

Implementation of Assimilation in the Progressive Law Perspective: Toward a Humane and Beneficial Society

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Abstract

The overcapacity of correctional institutions in Indonesia has led to various complex humanitarian, legal and social problems. One of the solutions pursued by the government is the assimilation policy, which aims to reduce the capacity burden while encouraging the social reintegration of prisoners. However, the implementation of this policy is often trapped in a legalistic-formal approach that ignores aspects of substantive justice. This article examines the implementation of the assimilation policy in the perspective of progressive law, which places law as a means of social transformation, not merely a normative rule. Through normative legal research methods with statutory, conceptual, and philosophical approaches, this article finds that the progressive legal approach plays an important role in encouraging assimilation policies that are more humanist, inclusive, and just. Progressive law emphasizes the importance of rehabilitation, community participation, and protection of prisoners' rights as part of the development process. In addition, concrete support is needed in the form of job training programs, psychosocial assistance, and fair and transparent supervision. By emphasizing the principles of justice, humanity and social benefit, the implementation of progressive law-based assimilation can reduce stigma against prisoners and create a more dignified correctional system. The results show that the success of the assimilation policy is greatly influenced by the synergy between an adaptive legal approach and strong social participation. In conclusion, progressive law can be an effective foundation for reforming correctional policies to be more oriented towards recovery, not just punishment.____

I. Introduction

The overcapacity of correctional institutions in Indonesia has become a crucial problem that has not yet found a complete solution. According to data from the Ministry of Law and Human Rights as of June 2024, there are 531 prisons and detention centers in Indonesia with an occupancy capacity of 140,424 people. However, the number of residents currently reaches 265,346 people, making the overcapacity rate around 89 percent (Wakik, 2024). This condition causes various negative impacts, not only from the physical side such as limited space and facilities, but also has an impact on the quality of guidance, services, and protection of prisoners' human rights. Overcrowded prison conditions not only hamper the implementation of the correctional function as a place of guidance, but also have the potential to violate the basic rights of prisoners. In a situation of overcapacity, individualized guidance becomes difficult to carry out optimally, while conflicts between prison inmates are more prone to occur. This phenomenon indicates that our punishment system needs a more humanist and proportional reform so that it is not only oriented towards punishment, but also towards the social reintegration of lawbreakers.

In response to these problems, the government has issued various policies, one of which is the assimilation policy. Assimilation allows prisoners to serve the remainder of their sentence outside of correctional institutions, while still being supervised by the competent authorities. The main objective is to reduce the burden on prison capacity while providing opportunities for prisoners to gradually begin adapting to social life. Theoretically, this policy is in line with the principle of restorative justice which emphasizes the restoration of relationships between perpetrators, victims and society. Assimilation is a form of gradual integration of prisoners into community life that is regulated in the Indonesian correctional system (Sulistiyatna, 2021). Terminologically, assimilation is a coaching process that allows prisoners to serve the rest of their sentence outside the correctional institution while remaining under supervision (Waluyo, 2023). This policy is part of a correctional system that is humanist and oriented towards social recovery. The legal basis for the implementation of assimilation is regulated in Law Number 22 of 2022 concerning Corrections, which replaces the previous law, and is further regulated in the Minister of Law and Human Rights Regulation and Decree of the Director General of Corrections.

According to Article 10 paragraph (1) of Law No. 22 Year 2022, assimilation is included in the form of inmates' rights in the framework of guidance. The implementation of assimilation is carried out based on an assessment from the Correctional Center (Bapas), which considers the behavior of the prisoner, the remaining criminal period, and the readiness of the social environment. With a clear legal basis, this policy provides legitimacy to the non-punitive development process and aims to avoid the adverse effects of total isolation of prisoners. This also reflects the correctional principle in the modern correctional system, which prioritizes rehabilitation over punishment (Silalahi et al., 2024). Although normatively assimilation has a strong legal basis and is designed to support rehabilitation-oriented coaching, the effectiveness of its implementation in the field is highly dependent on the response and involvement of the wider community in the reintegration process of prisoners. the success of assimilation cannot be separated from the active role of the community in accepting former prisoners back. Social stigma is often a major obstacle in the reintegration process, which ultimately risks encouraging recidivism. Therefore, the assimilation policy approach needs to be accompanied by public education and the strengthening of community-based supervision systems so that former prisoners are not only supervised, but also fostered and empowered socially and economically. Collaboration between correctional officers, local governments, and civil society organizations is needed in this regard. In addition, supervision of prisoners undergoing assimilation must be carried out strictly and professionally. The Bapas institution has a strategic responsibility in conducting regular guidance and evaluation of the behavior and development of prisoners outside the prison (Rinaldi, 2021). Uncontrolled implementation can lead to negative perceptions of this policy, especially if released prisoners are proven to have committed criminal acts again. Therefore, a technology-based monitoring system as well as continuous training for Bapas officers is an absolute necessity so that the assimilation policy really works as intended.

Although the assimilation policy has been explicitly regulated in legislation, its implementation is often trapped in a legalistic-formal approach that emphasizes textual and procedural implementation of the law. This approach places the law solely as a written norm that must be implemented as it is, without considering the social context and human dynamics that accompany the lives of prisoners. According to Satjipto Rahardjo, a legal approach that prioritizes legal certainty without regard to

justice will create a “law that is dull to humanity.” (Yuliani et al., 2023)

This criticism highlights how rigid laws often fail to address the real needs of society, including prisoners. The rigidity of the normative-positivistic approach has led to criticism from various circles, including academics and correctional practitioners, who consider that the law should not be separated from the values of substantive justice. In the correctional context, substantive justice includes humane treatment, empowerment of prisoners, and efforts to restore their dignity as individuals capable of change. When the assimilation policy is only implemented based on administrative requirements without looking at the personal and social background of prisoners, the essence of a just development system is neglected.

Furthermore, the legalistic approach often ignores the structural inequalities that affect the legal journey of prisoners. According to Lawrence M. Friedman, the legal system cannot be separated from the social, cultural and economic systems of the society that surrounds it. This means that the implementation of the law should not ignore external factors that influence individual behavior (Sukadi, 2020). In practice, prisoners from poor and marginalized groups often experience obstacles in obtaining their rights, including the right to assimilation. Meanwhile, those with access and social power find it easier to fulfill administrative requirements, even if they are not fully eligible substantively.

As a response to the limitations of the legalistic-formal approach in the legal system, Satjipto Rahardjo introduced the concept of progressive law which places law not as a rigid and final institution, but as a means to create social change towards a just, humane, and civilized society (Raharjo, 2009).

Progressive law is not trapped in text and procedure, but dares to go beyond normative boundaries in order to achieve the goal of substantive justice. In Satjipto's view, law must “always be in process” and can be adapted to evolving social needs (Raharjo, 2009). This makes law not just a rule, but also a tool for emancipation and social transformation. In the context of the correctional system and the assimilation policy, the progressive legal approach has a very strong relevance. Instead of understanding assimilation solely as an administrative right granted after the fulfillment of a number of conditions, the progressive approach sees it as an instrument of social change aimed at returning prisoners as an integral part of society.

This process is not only related to the fulfillment of normative requirements, but also involves empowerment, reconciliation, and character building. Therefore, the implementation of assimilation must be based on humanitarian values that respect individual dignity, not just procedural compliance.

The application of progressive law in assimilation also requires a paradigm shift in the legal apparatus and society. Prisoners should no longer be seen as individuals who are synonymous with crime, but rather as legal subjects who have the potential to change and contribute. For this reason, community participation in supporting social reintegration is very important. Communities need to be educated and involved in post-assimilation programs, such as job training, psychosocial assistance, and the creation of inclusive work spaces. This approach is in line with the progressive view that the law cannot work alone, but must synergize with other social elements. In addition, the progressive legal approach provides a wider space for the protection of prisoners' human rights. In this framework, the rights of prisoners are not merely seen as conditional state provisions, but as part of basic human rights that remain inherent, even though they are serving a sentence (Rafsanjani et al., 2023). Therefore, the assimilation policy should not only be a tool to reduce overcapacity, but as a means of restoring dignity and building character, as envisioned in a modern and humanist Indonesian correctional system. By making progressive law an alternative perspective, we not only improve the approach to implementing the law, but also encourage the birth of a more socially just correctional policy. This approach shifts the focus from "implementing rules" to "achieving justice", and from 'punishing' to "educating and empowering" (Faniyansyah, 2021). Therefore, correctional reform cannot only be carried out at the technical and administrative level, but must touch the ideological substance of the law itself that the law is present for humans, not the other way around.

However, although the assimilation policy in Indonesia's correctional system is intended as part of a strategy of guidance and social reintegration, its implementation, which is still dominated by a legalistic-formal approach, has the potential to obscure its main objectives. The overly administrative implementation and lack of humanitarian touch causes this policy to lose its transformative value, and is even prone to causing injustice, especially for prisoners who come from vulnerable groups. When the law is only implemented as a technical procedure without considering aspects of substantive justice, true social reintegration is difficult to achieve.

Therefore, there needs to be a serious effort to shift the legal paradigm towards a more progressive direction, so that assimilation does not only become a technical solution to the overcapacity of correctional institutions, but really becomes a path to fair, humanist, and socially meaningful guidance.

2. Research Method

The legal research method used in writing this journal article is normative legal research, or often referred to as doctrinal research (Al-Fatih, 2023). This research focuses on reviewing and analyzing the legal norms governing the assimilation policy in the Indonesian correctional system, as well as assessing its implementation through a progressive legal perspective. The purpose of this research is to reveal the extent to which a humanist and just legal approach has been accommodated in the implementation of the assimilation policy, and how the law can be used as a means of social reconstruction, not merely as a repressive tool. The approach used includes a statutory approach, namely by examining Law Number 22 Year 2022 on Corrections and other implementing regulations governing the rights of prisoners and the implementation of assimilation. In addition, a conceptual approach is also used, which is to understand the concept of progressive law as developed by Satjipto Rahardjo and its relevance in the correctional context. A philosophical approach is also used to explore the values of justice, humanity, and social benefits that should be the basis for the implementation of correctional policies. The legal materials used consist of primary legal materials, in the form of laws and regulations such as the Corrections Law, the Criminal Code (KUHP), and related Minister of Law and Human Rights Regulations. Secondary legal materials are used to deepen conceptual and normative analysis, including law books, scientific journal articles, and the results of previous research discussing assimilation, corrections, and progressive law. Tertiary legal materials, such as legal dictionaries and encyclopedias, were used to clarify the definition and understanding of important terms in this research (Ariawan, 2013).

3. Results and Discussion

The implementation of assimilation policies in Indonesia is reviewed from a progressive legal perspective based on justice, humanity, and social benefits

Progressive law, as initiated by Satjipto Rahardjo, offers a different approach from traditional law that tends to focus on certainty and normative order (Hazmi, 2024). Progressive law emphasizes the values of justice, humanity, and adaptation to social change. Rahardjo argues

that law should not be understood as a rigid and final system, but as a tool to achieve greater social goals, namely the welfare and progress of society(Hazmi, 2024). In his view, the law should be able to adapt to evolving social dynamics, so that it can provide relevant solutions to contemporary problems. Therefore, progressive law focuses on achieving substantive justice, not merely on fulfilling the formality of rules. In the correctional context, the basic principles of progressive law can be translated as an effort to change the paradigm of punishment, which has been overemphasizing the punishment aspect, to be more oriented towards the development and social reintegration of prisoners. Progressive law challenges approaches that solely see prisoners as objects of punishment and directs attention to the development of their human potential. Therefore, the application of progressive law in correctional policy focuses on efforts to restore the dignity of prisoners through humane guidance, while providing opportunities for them to return to contribute positively to society.

Progressive law is very relevant to be applied in Indonesian correctional policy, especially in the context of assimilation and social rehabilitation of prisoners. One of the main principles of progressive law is that justice is not only seen from the fulfillment of rigid laws, but from the ability of the law to accommodate social and human values(Ansori, 2018).

In this case, the assimilation policy regulated by the Corrections Law must be understood not only as an administrative mechanism to reduce the overcapacity of correctional institutions, but as a step to improve and empower prisoners so that they can return to live with dignity in society. In the framework of progressive law, assimilation becomes a tool to restore the dignity of prisoners, not just the termination of punishment. The application of progressive law in corrections also emphasizes the importance of community participation in the process of social reintegration of prisoners. As stated by Rahardjo, progressive law serves to build social involvement in solving legal problems(Christianto, 2012). In this context, the community not only acts as a supervisor, but also as a coaching partner for prisoners undergoing assimilation. Thus, a progressive correctional policy will change society's perception of ex-prisoners, from mere individuals who have broken the law to individuals who have the potential to contribute positively. For this reason, the success of the assimilation policy does not only depend on existing regulations, but also on the willingness of the community to accept and support the reintegration process.

Furthermore, the application of progressive law also requires changes in the supervision and guidance of prisoners. This approach views prisoners not as objects to be punished, but as subjects who are entitled to character and skills development. Therefore, the assimilation policy must be complemented by coaching programs oriented towards character building and life skills that can help prisoners adapt to society after serving their sentence. Progressive law supports

psychological assistance and skills training that enable prisoners to acquire skills that can be used to build a better life after prison. To provide a clearer picture of the differences in principles between traditional (positivistic) law and progressive law in the context of correctional policy, the following is a comparative table:

Table 1. Comparison of *Positivistic Law* and progressive law

Aspects	Positivistic Law	Progressive Law
Main Objectives	Retribution (Retribution)	Rehabilitation and social reintegration
Approach to Inmates	As an object of punishment	As a potentially changing subject of law
Focus	Punishment and prevention	Recovery and social empowerment
Human Rights	Neglected in some aspects	Emphasized, with a humanitarian approach

The assimilation policy in the Indonesian correctional system is part of an effort to respond to the problem of overcapacity of correctional institutions and improve the social reintegration process for prisoners. The main legal basis governing the implementation of the assimilation policy in Indonesia is Law No. 22 of 2022 on Corrections, which provides a legal basis for various policies related to the implementation of punishment, guidance, and social reintegration of prisoners. In addition, this policy is also based on the Regulation of the Minister of Law and Human Rights and the Regulation of the Director General of Corrections which regulate the procedures and provisions related to assimilation. This legal basis emphasizes that assimilation is not just an administrative mechanism, but part of a broader rehabilitation and development effort (Utami, 2017). The assimilation policy aims to reduce the overcapacity of correctional institutions by providing prisoners with the opportunity to continue their sentences outside of correctional institutions under strict supervision. In addition, the main goal of the assimilation policy is social reintegration, which facilitates prisoners in returning to society in a more productive way and reduces the risk of recidivism. The implementation of this policy is carried out with various procedures that consider several factors, such as the behavior of the prisoner during the sentence, the remaining criminal period, and the readiness of the social environment. The party that plays a role in this assessment is the Correctional Center (Bapas) which conducts periodic evaluations of inmates who have the potential to obtain assimilation.

In the implementation of assimilation policies, there are two dimensions of justice that need to be considered: substantive justice and procedural justice. Procedural justice refers to how rules and procedures are formally executed in accordance with applicable provisions. In this case, assimilation can be considered as fulfilling procedural justice if the policy is implemented in accordance with existing regulations without neglecting administrative aspects. However, substantive justice focuses on more deeply fulfilling prisoners' rights, including their right to be treated humanely, to obtain opportunities for change, and to obtain support in the process of social reintegration. This substantive justice prioritizes human values and does not only see prisoners as objects of punishment. The difference between the two concepts of justice is often a problem in the application of assimilation policies. If assimilation policies are carried out only on the basis of administrative procedures without considering the social and psychological needs of prisoners, then they can get stuck on rigid procedural justice. Conversely, if assimilation policies involve a deeper consideration of the basic rights of prisoners, such as the right to be fostered in a more humane way, a more comprehensive substantive justice will be created. Therefore, it is important to evaluate whether this policy really reflects the principle of substantive justice, rather than simply an administrative procedure that does not touch on the essence of restoring the dignity of prisoners.

Given that the main objective of assimilation policies is for the social reintegration of prisoners, it is very important to evaluate whether their implementation already reflects substantive justice. If this policy is only carried out as an administrative procedure that focuses on reducing overcapacity and fulfilling legal formalities, it will not be able to have a significant impact on restoring the dignity and social life of prisoners. Some of the evaluations that can be carried out include assessing the extent to which assimilation policies take into account the psychological well-being of prisoners, whether they get adequate access to psychological coaching and mentoring programs, and whether there is sufficient social support to help them adapt back to society.

Assimilation policies in the penitentiary system are not only related to aspects of reducing the overcapacity of penitentiary institutions, but also serve as a means to respect and protect the human rights of prisoners. In a progressive legal perspective, the basic rights of prisoners, including the right to rehabilitation, reintegration, and a dignified life, must be met (Fahlevi, 2015). Progressive law emphasizes that the law serves not only as a means of enforcing the rules, but also as a means of achieving substantive justice in favor of man, in this case, a prisoner who is serving a sentence. In addition, the practice of humanism in assimilation policies is reflected in the application of humanitarian principles that make rehabilitation and social reintegration the main objectives. This policy should focus on deep human values, namely the provision of opportunities for prisoners to return to live productively in society after serving their sentences.

In the implementation of assimilation, this can be realized by providing access to coaching programs that not only emphasize the administration of liberation, but also on mentoring that focus on improving skills and character formation in accordance with social norms in society. Progressive law supports this approach by inviting the public to view inmates as individuals with the potential to change, rather than simply as perpetrators of crimes that must be punished.

Assimilation has a very important positive impact on the process of social reintegration of prisoners. By giving inmates the opportunity to return to society through assimilation, they can better restart their lives. This process encourages prisoners to take responsibility for their actions and improve themselves, whether in social, economic or psychological aspects. Assimilation provides opportunities for inmates to improve relationships with family, work, and contribute to society, which in turn minimizes the risk of recidivism or repetition of criminal acts. With an approach based on recovery and empowerment, this policy paves the way for inmates to become a productive part of society. To illustrate the positive impact of assimilation policies on society as a whole, the following table shows some of the different key benefits of assimilation policy implementation and indicators of its success:

Table 2. Key benefits of assimilation policy implementation and indicators of its success

Positive Impact	Description	Success Indicators
Crime Reduction	Assimilation allows inmates to reintegrate with their families and society, reducing their risk of re-offending.	Decrease in recidivism crime rates among assimilated inmates

Increased Social Stigma	Assimilation helps society to better accept ex-convicts as part of a productive community.	Reduction of discriminatory attitudes and stigma against ex-convicts
	With assimilation, former inmates have the opportunity to work and make economic contributions.	Increase in the number of ex-convicts getting permanent jobs
Economic Empowerment		

This table shows that assimilation policies have a wider impact on society, not just on prisoners themselves. By facilitating the social reintegration of prisoners, these policies contribute to creating safer, more inclusive and equitable societies. Increasing economic empowerment and reducing social stigma also show how important assimilation policies are in creating opportunities for ex-prisoners to re-participate positively in community life.

However, the implementation of assimilation policies cannot be separated from various obstacles and challenges. One of the main problems is the inequality in the provision of assimilation, which often occurs especially in prisoners involved in certain cases, such as corruption or other serious crimes. This inequality creates an injustice in the implementation of the law, where some prisoners who are actually entitled to assimilation are not given this opportunity simply because of social stigma or fear of security risks. Suboptimal supervision can also cause assimilation policies not to run optimally, which leads to negative perceptions of these policies. The social Stigma attached to ex-convicts is also a great challenge in the process of social reintegration. Society often judges ex-convicts as individuals unfit for readmission, even though they have served their sentences and followed a process of assimilation. This exacerbates the challenges in rebuilding their lives outside the penitentiary.

To increase the effectiveness of assimilation policies, it is necessary to have a progressive legal approach that is more humanistic and based on substantive justice. In this case, assimilation policy reform needs to emphasize holistic development and not just administrative liberation. Coaching that includes education, skills, as well as the formation of a positive character should be an integral part of the assimilation process. In addition, there needs to be intensive assistance for prisoners after undergoing assimilation to ensure that they can adapt well in society. These programs should engage governments, penitentiaries, and civil society as partners in supporting more successful social reintegration. The success of assimilation policies depends largely on close collaboration between governments, communities, and penitentiaries. The state, through a progressive legal system, needs to ensure that assimilation policies not only work on paper, but are implemented with full responsibility and transparency. Society also has a huge role to play in supporting inmates' social reintegration by reducing stigma and providing opportunities for them to build new lives. Therefore, assimilation policies should be seen as a concerted effort involving all parties to create a more inclusive, just, and humane society.

The Role of Progressive Legal Approaches in Encouraging Humane Assimilation and Reducing Stigma Against Prisoners

Progressive law focuses on more adaptive, inclusive, and equitable change in the legal system, which also includes correctional and assimilation policies. This approach understands that the law should not be static, but should always adapt to social development and the needs of society. In the correctional context, progressive laws offer a profound change in the way prisoners are viewed. Instead of seeing them as objects of punishment that should be separated from society, progressive law considers prisoners as subjects of law who have a fundamental right to obtain coaching that can help them return to society as better individuals (Waluyo, 2022). In this case, the assimilation policy becomes a tool to ensure that convicts are not only released from punishment, but also prepared for smooth and constructive reintegration into society.

Mulyadi in his book *Reconstruction of Indonesian criminal law* further emphasizes that the success of the penal system must be seen from the system's ability to rehabilitate prisoners and assist them for social reintegration. According to Mulyadi, a progressive law-based penitentiary system should be able to give inmates the opportunity to transform into productive members of society, rather than simply serving a sentence (Tenriawaru et al., 2022). The assimilation policy, in this view, is not only an administrative mechanism to reduce the burden on prison capacity, but also a measure to facilitate the social transformation of prisoners. Thus, the assimilation policy can serve as a means of restoring dignity to prisoners, who should be given the opportunity to again contribute to society.

This view is also corroborated by Daniel J. Karpowitz in his writings on law and social justice, which reveals that the success of the correctional system is not only measured by how many prisoners are released, but also how well they are accepted back into society (Fitria et al., 2025). Karpowitz stressed that assimilation policies should ensure that released prisoners get social support to re-adapt to social life. In progressive law, the principle of humanization is of great importance, in which convicts are considered individuals with the right to change and have the opportunity to return to contribute to society (Ash-shidiqqi, 2020). Therefore, assimilation policies within a progressive legal framework must not only provide administrative release, but also provide support for prisoners to reintegrate in society in a positive way.

The importance of the rehabilitative approach in the penal system also received attention from Michel Foucault, a famous legal philosopher, who argued that the law should avoid the process of exclusion of convicts from society. Foucault states that by continuing to treat prisoners as “outsiders”, the legal system only reinforces social injustice and perpetuates a negative stigma (Ash-shidiqqi, 2020). Progressive laws, in this case through assimilation policies, need to ensure that prisoners are given the opportunity for social reintegration in a dignified and equitable manner. Assimilation policies within a progressive legal framework not only aim to reduce the number of prison residents, but more importantly as an effort to humanize inmates, give them the opportunity to achieve change, and return to functioning as productive members of society.

Progressive laws, such as those initiated by Satjipto Rahardjo, directed the penitentiary system to place more emphasis on rehabilitation, education, and social reintegration of prisoners. Rahardjo argued that the law should serve to achieve social justice, and that one important aspect of the penal system is to provide opportunities for inmates to improve themselves. Rehabilitation, in this case, becomes a more fundamental step than retribution, since the prisoner remains entitled to the opportunity to correct mistakes and return to contributing to society. The inmate's individual needs-based approach is an important cornerstone in progressive law. Each prisoner has different conditions, both psychological, social and economic, and therefore they need a different approach to the assimilation process. Progressive law considers that correctional policy focuses not only on the provision of punishment, but also on meeting the basic needs of prisoners, such as psychological rehabilitation, skills development, as well as meeting economic and social needs (Yustiana et al., 2023). This allows prisoners to be better prepared for reintegration into society after their sentence ends. Assimilation policies that take these factors into account are more oriented towards coaching and recovery, rather than just administrative liberation.

One of the transformations brought about by progressive law in the penitentiary system is the

shift from a retributive approach (retribution) towards a more restorative justice-oriented system (Waluyo, 2015). Restorative justice, which emphasizes rapprochement between inmates, victims, and society, provides opportunities for inmates to correct their mistakes and repair damaged relationships. Progressive law sees punishment as a means for rehabilitation and recovery, rather than simply retribution for wrongs done. This principle is applied in assimilation policies, where prisoners are not only given physical freedom, but also the opportunity to improve themselves and contribute back to society in a positive and productive way. The application of restorative justice in assimilation policies not only provides an opportunity for prisoners to improve themselves, but also allows them to interact with society in the process of mutual healing. Restorative justice provides an opportunity for inmates to dialogue with victims or communities affected by their actions, as well as repair social relationships damaged by the crime. Thus, assimilation policies based on progressive legal principles provided a space for prisoners to be not only physically free, but also free from their past and return to an active role in society.

In addition, progressive laws also focused on reducing social stigma against ex-convicts. In traditional legal systems, prisoners are often viewed as "outsiders" who are isolated from society. Progressive law seeks to change this view by showing that prisoners who have gone through a process of rehabilitation and social reintegration deserve to be readmitted to society. With assimilation policies based on rehabilitation, former inmates are given the opportunity to improve themselves and prove that they can return to being productive members of society. This helps reduce the social stigma that often prevents them from starting a new life after serving a sentence.

The balance between public safety and Prisoners' Human Rights is a major concern. Progressive laws seek to maintain a sense of security in society without neglecting the rights of prisoners, including their right to social reintegration. Assimilation policies, designed to allow prisoners to return to society after serving their sentences, aim to provide opportunities for them to improve themselves and contribute positively. However, in its implementation, it is important to ensure that this policy does not threaten the security of society. Thus, progressive laws emphasize proper and proportionate supervision of prisoners undergoing assimilation, to ensure that they do not repeat criminal acts without reducing their chances of returning to society. Proper and effective supervision is key in implementing assimilation policies based on progressive laws. This involves not only physical supervision, but also more in-depth approaches such as supervision of the inmate's social and psychological development. Supervision that focuses on rehabilitation and coaching will be more effective than just repressive supervision. Proper supervision will help prevent the risk of crime, while providing space for inmates to continue their process of social reintegration. Through effective

supervision, prisoners ' rights to repair and recovery can be maintained, while community safety can also be maintained.

Rehabilitation and mentoring programs are important aspects of progressive law-based assimilation policies. One of the most vital forms is the provision of educational programs and skills training for prisoners. Through this education and training, inmates can acquire the skills necessary to return to functioning in society after their sentence ends(Zaki & Anwar, 2022). Progressive laws emphasize the importance of preparing inmates with skills that can increase their chances of getting a job and reduce their likelihood of re-engaging in crime. The Program involves not only technical skills, but also social and emotional skills necessary in everyday life in society.

In addition to education and training, psychosocial assistance programs are also very important in supporting the process of social reintegration of prisoners. This mentoring provides inmates with the emotional and psychological support they need to adapt to life outside of prison. Prisoners undergoing assimilation often face great challenges in adjusting to changes in society, especially after being in isolation for the duration of the sentence. Psychosocial accompaniment can help them cope with feelings of anxiety, alienation, or even the social stigma they face. The Program is also important in ensuring that inmates do not feel alone in their reintegration process, and that they get the support they need to lead productive lives. The role of legal actors in promoting humanistic assimilation is very important. Judges, prosecutors, and correctional officers play a key role in determining the appropriateness and continuation of assimilation based on the inmate's individual conditions and needs(Sanyoto, 2008). The decisions taken by these legal actors must take into account the principles of progressive law, which emphasizes not only punishment, but also rehabilitation and social reintegration.

By integrating progressive law into correctional policy, Indonesia's legal system can transform towards a more humane and inclusive approach. Successful assimilation based on proper rehabilitation, mentoring, and supervision demonstrates the great potential of this policy in reducing social stigma and facilitating the reintegration of prisoners into society. In countries that have successfully implemented similar policies, assimilation based on progressive legal principles has shown positive effects in reducing recidivism rates and improving social relations between inmates and society. Here is a matrix of progressive law-based assimilation success case studies illustrating assimilation practices with a humanist approach:

Table 3. Countries That Successfully Implemented Assimilation Policies

Country	Assimilation Policy	The Humanist Approach	Results/Success	Relevance for Indonesia
Norwegia	Emphasis on reintegration from the beginning of the criminal period	Inmates treated as ordinary citizens, access to education	The recidivism rate is very low; inmates return to society well	This model can inspire coaching systems and non-discriminatory approaches
Belanda	Semi-open system for prisoners ahead of release	Given limited employment opportunities and interaction in the community	Social adaptation went smoothly; Reduce dependency on the system	Can be applied to prisoners undergoing final stage assimilation
Canada (Ontario)	Restorative justice in the assimilation process	Involving communities and victims in the reintegration process	Higher social acceptance rates; Prisoners are more responsible	Relevant for the development of the restorative justice system in Indonesia
Indonesia (COVID-19 Cases)	Mass assimilation for inmates with certain criteria	Focus on liberation for the sake of humanity, but lack of coaching	Many are recidivists because of lack of mentoring and high social stigma	Need to evaluate the mentoring system and increase the transparency of selection
Local Reintegration Program	Some prisons have started implementing talent-based job training	Personal and psychosocial approaches to recovery	Inmates are able to be economically independent post-release	It needs to be expanded and made into a progressive law-based national policy

From this table it can be seen that progressive legal approaches, when applied comprehensively, have a significant positive impact on both prisoners and society. Therefore, Indonesia needs to strengthen its correctional legal framework by consistently adopting progressive legal

principles, including in designing job training programs, psychosocial assistance, and restorative justice. The evaluation of past policies, such as assimilation during the COVID-19 pandemic, shows the importance of more serious mentoring and transparent selection so that successful social reintegration can be achieved and the stigma against ex-prisoners can be significantly reduced.

4. Conclusion

Progressive legal approaches to correctional policy, particularly in the context of assimilation, offer a more humanistic, adaptive, and equitable paradigm. Progressive law not only views prisoners as objects of law, but as subjects entitled to rehabilitation and the opportunity to change and return to contribute to society. Through the strengthening of individual needs-based education, training, and mentoring programs, as well as the application of restorative justice principles, progressive law is able to promote effective social reintegration and reduce stigma against former inmates. International case studies show that the success of the assimilation system is highly dependent on an inclusive and non-discriminatory approach, which is relevant to be applied in Indonesia to create a correctional system that is more just, humane, and has a positive impact on society at large.

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