

Family and Bapas Class II Garut Collaboration in Strengthening Restorative Justice for Children in Conflict with the Law

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Abstract

Children in conflict with the law require a justice approach that prioritizes protection, rehabilitation, and social reintegration rather than punishment. In Indonesia, restorative justice has been formally mandated through Law Number 11 of 2012 on the Juvenile Criminal Justice System, emphasizing the involvement of families and community institutions in resolving juvenile cases. This study aims to examine the collaboration between families and Bapas Class II Garut in strengthening restorative justice for children in conflict with the law. This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach and was conducted at Bapas Class II Garut, West Java. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with Community Counselors and family members, non-participant observation, and document analysis. The data were analyzed thematically to identify patterns related to forms of collaboration, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the impact of collaboration on children's psychosocial recovery and social reintegration. The findings indicate that family-Bapas collaboration occurs across multiple stages, including social inquiry, diversion and restorative mediation, supervision, and post-resolution guidance. Effective collaboration is supported by the commitment of Community Counselors and strong family-oriented cultural values, while social stigma, limited legal awareness, economic constraints, and institutional limitations hinder sustained engagement. Importantly, collaboration contributes positively to children's psychosocial recovery and social reintegration. This study concludes that institutionalizing family participation is essential to strengthening restorative justice and ensuring its transformative impact within Indonesia's juvenile justice system.

Keywords: Restorative Justice, Family Collaboration, Bapas, Juvenile Justice, Children in Conflict with the Law.

A. INTRODUCTION

Children in conflict with the law constitute a vulnerable population whose involvement in the criminal justice system often produces consequences that extend beyond legal sanctions to psychological, social, and developmental harm. Traditional punitive approaches to juvenile justice have been widely criticized for prioritizing punishment over rehabilitation, frequently resulting in stigmatization, emotional distress, and a higher risk of recidivism among children (Suryani, 2021; Wijaya, 2018). Such approaches often fail to address the root causes of juvenile offending and may disrupt the child's long-term social development.

In response to these limitations, the concept of restorative justice has gained global recognition as an alternative approach to juvenile justice. Restorative justice emphasizes accountability, dialogue, healing, and the restoration of social relationships rather than retribution (Zehr, 2002). Empirical studies demonstrate that

restorative justice practices can reduce reoffending rates and improve psychosocial outcomes, particularly when families and communities are actively involved in the resolution process (Latimer, Dowden, & Muise, 2005).

In Indonesia, this paradigm shift is formally institutionalized through Law Number 11 of 2012 on the Juvenile Criminal Justice System (Sistem Peradilan Pidana Anak/SPPA), which mandates the prioritization of restorative justice and diversion at all stages of juvenile case handling. The law recognizes children as individuals in a critical developmental phase and emphasizes the principles of protection, rehabilitation, avoidance of stigmatization, and the best interests of the child (Republic of Indonesia, 2012). Within this framework, restorative justice is not merely a procedural option but a fundamental approach guiding juvenile justice practice.

A key institutional actor in the implementation of restorative justice in Indonesia is the Correctional Centre (Balai Pemasyarakatan/Bapas). Bapas is responsible for conducting social inquiry reports (community research), providing guidance, supervision, and assistance to children, facilitating diversion and restorative mediation, and supporting post-adjudication social reintegration (Putri & Hidayat, 2020). In cases involving children, Bapas functions not only as a legal-administrative body but also as a social institution that connects the justice system with the child's family and community environment.

The effectiveness of restorative justice, however, largely depends on family involvement. From an ecological perspective, the family represents the child's primary microsystem, exerting a direct influence on emotional stability, moral development, and behavioral change (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Previous studies indicate that children who receive consistent family support during and after legal proceedings show better psychosocial recovery and lower rates of reoffending (Sari, 2019; Wijaya, 2018). Family participation in restorative processes—such as mediation, supervision, and post-resolution guidance—strengthens accountability while fostering emotional security and social acceptance.

Despite its importance, family involvement in restorative justice remains uneven. Research has identified several barriers, including social stigma toward children in conflict with the law, limited legal awareness among parents, economic constraints, and weak coordination between families and justice institutions (Kusuma, 2020; Putra, 2020). In many cases, families perceive the justice process as punitive and intimidating, leading to reluctance or passive participation rather than active collaboration (Rahayu, 2021). These challenges underscore the need for stronger institutional strategies to engage families as active partners rather than peripheral participants.

Existing studies on restorative justice in Indonesia have predominantly focused on policy frameworks, procedural compliance, or institutional performance at the national or provincial level (Rahardjo & Nugroho, 2019; Putri, 2020). Other research has examined family roles primarily in terms of emotional support, without exploring the institutionalized collaboration between families and Bapas as a continuous process across different stages of juvenile guidance. Consequently, there remains a significant

research gap concerning how such collaboration operates at the local level and how it affects both psychosocial recovery and social reintegration of children.

Garut Regency, located in West Java, presents a unique socio-cultural context for examining this issue. Strong family ties and communal values coexist with persistent social stigma toward children involved in legal cases (Anwar, 2021). In this setting, Bapas Class II Garut plays a crucial role not only in implementing legal mandates but also in facilitating trust, communication, and cooperation with families. Understanding the dynamics of family–Bapas collaboration in this local context is essential for assessing the practical effectiveness of restorative justice for children.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the collaboration between families and Bapas Class II Garut in strengthening restorative justice for children in conflict with the law. Specifically, the study seeks to (1) identify the forms of collaboration between families and Bapas throughout the stages of child guidance and supervision, (2) examine the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting such collaboration, and (3) assess the impact of collaboration on children's psychosocial recovery and social reintegration. By adopting a qualitative approach, this research contributes empirical insights into restorative justice implementation at the grassroots level and offers practical implications for strengthening family–institution partnerships within Indonesia's juvenile justice system.

B. METHOD

The research was conducted at Bapas Class II Garut, a correctional centre under the Directorate General of Corrections, Ministry of Law and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia. The site was selected due to its strategic role in implementing restorative justice and diversion for children in conflict with the law, as well as its jurisdiction over a socially and geographically diverse area in Garut Regency, West Java, Indonesia.

This study employed a qualitative research design with a descriptive-exploratory approach to examine the collaboration between families and Bapas Class II Garut in strengthening restorative justice for children in conflict with the law. A qualitative approach was chosen to capture in-depth perspectives, experiences, and meanings associated with restorative justice practices, particularly in relation to family involvement and institutional interaction. This design allowed the researcher to explore social processes, relational dynamics, and contextual factors that cannot be adequately explained through quantitative measurement.

Research participants were selected using purposive sampling, based on their direct involvement and relevance to the restorative justice process. The participants consisted of:

1. Community Counselors (Pembimbing Kemasyarakatan) at Bapas Class II Garut who were responsible for conducting social inquiry reports, guidance, supervision, and restorative mediation for children.
2. Parents or family members of children in conflict with the law who were involved in the guidance and supervision process.

3. Supporting documents, including social inquiry reports, internal guidelines, and relevant legal documents related to restorative justice and juvenile justice procedures.

The selection of participants continued until data saturation was reached, indicated by the repetition of information and the absence of new emerging themes. Data were collected using multiple qualitative techniques to ensure depth and credibility of the findings:

1. In-depth interviews were conducted with Community Counselors and family members to explore their experiences, roles, perceptions, and challenges in implementing restorative justice.
2. Non-participant observation was carried out during guidance, supervision, and family interaction processes to understand the practical dynamics of collaboration.
3. Document analysis was used to examine social inquiry reports (*community research*), institutional records, and relevant regulations to contextualize empirical findings.

The use of multiple data collection methods enabled triangulation and strengthened the trustworthiness of the study. Data analysis followed a thematic analysis approach. The process involved data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Interview transcripts and observation notes were coded to identify recurring patterns, categories, and themes related to forms of collaboration, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the impacts of collaboration on children's psychosocial recovery and social reintegration. The analysis was conducted iteratively, allowing themes to emerge inductively from the data while being informed by restorative justice theory and ecological perspectives.

To ensure the rigor and trustworthiness of the research, several strategies were employed:

1. Source triangulation, by comparing data from Community Counselors, family members, and documents.
2. Method triangulation, through the use of interviews, observations, and document analysis.
3. Prolonged engagement at the research site to gain a deeper understanding of institutional practices and social context.
4. Peer debriefing, by discussing preliminary findings with academic colleagues to minimize researcher bias.

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and pseudonyms were used to protect personal identities. Given the involvement of children in conflict with the law, the research adhered to ethical principles of child protection, non-harm, and respect for human dignity, in line with the Juvenile Criminal Justice System Law and relevant research ethics standards.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Forms of Collaboration between Families and Bapas Class II Garut

The findings of this study indicate that collaboration between families and Bapas Class II Garut is manifested across several stages of juvenile justice handling, including social inquiry, diversion and restorative mediation, supervision, and post-resolution guidance. Families are actively involved during the preparation of social inquiry reports by providing information regarding the child's background, family dynamics, and social environment. This involvement supports the formulation of recommendations that inform decisions by law enforcement officers and the juvenile court.

During diversion and restorative mediation processes, families function as both emotional supporters and moral guides for the child. Parents or guardians accompany the child in mediation sessions, assist the child in understanding the consequences of their actions, and participate in negotiating restorative agreements. These findings align with restorative justice theory, which emphasizes inclusive participation of stakeholders to restore relationships and promote accountability (Zehr, 2002). The involvement of families in mediation also reflects the restorative justice mandate embedded in Indonesia's juvenile justice framework, which prioritizes dialogue and reconciliation over punitive sanctions.

Following mediation, families play a central role in supervising children and ensuring compliance with agreed restorative measures or court decisions. Family-based supervision complements institutional oversight by Bapas and strengthens continuity of guidance in the child's daily life. This confirms previous studies highlighting the importance of family engagement as an extension of institutional rehabilitation efforts (Sari, 2019; Wijaya, 2018).

2. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Family–Bapas Collaboration

The study identified several factors that support effective collaboration. First, the commitment and humanistic approach of Community Counselors at Bapas Class II Garut foster trust and open communication with families. Trust-building is essential in restorative justice, as it enables families to move from passive compliance to active participation. Second, strong family-oriented cultural values within the Garut community facilitate dialogue-based approaches and collective problem-solving.

However, the collaboration is also constrained by significant inhibiting factors. Social stigma toward children in conflict with the law remains a major barrier, often discouraging families from engaging fully in restorative processes. This finding supports earlier research indicating that stigma undermines family confidence and willingness to cooperate with justice institutions (Kusuma, 2020; Rahayu, 2021). Additionally, limited legal awareness among parents restricts their understanding of restorative justice principles and their own roles within the process.

Economic constraints further inhibit collaboration, as families with limited resources face difficulties attending meetings or maintaining consistent supervision. Institutional limitations within Bapas, including high caseloads and limited personnel,

also affect the intensity and sustainability of family engagement. These findings reinforce existing literature that highlights structural and resource-related challenges in implementing restorative justice at the local level (Putra, 2020; Rahardjo & Nugroho, 2019).

3. Impact of Collaboration on Psychosocial Recovery and Social Reintegration

The findings demonstrate that effective collaboration between families and Bapas has a positive impact on children's psychosocial recovery. Children who receive consistent family support during and after restorative justice processes show reduced anxiety, improved emotional stability, and increased self-confidence. From an ecological perspective, this outcome reflects the critical role of the family as the child's primary microsystem, shaping emotional resilience and behavioral adjustment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

In terms of social reintegration, collaboration facilitates children's return to school, participation in community activities, and acceptance within their social environment. Family involvement helps mitigate social rejection and reinforces pro-social norms, thereby reducing the likelihood of reoffending. These results are consistent with empirical evidence suggesting that restorative justice programs involving families and communities yield better reintegration outcomes than punitive approaches (Latimer et al., 2005).

Nevertheless, the study also reveals that the positive impacts of collaboration are not evenly distributed among all children. Variations in family capacity, socio-economic conditions, and institutional support influence the extent of psychosocial recovery and reintegration. This indicates that restorative justice outcomes depend not only on procedural implementation but also on broader social and structural conditions.

Overall, the findings affirm that collaboration between families and Bapas Class II Garut is a crucial component in strengthening restorative justice for children in conflict with the law. The results support restorative justice theory, ecological development theory, and prior empirical studies emphasizing family-centered rehabilitation. However, the findings also highlight the need for more structured and institutionalized mechanisms to support family participation.

Strengthening family legal literacy, reducing social stigma, and enhancing institutional capacity are essential to ensuring that restorative justice functions as a transformative rather than symbolic process. By positioning families as active partners rather than auxiliary actors, restorative justice can more effectively achieve its dual goals of accountability and reintegration within Indonesia's juvenile justice system.

D. CONCLUSION

This study examined the collaboration between families and Bapas Class II Garut in strengthening restorative justice for children in conflict with the law. The findings demonstrate that family–institution collaboration plays a pivotal role in

ensuring the effectiveness of restorative justice processes within Indonesia's juvenile justice system.

The study reveals that collaboration between families and Bapas occurs throughout key stages of child handling, including social inquiry, diversion and restorative mediation, supervision, and post-resolution guidance. Families function not only as companions during legal procedures but also as primary agents of supervision and psychosocial support in the child's daily life. This collaboration aligns with restorative justice principles that emphasize inclusive participation, accountability, and the restoration of social relationships.

Furthermore, the study identifies both supporting and inhibiting factors influencing collaboration. Commitment and humanistic practices of Community Counselors, alongside strong family-oriented cultural values, facilitate effective engagement between families and Bapas. Conversely, social stigma, limited legal awareness, economic constraints, and institutional resource limitations hinder sustained family participation. These findings indicate that restorative justice outcomes are shaped by broader social and structural conditions beyond formal legal procedures.

Importantly, effective family-Bapas collaboration contributes positively to children's psychosocial recovery and social reintegration. Children who receive consistent family support demonstrate improved emotional stability, reduced anxiety, and greater social adaptability, including successful reintegration into school and community life. However, the uneven distribution of these outcomes highlights the need for more systematic and inclusive support mechanisms.

In conclusion, strengthening restorative justice for children in conflict with the law requires institutionalizing family participation as a core component of juvenile justice practice. Enhancing family legal literacy, reducing social stigma, and improving institutional capacity are essential steps toward ensuring that restorative justice functions as a transformative approach rather than a procedural formality. The findings of this study contribute empirical insights for policymakers and practitioners seeking to reinforce family-centered restorative justice within Indonesia's juvenile justice framework.

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