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Islamic Religious Education as Part of the Rehabilitation Process for Children in Conflict with the Law: A Case Study in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The fulfillment of the right to religious education for Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) is an essential dimension of juvenile rehabilitation. However, the rehabilitative contribution of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) cannot be inferred from the mere presence of religious activities. This qualitative single-case study examines how IRE contributes to an emergent rehabilitative configuration at LPKA Class II Yogyakarta. Data were generated through participant observation, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, self-assessments, and document analysis involving institutional leaders and officers, educators, a religious counselor, CICL guardians, parents, 10 current CICL participants, and 3 former residents. Data analysis involved iterative data condensation, display, coding, category development, thematic synthesis, and conclusion verification. The findings reveal that IRE has not been formally institutionalized as a distinct rehabilitation system. Nevertheless, its contribution is reflected in four interrelated dimensions: rehabilitative foundations; formal and non-formal educational experiences; pedagogical-reflective mechanisms grounded in mentoring, participation, non-stigmatizing relationships, and prosocial roles; and a continuum from institutional participation to reflective appropriation and negotiated post-release continuity. IRE therefore functions as one contributor within a broader rehabilitation ecology, shifting analysis from curriculum-centered intervention toward a relational, institutional, and temporal process.

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INTRODUCTION

Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) occupy a particularly vulnerable position at the intersection of offending, developmental change, educational disruption, family difficulties, and social pressure. Because their personalities and life orientations are still developing, responses to children cannot be equated with adult punishment. Education is therefore important not only for preserving the right to learn but also for reopening possibilities for change, recovery, and constructive social participation.[1] In the context of Special Child Development Institutions (LPKA), this challenge is intensified by differences in schooling histories, placement lengths, prior learning experiences, and psychosocial needs. The existence of an educational program alone is therefore insufficient; the more important question is how educational experience becomes connected to rehabilitation.

This orientation is consistent with the international child-justice framework. The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires treatment that respects children's dignity and supports their return to a constructive role in society,[2] General Comment No. 24 emphasizes best interests, prevention, proportionality, and reintegration,[3] Moreover, the Beijing Rules identify education, training, protection, and capacity development as central aims of institutional treatment.[4] Indonesia adopts a similar orientation through Law No. 11 of 2012 on the Juvenile Criminal Justice System and Law No. 22 of 2022 on Corrections, both of which strengthen restorative justice, rights protection, rehabilitation, and social reintegration.[5] LPKA should therefore be understood as an educational and rehabilitative environment rather than a detention space where learning activities are merely added.

However, education in juvenile justice cannot be reduced to classrooms and curricula. Children entering custodial institutions often carry experiences of school failure or interruption. Shafi shows that re-engagement with learning depends not only on access to instruction but also on relationships, emotional conditions, and the character of the custodial environment.[6] Cross-national research similarly emphasizes agency, learner interests, social-emotional competence, and continuity into post-release life.[7] Rehabilitative education thus works through an ecology of curriculum, institutional routine, pedagogical relationships, opportunities for responsibility, emotional experience, and transition preparation. This

[1] Adeela Ahmed Shafi, "The Impact of the Secure Custodial Setting on Re-engaging Incarcerated Children with Education and Learning—A Case Study in the UK," *International Journal of Educational Development* 76 (2020): 102190, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2020.102190.

[2] United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, adopted November 20, 1989, General Assembly Resolution 44/25.

[3] Committee on the Rights of the Child, *General Comment No. 24 (2019) on Children's Rights in the Child Justice System*, CRC/C/GC/24, September 18, 2019.

[4] United Nations, *United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules)*, General Assembly Resolution 40/33, November 29, 1985.

[5] Republik Indonesia, Undang-Undang Nomor 11 Tahun 2012 tentang Sistem Peradilan Pidana Anak; Republik Indonesia, Undang-Undang Nomor 22 Tahun 2022 tentang Pemasyarakatan.

[6] Shafi, "The Impact of the Secure Custodial Setting," 102190.

[7] Adeela Ahmed Shafi, Tristan Middleton, and Chris Jones, "Re-engaging Incarcerated Children and Young People with Education and Learning Using Authentic Inquiry in Italy, Spain, Germany and the UK," *Cambridge Journal of Education* 53, no. 6 (2023): 803–824, https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2023.2230161; Adeela Ahmed Shafi, "Improving Education for Incarcerated Children and Young People: Policy Recommendations from Three Transnational Projects in Europe," *Quality Education for All* 1, no. 1 (2024): 180–186, https://doi.org/10.1108/QEA-03-2024-0032.

distinction matters because compliance within a highly structured institution is not necessarily equivalent to the capacity to sustain new orientations after returning to a less regulated social environment.

Indonesian studies reveal comparable tensions. Research at LPKA Blitar reports progress through formal and non-formal education while also noting heterogeneous educational backgrounds, limited adaptive facilities, and weak community involvement.[8] Research in Jayapura similarly shows that education, social development, and physical-spiritual guidance interact in rebuilding social bonds but remain constrained by structural conditions.[9] These findings suggest that the rehabilitative value of education depends on connections across programs, actors, and settings, not simply on whether particular activities are present.

Within this ecology, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) has a potential role that extends beyond the transmission of religious knowledge and ritual competence. For Muslim children, IRE may provide a moral and spiritual vocabulary through which experiences of responsibility, wrongdoing, self-control, relationships, and hope for the future can be interpreted. Religious activities, however, are not automatically rehabilitative. Jang and Johnson conceptualize faith-based rehabilitation as moral reform that involves identity, meaning in life, character, and self-control, rather than ritual frequency alone.[10] Their work in Colombia and South Africa also connects religion with responsibility, forgiveness, identity change, and human flourishing.[11] The analytical question, therefore, is not whether CICL participates in prayer, Qur'anic learning, or religious lectures, but how such experiences are positioned within a broader process of education, reflection, and reintegration.

Studies in Indonesia point in a similar direction while leaving an important conceptual problem unresolved. Humaira and colleagues associate spiritual guidance with behavioral change, reduced psychological distress, respect for dignity, and reintegration, although lecture-centered approaches remain prominent.[12] Asnuddin, Muzakkir, and M. Rusdi T. document the cultivation of creed, worship, and moral conduct at LPKA Mamuju through prayer, *dhikr*, lectures, Qur'anic learning, memorization, and habituation.[13] Such research is

[8] Afifah Dhaninta Anggraeni and Rayno Dwi Adityo, "The Effectiveness of Fulfilling Children's Educational Rights in the Legal Development Process," *Sakina: Journal of Family Studies* 9, no. 3 (2025): 306–322, https://doi.org/10.18860/jfs.v9i3.18078.

[9] Deppa Ringgi and Muh. Anugrah Kurniawan Amir, "Empirical Analysis of Rehabilitation Programs for Children in Conflict with the Law at Jayapura Class II Juvenile Correctional Facility," *SIGn Journal of Social Science* 6, no. 1 (2025): 43–68, https://doi.org/10.37276/sjss.v6i1.495.

[10] Sung Joon Jang and Byron R. Johnson, "Religion and Rehabilitation as Moral Reform: Conceptualization and Preliminary Evidence," *American Journal of Criminal Justice* 49, no. 1 (2024): 47–73, https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-022-09707-3.

[11] Sung Joon Jang, Byron R. Johnson, Matthew Lee Anderson, and Karen Booyens, "Religion and Rehabilitation in Colombian and South African Prisons: A Human Flourishing Approach," *International Criminal Justice Review* 33, no. 3 (2023): 225–252, https://doi.org/10.1177/10575677221123249.

[12] Aida Humaira, Imam Sujoko, Edwin Syarif, Nurul Adhha, and Raju Moh Hazmi, "Actualization of the Maqsid Al-Shar'ah in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Spiritual Counting of Prisoners in Judicial Institutions," *Jurnal Fuaduna: Jurnal Kajian Keagamaan dan Kemasyarakatan* 7, no. 2 (2023): 123–142, https://doi.org/10.30983/fuaduna.v7i2.7366.

[13] Asnuddin, Muzakkir, and M. Rusdi T., "Islamic Education as a Pillar of Rehabilitation: A Study of Child Inmate Development at LPKA Class II Mamuju," *Tadbir: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 13, no. 3 (2025): 531–541, https://doi.org/10.30603/tjmpi.v13i3.6435.

valuable, but it generally treats educational rights, religious activities, moral improvement, or rehabilitation as partly separate objects of study.

The theoretical problem produced by this fragmentation is more significant than a simple gap in topics. Existing scholarship often conceptualizes IRE either as an instructional provision or as an intervention expected to produce moral change. This risk treats rehabilitation as an outcome attributable to religious activities themselves, while underexamining the relational and institutional processes through which educational experiences may acquire rehabilitative meaning. Youth-justice research indicates that educational outcomes are shaped by interactions among instructional design, relationship quality, institutional characteristics, social-emotional competence, and transition to the community.[14] This study, therefore, shifts the analytical unit from religious activities to the relationships among educational provision, institutional culture, pedagogical interaction, participation, reflection, assessment, and reintegration.

Accordingly, the principal research question is: How does Islamic Religious Education contribute to an emergent rehabilitative configuration for Children in Conflict with the Law at LPKA Class II Yogyakarta? The article does not assume in advance that the institution possesses a formally established 'IRE rehabilitation system.' Instead, it examines whether and how existing practices become systemically connected in the empirical case. The novelty lies in reconstructing an analytical model from those connections while carefully distinguishing between what is institutionally established, what emerges through relationships among practices, and what still requires development. Theoretically, the article extends IRE scholarship from a predominantly curriculum-centered frame toward a relational, institutional, and temporal understanding of rehabilitation.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative single-case study design to examine how IRE contributes to rehabilitation at the Class II LPKA in Yogyakarta. The case was bounded by the relationships among program formulation, formal IRE, non-formal religious guidance, pedagogical relationships, institutional culture, developmental monitoring, child reflection, and reintegration orientation. A case-study design was selected because it enables educational and rehabilitative practices to be analyzed in depth within the institutional context in which they acquire meaning.[15]

The site was purposively selected because religious education operates through at least two interconnected spaces: formal instruction delivered in cooperation with partner educational institutions and non-formal religious guidance embedded in everyday institutional life. Data collection occurred in three documented phases rather than continuously from 2022 to 2025: (1) orientation and initial exploration in August–September

[14] Adeela Ahmed Shafi and Tristan Middleton, "Educational Development in Secure Juvenile Justice Settings: The Benefits, the Challenges and Power Dynamics in International Research Collaborations," *International Journal of Educational Development* 117 (2025): 103346, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2025.103346.

[15] John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2018), 96–102; Robert K. Yin, Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods, 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2018), 25–65.

2022; (2) first-stage field data collection from December 2022 to June 2023; and (3) supplementary data collection under renewed institutional permission from February 17 to June 17, 2025. The extended period allowed the researchers to revisit practices, clarify earlier findings, and examine the consistency and change of IRE-related routines over time.

Informants were purposively selected based on direct involvement in or knowledge of IRE and rehabilitation.[16] The research records explicitly document ten current CICL participants and three former residents. They also identify key institutional leaders and rehabilitation staff, an IRE teacher, a partner-school educator, a Ministry of Religious Affairs counselor, CICL guardians, and parents. Because several institutional roles overlap—for example, a rehabilitation officer may also act as a CICL guardian—the table below reports roles transparently rather than double-counting them as distinct samples. Participant roles and their primary contributions are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Participant categories and roles.

Participant category	Number documented	Primary contribution
LPKA leadership and rehabilitation officers	4 key staff interviewees	Institutional policy, rehabilitation practice, monitoring, and mentoring
CICL guardian role	1 documented guardian role within the officer group	Daily mentoring and behavioral monitoring; not double-counted above
IRE teacher	1	Formal IRE curriculum, instruction, and academic assessment
Partner-school educator	1	Educational continuity and school-LPKA coordination
Religious counselor	1	Non-formal religious guidance and religious-learning practices
Current CICL	10	FGD, self-assessment, learning, and rehabilitation experiences
Former LPKA residents	3	Early post-release continuity and retrospective experience
Parents	Contextual informants; total not separately enumerated in the archived dataset summary	Family perspective and reintegration expectations

Data were generated through participant observation, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), self-assessment, and documentary analysis. Observation covered formal

[16] Creswell and Poth, Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design, 156–160.

learning situations and daily rehabilitation routines, including congregational worship, Qur'anic learning, religious study, *hadrah*, interaction patterns, the assignment of responsibility, and developmental monitoring. Interviews addressed institutional foundations, educational objectives, curriculum adaptation, mentoring, children's experiences, observed changes, and post-release continuity. Documentary material included schedules, instructional materials, activity reports, institutional records, and program documents. Multiple forms of evidence were used to compare institutional accounts with observed practice rather than treating interview statements as self-validating evidence.

Analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.[17] More specifically, raw interviews, FGDs, observations, self-assessments, and document records were first organized into initial descriptive codes. Recurrent and analytically significant codes were then condensed into focused codes, grouped into categories, and compared across sources. Categories relating to rights and institutional foundations, formal and non-formal education, relational pedagogy, non-stigmatizing participation, behavioral evidence, reflection, and post-release continuity were subsequently developed into themes. The four model dimensions were formulated only after cross-source matrices showed stable relationships among those themes. The model is thus an analytical synthesis of empirical regularities rather than a framework imposed before field analysis.

Credibility was strengthened through triangulation of sources, techniques, and time; member checking; peer debriefing; and an audit trail documenting research permissions, interview guides, field notes, recordings and transcripts, coding lists, category and theme development, analytic memos, data matrices, and methodological decisions.[18] Throughout the analysis, the researchers distinguished among directly observed practices, mechanisms inferred from converging evidence, and areas representing future institutional development. This distinction is central to avoiding the claim that all components of the proposed model have already been formally institutionalized.

Ethical reporting is limited to procedures that can be verified in the available research records. Fieldwork was conducted under institutional permission from LPKA, including renewed permission for the supplementary 2025 phase. The manuscript record reports voluntary participation; identities of current and former CICL were anonymized, and case details not needed to explain educational processes were omitted. The available records consulted for this revision do not document a separate university ethics committee approval number, a distinct written parental consent/child assent protocol, or a formal data retention schedule. The article, therefore, does not retroactively claim procedures that cannot be verified. This limitation is stated explicitly because the research involves minors and a legally vulnerable population.

[17] Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2020), 8–9.

[18] Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, Naturalistic Inquiry (Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications, 1985), 289–331, 357–382.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Formulating IRE: From Rights Fulfillment to an Emergent Rehabilitative Orientation

The empirical starting point is that IRE at LPKA Class II Yogyakarta does not exist as a single stand-alone program formally named an 'IRE rehabilitation system.' It operates through two partially connected pathways: formal IRE provided by partner educational institutions and non-formal religious guidance embedded in institutional routines. The latter includes congregational prayer, Qur'anic learning, religious study, short religious talks (*kultum*), moral guidance, and religious habituation. Formal learning preserves children's status as students and provides curricular continuity, whereas non-formal guidance extends religious experience into the daily rhythm of institutional life. Their relationship is real, but it is contextual and emergent rather than the result of a fully designed rehabilitation curriculum.

The institutional orientation rests on four mutually reinforcing foundations: normative, philosophical, juridical, and rehabilitative. The normative foundation positions religious education as a right; the philosophical foundation refuses to reduce children to their offenses; the juridical foundation links IRE to the state's duty to provide education and rehabilitation; and the rehabilitative foundation orients educational experience toward change and return to society. The head of the institution emphasized that maintaining educational opportunities, including school examinations, provides children with the resources to 'return to society and achieve a better future.'[19] A rehabilitation officer similarly described children as persons who require services and guidance in order to live better and rejoin society.[20] These statements mark a shift from retributive logic to an educational one, although rehabilitation is broader than IRE alone.[21]

Formal IRE follows the national curriculum through partner schools, but implementation must be adapted to the temporal and educational heterogeneity of the LPKA population. The IRE teacher explained: 'The IRE curriculum used for children in LPKA is the same as the curriculum applied in school. However, due to time constraints, not all IRE material can be delivered properly (IRE-T1).[22] Children may enter and leave the institution outside the academic calendar, and their schooling levels are not uniform. Adaptation, therefore, occurs through the selection of essential content, the adjustment of methods, and the coordination with partner schools. The term adaptive in this article does not imply that a specialized rehabilitation curriculum has already been formally designed.

This pattern is consistent with Shafi's finding that re-engagement with education depends strongly on the nature of the custodial environment,[23] and with cross-national research emphasizing learner agency and specific educational needs.[24] It also confirms the

[19] Interview with the Head of LPKA Class II Yogyakarta, February 22, 2025.

[20] Interview with one of the LPKA Class II Yogyakarta coaching employees, February 22, 2025.

[21] Republik Indonesia, Undang-Undang Nomor 11 Tahun 2012, terutama Pasal 21 dan Pasal 85; Republik Indonesia, Undang-Undang Nomor 22 Tahun 2022.

[22] Interview with Moh Imadudin, Islamic Religious Education teacher at SMA Budi Luhur Yogyakarta, February 17, 2025.

[23] Shafi, "The Impact of the Secure Custodial Setting," 102190.

[24] Shafi, Middleton, and Jones, "Re-engaging Incarcerated Children and Young People," 803–824.

importance of creed, worship, and moral development described in research on IRE at LPKA Mamuju.[25] However, the present case adds an analytical distinction: the rehabilitative significance of IRE does not reside in the activity type itself. Prayer, Qur'anic learning, or religious lectures become rehabilitatively meaningful when connected with educational rights, relationships, participation, reflection, and a future orientation.

The key finding of this subsection is therefore not the discovery of a new institutional program but the identification of an emergent rehabilitative configuration. Educational rights provide the foundation; belief in children's capacity for change supplies the philosophical orientation; regulation provides legitimacy; and reintegration provides a temporal direction. This interpretation is consistent with Jang and Johnson's argument that religion acquires rehabilitative potential when it engages identity, meaning, and character rather than ritual alone.[26] The analytical shift is from asking whether religious activities exist to asking how they are connected and what mechanisms make them educationally consequential.

Relational Pedagogy, Participation, and Non-Stigmatizing Roles

The second empirical pattern concerns relationships. The rehabilitative significance of IRE is shaped less by the quantity of religious content than by the way values are enacted through interaction, routine, and responsibility. IRE operates not only when teachers or counselors teach, but also when officers accompany children, when worship is performed collectively, when children are entrusted with roles, and when the institutional environment permits them to be recognized by identities other than 'offender.' This is relational pedagogy: educational meaning is produced through relationships between children and adults as well as through the formal content of instruction.

CICL guardians occupy a particularly important position because they combine supervisory authority with relatively continuous mentoring. One guardian explained that he was responsible for 'supervising and guiding' several children and monitoring their development (G-01).[27] Observation also showed children participating in congregational prayer and voluntarily taking roles as muezzins or reciters of the *iqamah*.[28] These data indicate two interacting layers: collective habituation through structured routines and individualized accompaniment through relatively stable relationships. The relationship is not fully equal—guardians exercise institutional authority—but authority can function pedagogically when accompanied by explanation, trust, modeling, and consistent guidance.

Entrusting children with visible responsibility is a second mechanism. Children served as muezzins, delivered short religious talks, participated in *hadrah* ensembles, and carried out other institutional tasks. A *kultum* requires the child not merely to listen to moral themes such as honesty, repentance, emotional control, responsibility, and relationships with parents, but to reformulate them before peers.[29] The child, therefore, moves from recipient

[25] Asnuddin, Muzakkir, and M. Rusdi T., "Islamic Education as a Pillar of Rehabilitation," 531–541.

[26] Jang and Johnson, "Religion and Rehabilitation as Moral Reform," 47–73.

[27] Interview with Yudha, coaching employee and guardian of ABH, LPKA Class II Yogyakarta, February 27, 2025.

[28] Field observation notes on congregational prayer activities at the At-Taqwa Mosque, LPKA Class II Yogyakarta, 2025.

[29] Excerpted from an interview with Aris, Head of the Development Section of LPKA Class II Yogyakarta, February 27, 2025, and data on religious development activities.

to participant. This shift matters because values are more likely to become objects of reflection when children must speak, perform, cooperate, or assume accountability in front of others.

The importance of participation is reinforced by humanistic educational theory. Experiences of acceptance, trust, and meaningful participation can support personal growth without freezing the individual in past judgments.[30] At LPKA, psychological safety does not mean the absence of rules; it means that children are given opportunities to demonstrate positive capacities within a restrictive environment. Religious humanism similarly connects subjectivity, social responsibility, and spirituality.[31] In this case, religious practice also becomes a site for learning communication, cooperation, self-control, and social participation.

The study, therefore, uses the term non-stigmatizing orientation rather than claiming the existence of a formal 'non-labeling program.' The data show practices that reduce the dominance of negative identities: a child may be recognized as a student, a member of the congregation, a muezzin, a presenter, a hadrah performer, or a trusted participant. Labeling theory helps explain why this matters: when a deviant label becomes dominant, alternative social identities become more difficult to inhabit.[32] Prosocial roles do not erase accountability for past conduct, but they provide experiential evidence that the offense need not remain the only socially available identity.

Hadrah activities make this mechanism especially visible. Unlike lectures that position children mainly as listeners, *hadrah* requires bodily engagement, attention, rhythmic coordination, and cooperation. FGDs indicated that children valued the combination of music, togetherness, expression, and religiosity. The participation of a former resident as a trainer further provides a proximal model of social possibility: someone who previously underwent rehabilitation can return in a trusted and productive role. In this sense, role modeling comes not only from officers but from social trajectories that make reintegration imaginable.

Non-formal religious guidance also creates spaces for personal questions rather than only ritual repetition. A religious counselor reported that children frequently asked whether their placement in LPKA was simply 'God's destiny.' His response emphasized that destiny does not remove human choice and responsibility: children still possess reason and the capacity to choose a better path (RC-01). This interaction is analytically important because it transforms theological content into a discussion of agency, accountability, and future choice. The pedagogical mechanism is therefore not transmission alone but the reinterpretation of personal experience through a moral-spiritual frame.

Youth-justice scholarship shows that children engage more deeply when learning provides relevance, agency, and active participation.[33] The same pattern appears here.

[30] Carl R. Rogers and H. Jerome Freiberg, *Freedom to Learn*, 3rd ed. (New York: Merrill, 1994), 120–26, 157–65.

[31] Muhammad Qorib and Umiarso El-Rumi, "Co(e)laborative of Critical Pedagogy and Islamic Education: Reflections on the Construction of Religious Humanism Education," *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan dan Kemasyarakatan* 18, no. 1 (2020): 67–84, https://doi.org/10.21154/cendekia.v1i1.1843.

[32] Howard S. Becker, *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance* (New York: Free Press, 1963), 9–14.

[33] Shafi, Middleton, and Jones, "Re-engaging Incarcerated Children and Young People," 803–824.

Relationships can generate trust, trust can open participation, and participation can create experiences of a more prosocial self. The sequence is not mechanically linear, but it explains why the same religious activity may have different meanings depending on whether children are positioned as passive recipients or active participants. Institutional culture is therefore not merely the background of IRE; it is part of the educational mechanism through which religious values are experienced.

Academic Assessment and Behavioral Monitoring: Evidence without Causal Overclaiming

IRE evaluation operates through two parallel pathways. The first is academic assessment attached to IRE as a school subject; the second is developmental monitoring within the broader rehabilitation system. Children complete assignments and examinations and receive school reports through partner institutions.[34] At the same time, LPKA monitors participation, discipline, interaction, responsibility, and general behavioral development through institutional procedures.[35] Both pathways concern the same children, but they differ in purpose, implementers, indicators, and consequences.

This distinction matters because academic scores capture only part of the IRE experience. Congregational prayer, Qur'anic learning, *kultum*, *hadrah*, relationships with guardians, and everyday institutional routines are not fully represented in report cards. Conversely, institutional behavioral monitoring cannot be treated automatically as an IRE assessment because behavior is shaped by an ecosystem that includes schooling, caregiving, vocational activities, sports, discipline, peer interactions, and other interventions. A guardian stated that his role involved responsibility for and monitoring of children's behavior, which may also become relevant to institutional decisions.[36] The evidentiary contribution of IRE must therefore be separated from broader judgments about rehabilitation.

Cross-source data nevertheless revealed recurring behavioral evidence: some children became easier to guide, participated more actively, volunteered for religious roles, cooperated in *hadrah*, and displayed improved interaction patterns. The study distinguishes three evidentiary layers: academic achievement assessed by schools; behavioral development monitored by the institution; and the researchers' interpretation of relationships between IRE experience and processes of change. The third layer was constructed through the convergence of interviews, observations, FGDs, self-assessments, and accounts from former residents. This analytical separation is intended to prevent academic grades from being treated as measures of rehabilitation and to prevent institutional order from being treated as proof of successful religious instruction.

The observed performances are close to what Wiggins calls authentic evidence because they concern meaningful action in real contexts.[37] The ability to deliver a *kultum*, assume

[34] Interview with Niken, teacher of Budi Luhur High School Yogyakarta, February 17, 2025; interview with Moh Imadudin, Islamic Religious Education teacher of Budi Luhur High School Yogyakarta, February 17, 2025; documentation of the implementation of formal ABH education at LPKA Class II Yogyakarta.

[35] Republik Indonesia, Keputusan Menteri Hukum dan Hak Asasi Manusia Nomor M.HH-03.OT.02.02 Tahun 2014 tentang Pedoman Perlakuan Anak di Balai Pemasyarakatan (Bapas), Lembaga Penempatan Anak Sementara (LPAS), dan Lembaga Pembinaan Khusus Anak (LPKA).

[36] Interview with Yudha, February 27, 2025.

[37] Grant Wiggins, *Educative Assessment: Designing Assessments to Inform and Improve Student Performance* (San

responsibility as a muezzin, cooperate in a group, or manage interpersonal tension can provide important information about development. However, authentic evidence is not equivalent to a fully designed authentic-assessment system. The case does not show a standardized set of IRE behavioral indicators, individualized rubrics, systematic records, or a regular feedback loop connecting observations to subsequent instructional design.

The more accurate description is therefore monitoring based on authentic behavioral evidence. Its strength lies in proximity to children's lived experience; its limitation is that academic evidence, guardian observations, and children's own reflections are not routinely integrated. Formative assessment requires that evidence be used to improve subsequent learning.[38] In the present case, the information exists, but the feedback loop remains incomplete. This evaluative dualism becomes one of the principal areas for future integration in the proposed model.

From Institutional Participation to Reflective Appropriation and Post-Release Continuity

The rehabilitative implications of IRE cannot be reduced to a single type of change. The data indicate three analytically distinct layers: participation and behavior visible within the institution, reflective appropriation expressed by children themselves, and negotiated continuity after release. These layers are connected but not equivalent. Institutional order may reflect supervision; self-reports do not prove permanent transformation; and post-release life exposes values and habits to family dynamics, peer influence, education, work, economic pressure, and a less structured environment.

The first layer is visible in participation. Some children became more willing to join congregational worship, Qur'anic learning, *kultum*, and *hadrah,* and to assume roles such as muezzin or *iqamah* reciter. Such participation is meaningful, but it should not automatically be equated with internalization. More analytically useful indications appear when participation is combined with responsibility and when children begin to explain their own actions in moral and spiritual terms.

The second layer appears clearly in FGD and self-assessment data.[39] One participant stated, 'I used to get angry easily; now, before getting angry, sometimes I think first' (CICL-03, FGD/self-assessment, 2025). Another said, 'I am better able to control my emotions in LPKA than outside; I am learning patience' (CICL-04, FGD/self-assessment, 2025). A further participant explained, "Before I knew religion, I was easily angry and emotional. After learning religion, I can hold myself back and control my emotions" (CICL-09, FGD/self-assessment, 2025). These statements are not objective measurements of stable change. Their evidentiary value lies in demonstrating that some children have begun to use concepts such as patience, *istighfar*, consequences, and self-control to interpret their personal experiences.

The distinction between observed behavior and narrated change is therefore maintained. Regular prayer is visible evidence; connecting patience with anger control is a

Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 21–42.

[38] Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam, "Assessment and Classroom Learning," *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice* 5, no. 1 (1998): 7–74, https://doi.org/10.1080/0969595980050102.

[39] Data Focus Group Discussion dan self-assessment Anak yang Berhadapan dengan Hukum, LPKA Kelas II Yogyakarta, 2025.

form of self-interpretation. The study does not claim that reflection always produces consistent behavior. Rather, the data indicate an emerging capacity for self-evaluation and for imagining alternative responses to provocation or conflict. In rehabilitative terms, the important mechanism is reflective appropriation: religious values begin to function as a language for evaluating emotions, past actions, and possible future choices.

The experience of a former resident provides a more temporally extended illustration. GAS recalled Qur'anic learning, tajwid, religious lectures, and worship guidance, stating: 'I was taught to read the Qur'an, tajwid, and religious knowledge. I deeply regret it and promise never to return there' (FR-01).[40] Remorse is not equivalent to completed rehabilitation, but it demonstrates the connection of past conduct, institutional experience, and a desired future. This resonates with Jang and Johnson's concept of moral reform, which places identity, meaning, character, and self-control at the center of faith-based rehabilitation.[41] Research on human flourishing similarly emphasizes responsibility, forgiveness, and self-control.[42]

The third layer concerns post-release continuity. Interviews with GAS, EAS, and TAPP indicate that religious experiences remained memorable and that some practices, including prayer and Qur'an reading, were maintained to varying degrees after release.[43] However, all three accounts also show that consistency can decline outside the institution. This is precisely why post-release continuity should be treated as negotiation rather than automatic transfer. Institutional structure can support routine; community life requires self-regulation and different forms of social support.

The study, therefore, does not claim that IRE produces permanent transformation, prevents reoffending, or guarantees successful reintegration. Education in youth justice must be connected to transition beyond the institution,[44] but the three former residents provide only limited early evidence. The more defensible conclusion is that IRE can contribute to religious-prosocial experiences, moral-spiritual reflection, and reference values that children subsequently negotiate in social life. Rehabilitation is thus temporal: institutional participation may lead to reflective appropriation, but continuity after release remains contingent on family, peers, education, employment, and wider social conditions.

An Emergent Systemic Model of IRE in Juvenile Rehabilitation

Synthesizing the findings, IRE at LPKA Class II Yogyakarta forms a rehabilitative configuration broader than either a formal school subject or a collection of religious activities. The term 'model' in this article does not imply that LPKA has formally established a program titled 'IRE Rehabilitation System.' Some components are clearly institutionalized—formal education, religious guidance, mentoring, habituation, and behavioral monitoring—while other relationships remain partial, especially the integration of academic and behavioral evidence and the connection between internal rehabilitation and post-release support. The model is therefore an analytical reconstruction of how existing practices relate, together with an identification of the gaps between current practice and a

[40] In-depth interview with GAS, former Child Facing the Law, 2025.
[41] Jang and Johnson, "Religion and Rehabilitation as Moral Reform," 47–73.
[42] Jang et al., "Religion and Rehabilitation in Colombian and South African Prisons," 225–252.
[43] In-depth interviews with GAS, EAS, and TAPP, former Children Facing the Law, 2025.
[44] Shafi, "Improving Education for Incarcerated Children and Young People," 180–186.

more integrated system.

The first dimension is the rehabilitative foundation: educational rights, belief in children's capacity for change, juridical mandates, and an orientation toward reintegration. Jang and Johnson's moral-reform framework is relevant here,[45] but the present case adds that faith-related rehabilitation of children must begin from their status as rights-holders and subjects of education. The purpose of change cannot justify excessive control or the imposition of a fixed religious identity.

The second dimension is the configuration of educational experience through formal IRE and non-formal religious guidance. Formal instruction maintains curricular and academic continuity; non-formal guidance extends value-based experience into daily institutional life. These pathways are complementary but not fully integrated. Research in secure juvenile-justice settings similarly shows that education is shaped by institutional characteristics, relationships among actors, and learner conditions rather than by curriculum alone.[46]

The third dimension comprises pedagogical-reflective mechanisms: mentoring relationships, trust, non-stigmatizing interaction, active participation, prosocial roles, and reflective appropriation. Children not only hear religious messages but also take on responsibilities through roles such as muezzin, *kultum* presenter, *hadrah* member, or trusted participant. Religious humanism helps illuminate this connection between subject development, social relations, and spirituality.[47] Reflection then becomes the bridge between external experience and the possibility of internal change.

The fourth dimension is the continuum of change and reintegration. The model differentiates institutional participation, reflective appropriation, and the negotiation of continuity after release. This temporal distinction extends faith-based rehabilitation and human-flourishing scholarship by refusing to equate behavior inside a structured institution with successful reintegration outside it.[48] The model is not linear and allows for interruption, regression, and renewed strengthening. A child may participate actively without deep reflection, or may retain moral understandings even when the intensity of ritual practice declines.

Figure 1 summarizes the four dimensions, their cyclical relationships, cross-cutting evaluation, and the wider rehabilitation ecology.

[45] Jang and Johnson, "Religion and Rehabilitation as Moral Reform," 47–73.
[46] Shafi and Middleton, "Educational Development in Secure Juvenile Justice Settings."
[47] Qorib and El-Rumi, "Co(e)laborative of Critical Pedagogy and Islamic Education," 67–84.
[48] Jang et al., "Religion and Rehabilitation in Colombian and South African Prisons," 225–252.

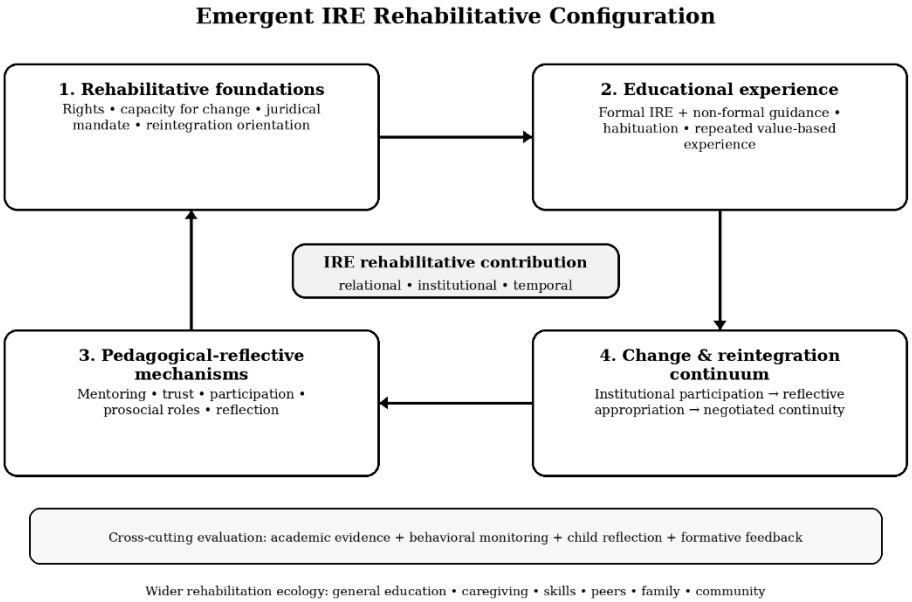


Figure 1. Emergent IRE rehabilitative configuration.
Note: Analytical model reconstructed from the case findings; it is not a formally institutionalized program or a causal prediction model.

Evaluation occupies a cross-cutting position in the model. Academic scores indicate achievement as a student, while behavioral monitoring provides information on participation, responsibility, relationships, and everyday development. Both matter, but they remain insufficiently integrated. To function formatively, evidence must inform subsequent learning and rehabilitation rather than merely document past performance.[49] A stronger model would periodically bring together academic evidence, mentor observations, children's reflections, and program adjustments without reducing every behavior to a numerical score. The four dimensions and their current integration priorities are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Four dimensions of the emergent IRE model.

Dimension	Empirical basis	Rehabilitative mechanism	Current status/priority
1. Rehabilitative foundation	Educational and religious rights; capacity for change; legal mandate; reintegration.	Provides legitimacy and future direction.	Strongly identified; clarify institutional IRE objectives.
2. Educational experience	Formal IRE; non-formal guidance; worship; Qur'anic learning; *kultum*; *hadrah*; habituation.	Connects academic continuity with everyday value experience.	Both pathways operate to strengthen shared rehabilitative goals.

[49] Black and Wiliam, "Assessment and Classroom Learning," 7–74.

Dimension	Empirical basis	Rehabilitative mechanism	Current status/priority
3. Pedagogical-reflective mechanisms	Mentoring; non-stigmatizing relations; trust; participation; prosocial roles; reflection.	Links value exposure to self-interpretation.	Clearly observed; deepen reflection and coordination with mentors.
4. Change & reintegration continuum	Institutional participation; reflective appropriation; early post-release accounts.	Separates supervised behavior, internal meaning, and social continuity.	Limited post-release evidence; strengthen family/community bridges.

Three analytical propositions follow. First, the rehabilitative function of IRE is determined by interconnections among components rather than by the number of religious activities. Second, relationships and participation mediate the movement from exposure to values toward reflection and possible behavioral change. Third, rehabilitation is temporal: institutional participation must be distinguished from reflective meaning-making and from the capacity to sustain values in community life. The model, therefore, shifts the central question from 'How many religious activities are conducted?' to 'How are educational, relational, reflective, evaluative, and reintegration processes connected?'

The model is deliberately modest in its claims. It is not a causal model, a prediction tool, or evidence that IRE alone reduces recidivism. It is an analytical generalization from a single case that explains conditions and mechanisms through which IRE may acquire rehabilitative significance. Its strongest conceptual contribution is to move IRE in juvenile rehabilitation away from a curriculum-centered intervention model toward a relational, institutional, and temporal process situated within a wider rehabilitation ecology.

CONCLUSION

The principal finding is that IRE at LPKA Class II Yogyakarta contributes to an emergent rehabilitative configuration rather than operating as a formally institutionalized rehabilitation system. Its significance arises from the interaction of educational rights, formal and non-formal religious experiences, mentoring relationships, non-stigmatizing participation, prosocial roles, reflection, developmental monitoring, and an orientation toward return to society. Religious activities acquire rehabilitative relevance through these connections, not through their frequency alone.

The theoretical contribution lies in shifting the conceptualization of IRE in juvenile rehabilitation from a curriculum-centered intervention toward a relational, institutional, and temporal process. The study distinguishes institutional participation from reflective appropriation and from negotiated post-release continuity, while also separating academic assessment, institutional behavioral monitoring, and researchers' interpretations. This prevents both causal overclaiming and the assumption that behavior observed within a structured institution is equivalent to permanent transformation.

Practically, the case points to two priorities. First, formal IRE, non-formal guidance, guardian observations, and children's reflections need a clearer formative feedback loop to ensure that developmental evidence informs subsequent educational support. Second, the reintegration orientation of IRE requires stronger bridges to families, schools, communities, and post-LPKA support. These steps would not make IRE the sole instrument of rehabilitation; rather, they would position it more coherently within the broader rehabilitation ecosystem.

The study remains limited by its single-case design, the small number of former residents, the absence of longitudinal measures of recidivism, education, employment, and social reintegration, and the limited documentation of formal research ethics procedures. Future research should test the analytical model across multiple LPKA institutions, follow children's trajectories after release, and employ prospectively documented ethics, assent/consent, and data governance protocols appropriate for research with minors and legally vulnerable populations.

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Riza Agustina led conceptualization, investigation, data curation, formal analysis, and preparation of the original draft. Sri Sumarni contributed to supervision, methodology, conceptual review, and manuscript review. Karwadi contributed to supervision, validation, conceptual review, and manuscript review. All authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript.

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The authors declare that OpenAI's ChatGPT was used during manuscript revision to assist with language refinement, structural editing, consistency checking against reviewer comments, and formatting alignment with the journal template. It was not used to generate field data, conduct interviews, or replace the authors' empirical analysis. All substantive interpretations, model decisions, and conclusions were reviewed and approved by the authors, who retain full responsibility for the manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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