of its status as one of the largest and most strategically significant child correctional facilities in Indonesia, handling a diverse range of juvenile cases from the capital city and serving as a reference institution for child development policy implementation at the national level. The research participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, a method that is widely accepted in qualitative inquiry because it allows the researcher to deliberately select informants who possess direct, relevant knowledge of the phenomenon under study (Sugiyono, 2022; Emzir, 2012). The key informants in this study consist of the Head of LPKA Class I Jakarta, daily development staff, clinical psychologists, social workers assigned to child accompaniment, and the children under correctional supervision themselves. The inclusion criteria for informants require that they have been actively involved in the design, implementation, or experience of child development programs for a minimum of six months at LPKA Class I Jakarta. Informants who had not been directly involved in the child development programs or had been stationed at the institution for fewer than six months were excluded from the study. This multi-actor approach to informant selection ensures that the data collected reflects institutional perspectives from multiple levels of the organizational hierarchy, as well as the lived experiences of the children who are the direct subjects of the programs being examined (Anggraini et al., 2024).

Three complementary instruments were employed to collect data in this study: an in-depth interview guide, a structured observation guide, and a document review checklist. The in-depth interview guide was constructed based on the key thematic dimensions of this study, including the normative policy framework, the day-to-day implementation of development programs, resource availability, inter-agency coordination, and the degree to which individual children's needs are accommodated. Questions directed at institutional staff focused on the macro-level policy and managerial dimensions, while questions for children were formulated using simplified, age-appropriate language to avoid inducing psychological distress (Emzir, 2012). Prior to data collection, the instrument was reviewed by two academic experts in the fields of

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child law and qualitative methodology, and subsequently refined through a pilot test involving two informants outside the primary sample. The structured observation guide was designed to direct the researcher's attention toward specific physical and interactional dimensions of the institutional environment, including the condition of educational facilities, the quality of recreational and vocational spaces, patterns of staff-child interaction, and the management of inter-child conflicts. The document review checklist was constructed to guide systematic review of official documents, including Law Number 11 of 2012 on the Juvenile Justice System, ministerial regulations, LPKA standard operating procedures, program reports, and child development records, all of which were cross-referenced with empirical findings to verify the alignment between stated policies and documented practices (Sugiyono, 2022; Creswell & Poth, 2023).

The research was conducted in three sequential phases. In the first phase, which consisted of preparatory activities, the researcher completed ethical clearance procedures, obtained formal institutional research permits from LPKA Class I Jakarta and the Directorate General of Corrections, and conducted a preliminary review of relevant national and international legal instruments alongside academic literature. This phase also included the construction and expert validation of all research instruments and the establishment of rapport with institutional gatekeepers to facilitate access to informants, including the children under supervision. The second phase constituted the main fieldwork period, during which data were collected through multiple rounds of in-depth interviews, participatory observation sessions conducted across different program activities such as vocational training, religious guidance, and recreational activities, and systematic review of institutional documents and archives. Each interview session was audio-recorded with the explicit informed consent of the participant, lasted between thirty and sixty minutes, and was subsequently transcribed verbatim to form the raw data corpus (Moleong, 2021). Observation notes were compiled into detailed field journals following each site visit, incorporating both objective factual descriptions and theoretical reflections. The third phase involved data processing, analysis, and report writing, during which transcripts, field notes, and document summaries were systematically coded and interpreted in accordance with the analytical framework described below (Kurniawan et al., 2021).

Data analysis in this study follows the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which comprises three iterative stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. In the data condensation stage, all transcripts, observation notes, and document summaries were reviewed, and relevant segments were coded and categorized according to the main thematic dimensions of the research, including program design and

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delivery, resource capacity, individual needs accommodation, and inter-agency coordination. In the data display stage, the condensed data were organized into narrative matrices, comparative tables, and thematic networks to facilitate the identification of patterns, relationships, and contradictions across different informant groups and data sources. In the conclusion drawing and verification stage, preliminary findings were formulated and then re-examined against the raw data to confirm their accuracy and logical coherence (Emzir, 2012). To strengthen the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed triangulation of data sources by cross-referencing information from interviews, observations, and documents, as well as member-checking procedures in which key informants were invited to review and confirm the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations (Sugiyono, 2022). The entire analytical process was conducted manually without the use of dedicated qualitative analysis software, although thematic coding was assisted by a structured coding matrix developed by the researcher to ensure consistency across the dataset.

Ethical considerations constituted an integral dimension of the research design, given the involvement of children as vulnerable research participants. Prior to the commencement of fieldwork, formal research permits were obtained from LPKA Class I Jakarta and from the institutional authority of the Directorate General of Corrections. Written informed consent was secured from adult informants, while for child participants, assent was obtained from each child in addition to institutional authorization, in recognition of their limited legal capacity and heightened need for protection (United Nations, 2022). All participants were fully informed of the voluntary nature of their participation, their right to withdraw at any point without negative consequences, and the measures in place to protect the confidentiality of their identities and data. No names or identifying information of child participants appear in any part of the research report; pseudonyms and role-based identifiers are used throughout. Interview sessions with children were conducted in a safe, private, and non-threatening environment, and were accompanied where necessary by a trained social worker to provide psychosocial support. All data, including audio recordings and transcripts, were stored securely and are accessible only to the research team. These procedures reflect the ethical standards outlined in the CRC and are consistent with the principles of child rights-based research practice (Zumbach et al., 2022; Triwati & Kridasaksana, 2021).

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Conceptual Alignment of LPKA With the Best Interest of The Chlid Framework

The first finding of this study concerns the extent to which LPKA Class I Jakarta is normatively aligned with the best interest of the child principle as mandated by Law Number 11 of 2012 on the Juvenile Criminal Justice System (SPPA) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Document analysis revealed that the institutional legal foundation of LPKA Class I Jakarta formally references both instruments, establishing personality development, formal and non-formal education, vocational training, and religious guidance as the four main pillars of its child development programming (Indonesia, 2012; United Nations, 1989). The institution's standard operating procedures articulate an orientation toward rehabilitation and social reintegration rather than punishment, reflecting the paradigmatic shift from retributive to restorative approaches that Indonesian child justice law has sought to institutionalize since 2012 (Triwati & Kridasaksana, 2021). However, while normative alignment is documented at the policy level, field observations and in-depth interviews consistently indicated that day-to-day program delivery at LPKA Class I Jakarta has not fully translated these normative commitments into individualized, rights-based practice. The programs that exist are administered in a generalized manner, applying the same format to all children regardless of their individual developmental needs, psychological backgrounds, or social histories. The second finding presents a comparative analysis of conventional child development approaches against programs grounded in the best interest of the child principle. Table 1 below summarizes the key dimensional differences identified through document review, participant observation, and cross-informant interview analysis conducted at LPKA Class I Jakarta.

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Table 1. Comparative Implementation of Conventional vs. Best Interest of the Child-Based Development Programs		
Dimension	**Conventional Development**	**Best Interest of the Child-Based Development**
Program Orientation	Discipline, compliance, deterrence	Protection, rehabilitation, optimal development
Development Approach	Top-down, authoritative, uniform	Participatory, humanistic, individually tailored
Role of the Child	Object of development	Active subject with rights and voice
Educational Programs	Limited to standard formal education	Integrates formal, non-formal, and life skills development
Psychological Approach	Minimal attention to psychological needs	Counseling and mental health support integrated
Professional Personnel	Limited to correctional officers	Multidisciplinary: psychologists, social workers, educators
Development Methods	Administrative and routinized	Adaptive, innovative, and needs-based
Fulfillment of Children's Rights	Not a primary priority	Central focus aligned with child protection principles
Development Environment	Rigid and institutional	Child-friendly, supportive, and conducive
Family Involvement	Minimal	Active family participation encouraged
Program Evaluation	Compliance and discipline-	Based on child development and

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Table 1. Comparative Implementation of Conventional vs. Best Interest of the Child-Based Development Programs		
Dimension	**Conventional Development**	**Best Interest of the Child-Based Development**
	based	behavioral change
Social Reintegration	Unsystematic	Comprehensively designed for community reintegration readiness
Program Flexibility	Rigid and uniform	Flexible and individualized
Expected Outcome	Behavioral control and compliance	Recovery, independence, and social integration

The data in Table 1 reveal a fundamental divergence in orientation between the two models. Under the conventional approach, children are treated primarily as objects of institutional control, with program delivery driven by administrative routine rather than developmental need. In contrast, the best interest of the child-based approach repositions the child as an active rights-holder whose psychological, educational, and social needs must shape every aspect of program design and delivery. Field observations at LPKA Class I Jakarta confirmed that current practice remains predominantly aligned with the conventional model, with limited individual assessment systems, minimal psychological counseling services, and a near-absence of structured family engagement mechanisms (Zumbach et al., 2022; Anggraini et al., 2024).

The Policy-Practice Gap: Structural Determinants

The third finding identifies and analyzes the structural factors that produce the gap between normative policy and empirical practice at LPKA Class I Jakarta. Four principal determinants were identified through triangulated data analysis. First, overcrowding emerged as the most pervasive structural constraint. The number of children housed at LPKA Class I Jakarta consistently exceeds the institution's ideal capacity, reducing physical space available for program delivery, increasing the frequency of inter-child conflicts, and diminishing the quality of individual supervision (Zumbach et al., 2022). Second, the shortage of professional human resources

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constitutes a critical barrier to individualized development. The institution operates with a severely limited number of clinical psychologists, counselors, and social workers, compelling development officers to simultaneously perform multiple functional roles, which reduces the depth of psychosocial attention available to each child. Third, inadequate facilities and infrastructure were directly observed across several program domains: classroom spaces are insufficient, vocational training equipment is outdated, and counseling rooms are either absent or unsuitably configured for child-friendly interaction. Fourth, suboptimal inter-agency coordination between LPKA Class I Jakarta, the Community Corrections Office (Bapas), and relevant social service agencies results in disjointed development and reintegration processes, leaving post-release reintegration planning incomplete for the majority of children (Kurniawan et al., 2021). Across all four dimensions, the finding is consistent: the best interest of the child principle remains predominantly a normative aspiration rather than an operationalized institutional standard at LPKA Class I Jakarta.

Impact of Best Interest of the Child-Based Development on Child Outcomes

The fourth finding examines the differential outcomes produced by conventional versus best interest of the child-based development models, drawing on interview data from children, staff, and social workers, as well as comparative analysis of documented program outputs. Table 2 presents the comparative impact across key child development dimensions.

Table 2. Comparative Impact of Development Approaches on Child Outcomes

Impact Dimension	Conventional Development	Best Interest of the Child-Based Development
Psychological Development	Vulnerable to stress, pressure, and anxiety	Emotionally stable, feels safe and valued
Self-Confidence	Generally low due to authoritative approach	Increased through participatory, supportive engagement
Behavioral Change	Temporary; driven by external rules and fear	Sustained; grounded in self-awareness and internal motivation
Learning Motivation	Low; programs not relevant to individual needs	High; programs aligned with interests and potential

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Impact Dimension	Conventional Development	Best Interest of the Child-Based Development
Child Independence	Underdeveloped	Strengthened through life skills training
Social Relationships	Closed; difficulty forming positive interactions	Open; capable of building constructive social bonds
Self-Understanding	Minimal self-reflection	Enhanced through counseling and personal development
Recidivism Risk	Relatively high	Reduced through comprehensive rehabilitation
Mental Health	Vulnerable to disruption	Protected through psychosocial support
Social Reintegration Readiness	Poor readiness to return to community	Strong readiness across mental, social, and skills dimensions
Response to Social Stigma	Difficult to manage	Better equipped with adaptive capacity and emotional support
Child Participation	Passive in development process	Active; involved in decision-making processes
Fulfillment of Children's Rights	Suboptimal	More fully realized in accordance with child protection principles
Quality of Life	Stagnant	Improved comprehensively
Future Prospects	Directionless	Goal-oriented with improved opportunities

The data in Table 2 demonstrate that across all fifteen measured outcome dimensions, best interest of the child-based development produces markedly superior results compared to conventional approaches. Interview data from children who participated in rights-based program

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elements revealed qualitative patterns consistent with these findings. Children reported higher levels of self-esteem, greater motivation to engage with educational activities, and reduced fear of post-release social rejection when they experienced counseling-based and participatory development modalities. Staff informants corroborated these observations, noting that children who received individualized psychosocial attention demonstrated more stable behavioral patterns and more meaningful engagement with vocational training programs. These findings confirm that the orientation of development programming is a critical determinant of both the psychological wellbeing of children during their period of institutional residence and their readiness for successful social reintegration upon release (Moran, 2021; Carmichael & Baybutt, 2025).

Opportunities and Challenges in Implementation

The fifth finding delineates the opportunities and challenges that shape the feasibility of transitioning toward a fully operationalized best interest of the child-based development model at LPKA Class I Jakarta and across the Indonesian juvenile correctional system more broadly. On the opportunity side, Indonesia's existing legal architecture provides a strong normative foundation for such a transition, as Law Number 11 of 2012, Law Number 35 of 2014 on Child Protection, Law Number 22 of 2022 on Corrections, and Indonesia's ratification of the CRC collectively mandate a child rights-based approach to all institutional interactions with children in conflict with the law (Indonesia, 2012; Indonesia, 2022; Zijlstra et al., 2023). Additionally, growing societal awareness of mental health, child protection, and rehabilitative justice creates a favorable environment for multi-sector partnerships involving psychologists, educational institutions, community organizations, and the private sector in supporting child rehabilitation. On the challenge side, the study identified four persistent barriers: the shortage of professionally trained staff, the absence of a comprehensive individual needs assessment system, the persistence of a compliance-oriented institutional culture resistant to paradigm change, and deeply entrenched social stigma toward children who have been in conflict with the law, which undermines post-release reintegration efforts regardless of the quality of in-institution programming (Sari & Nugroho, 2022; Bahroni et al., 2022). These findings collectively indicate that achieving genuine alignment between normative policy and institutional practice at LPKA Class I Jakarta requires not only incremental program improvements but a systemic transformation of institutional capacity, professional culture, and inter-agency coordination architecture.

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DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal a persistent and structurally embedded gap between the normative aspirations of Indonesian juvenile correctional policy and the empirical realities of program delivery at LPKA Class I Jakarta. This condition is not incidental but reflects a systemic tension that has been observed across multiple jurisdictions, whereby progressive legal frameworks formulated at the national and international levels fail to fully permeate institutional practice due to inadequate resource allocation, professional capacity limitations, and organizational culture resistant to paradigm change (Zumbach et al., 2022; Wibowo, 2023). The normative alignment documented at the policy level, namely the formal incorporation of the best interest of the child principle in institutional standard operating procedures and program frameworks derived from Law Number 11 of 2012, represents an important institutional achievement. However, as the results of this study consistently demonstrate, normative compliance with policy instruments does not automatically translate into child-centered practice on the ground. This finding is consistent with Kurniawan et al.'s (2021) application of Dunn's (2018) implementation theory, which emphasizes that effective policy implementation is contingent upon four mutually reinforcing conditions: clear communication of policy objectives, adequate resources, committed implementer disposition, and coherent bureaucratic structure. The deficiency of each of these conditions at LPKA Class I Jakarta explains, in substantial part, why the best interest of the child principle remains more aspirational than operational in the institution's daily programming.

The comparative analysis between conventional and best interest of the child-based development approaches, as presented in Table 1, provides empirical validation of a paradigmatic divide that the literature has long theorized but rarely examined within a single institutional case study in the Indonesian context. The conventional model's orientation toward compliance, administrative routine, and uniform program delivery mirrors what critical scholars of carceral environments have identified as an inherently depersonalizing institutional logic, one that prioritizes institutional order over individual developmental need (Moran, 2021). In contrast, the best interest of the child-based model's emphasis on individualized assessment, multi-professional involvement, participatory approaches, and family engagement reflects the standards endorsed by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child and elaborated by Zijlstra et al. (2023) in their empirical validation of child-centered assessment frameworks. The data from LPKA Class I Jakarta confirm that children who experienced elements of the rights-based approach, particularly through counseling interactions and participatory program components,

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demonstrated more stable psychological states and greater engagement with educational and vocational activities. This finding directly echoes Hidayat's (2021) earlier observation that individually oriented educational interventions produce measurable behavioral improvements in children within LPKA settings, while extending his finding across a broader range of program dimensions and situating it within the structural conditions that either enable or impede such interventions.

The identification of overcrowding as the most pervasive structural constraint on program quality at LPKA Class I Jakarta contributes to a growing body of international evidence on the relationship between institutional overcrowding and the degradation of rehabilitation outcomes for juvenile offenders. Research conducted across multiple low- and middle-income country correctional systems consistently demonstrates that overcrowded facilities are structurally incapable of delivering individualized rehabilitation programs, as the ratio of professional staff to children falls far below the threshold required for meaningful psychosocial engagement (Ijiissh, 2022; Awopetu, 2014). In the Indonesian context, this structural constraint is compounded by the shortage of clinical psychologists, social workers, and trained counselors at LPKA Class I Jakarta, a condition that Sari and Nugroho (2022) identified as a systemic barrier across multiple LPKA facilities. The consequence, as this study's findings make plain, is that development officers are compelled to perform multiple roles simultaneously, spreading their attention so thinly across the child population that individualized needs-based programming becomes practically impossible. This is not merely an operational inconvenience; it represents a structural violation of the individualization principle that lies at the heart of the best interest of the child standard, as affirmed by the United Nations General Comment No. 14 on Article 3 of the CRC (United Nations, 2022; Triwati & Kridasaksana, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of child development programs at LPKA Class I Jakarta has been normatively aligned with the best interest of the child principle as mandated by Law Number 11 of 2012 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, as evidenced by the formal incorporation of personality development, education, vocational training, and religious guidance within the institutional program framework. However, in practice, the implementation of these programs remains generalized, administratively oriented, and insufficiently responsive to the individual developmental needs of each child, resulting in a significant and structurally embedded policy-practice gap. This gap is primarily driven by four

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compounding structural factors: overcrowding that exceeds ideal institutional capacity, a critical shortage of professional human resources including psychologists, counselors, and social workers, inadequate physical facilities and program infrastructure, and suboptimal inter-agency coordination between LPKA, the Community Corrections Office, and relevant social service agencies.

The comparative analysis further confirmed that children exposed to rights-based development approaches demonstrate markedly better psychological stability, behavioral change sustainability, learning motivation, and social reintegration readiness compared to those processed through conventional punitive-oriented models. For future research, it is recommended that scholars extend this investigation to multiple LPKA facilities across different provinces in Indonesia to assess whether these findings reflect a systemic national pattern, as well as to develop quantitative indicators for measuring the degree of best interest of the child-based implementation. Practically, policymakers and institutional managers are urged to prioritize professional capacity building, introduce comprehensive individual needs assessment systems, establish structured inter-agency coordination protocols, and cultivate an institutional culture that genuinely embeds the child rights-based approach into daily program delivery. The primary limitation of this study lies in its single-site case study design, which, while enabling contextual depth, constrains the direct generalizability of the findings to other LPKA facilities across Indonesia.

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