



Case Description of Juvenile Criminal Offenses at Tanjung Gusta Medan Penitentiary in 2024

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ABSTRACT

Background: Juvenile crime is a critical issue, particularly as children are the nation's future. This study examines the profiles and types of crimes committed by juvenile inmates at the Tanjung Gusta Penitentiary, Medan, in 2024. **Methods:** Using a descriptive observational approach, data were collected from legal documents and administrative records of 50 juvenile inmates with final court decisions. **Results:** Results showed that all inmates were male, aged 14–19 years, with education levels ranging from elementary to high school. Sexual violence was the most prevalent offense (52%), followed by theft, narcotics distribution, and assault. Sentences ranged from less than one year to a maximum of ten years, with most inmates receiving 1–3 years. **Conclusion:** The findings underscore the need for targeted interventions to address socio-economic and educational factors contributing to juvenile delinquency. Further studies and policy enhancements are recommended to prevent juvenile crimes and support their rehabilitation.

Keyword: Juvenile Crime, Penitentiary, Tanjung Gusta, Rehabilitation, Youth Offenders

ABSTRAK

Latar Belakang: Kejahatan anak merupakan masalah yang sangat penting, terutama karena anak-anak adalah masa depan bangsa. Studi ini mengkaji profil dan jenis kejahatan yang dilakukan oleh narapidana anak di Lembaga Pemasyarakatan Tanjung Gusta, Medan, pada tahun 2024. **Metode:** Dengan menggunakan pendekatan observasional deskriptif, data dikumpulkan dari dokumen hukum dan catatan administratif 50 narapidana anak yang telah memiliki putusan pengadilan yang berkekuatan hukum tetap. **Hasil:** Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa semua narapidana berjenis kelamin laki-laki, berusia 14-19 tahun, dengan tingkat pendidikan mulai dari SD hingga SMA. Kekerasan seksual adalah pelanggaran yang paling banyak dilakukan (52%), diikuti oleh pencurian, peredaran narkoba, dan penganiayaan. Hukuman berkisar dari kurang dari satu tahun hingga maksimal sepuluh tahun, dengan sebagian besar narapidana menerima hukuman 1-3 tahun. **Kesimpulan:** Temuan ini menggarisbawahi perlunya intervensi yang ditargetkan untuk mengatasi faktor sosial-ekonomi dan pendidikan yang berkontribusi terhadap kenakalan remaja. Studi lebih lanjut dan peningkatan kebijakan direkomendasikan untuk mencegah kejahatan remaja dan mendukung rehabilitasi mereka.

Kata Kunci: Kejahatan Anak, Lembaga Pemasyarakatan, Tanjung Gusta, Rehabilitasi, Pelaku Tindak Pidana Anak



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1. Introduction

Juvenile delinquency represents a significant worldwide challenge for societies including Indonesia.^{[1][2][15]} Adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterized by emotional volatility and heightened curiosity, making young individuals more susceptible to social deviance and risky behaviors.^{[1][3]} Factors such as family dysfunction, peer influence, and socio-economic challenges have been widely identified as contributors to juvenile crime. Common offenses committed by juveniles include theft, substance abuse, and violent crimes, all of which have substantial social and legal implications.^[3]

In Indonesia, data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) indicates a growing number of juveniles in conflict with the law, particularly in cases involving drug offenses and acts of violence. Rehabilitation centers, like the Tanjung Gusta Penitentiary in Medan, play a pivotal role in rehabilitating these juveniles and preparing them for reintegration into society. However, these institutions often face challenges, including overcrowding, inadequate resources, and limited tailored rehabilitation programs.^[15]

The rehabilitation of juvenile offenders is essential not only for reducing recidivism but also for addressing the root causes of delinquency. Effective rehabilitation programs incorporate both behavioral and social interventions to ensure holistic development. Studies highlight the importance of family involvement, educational opportunities, and psychological counseling as critical components of successful rehabilitation.^{[8][9]}

This study seeks to analyze juvenile crime cases at the Tanjung Gusta Penitentiary in 2024, focusing on profiling offenders, identifying the most common crimes, and evaluating sentencing patterns. By providing a descriptive overview, this research aims to inform policy interventions and improve the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs in Indonesia.

2. Method

This study employed a descriptive observational design to analyze the demographic profiles, criminal behaviors, and sentencing patterns of juvenile offenders at Tanjung Gusta Penitentiary, Medan, during 2024. The study population comprised all juvenile inmates aged 14-18 years incarcerated at the penitentiary, with a total of 50 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Inclusion criteria ensured that only juveniles with finalized court decisions and comprehensive records were included in the analysis.

The research focused on secondary data collected from institutional and court records, which provided insights into the characteristics and legal outcomes of offenders. Data collection involved reviewing official documents, including detailed court records that outlined the offenses, legal processes, and sentencing. Institutional records provided demographic information such as age, gender, education level, and prior criminal history.

Quantitative analysis was conducted using descriptive statistical methods to identify patterns in the data, with a focus on age distribution, types of crimes, and sentencing lengths. The data were processed using SPSS software to ensure accuracy and reliability in presenting trends and correlations.

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the study. Permission was obtained from the penitentiary administration to access inmate records, and all identifying information was anonymized to maintain confidentiality. The study adhered to institutional ethical guidelines, ensuring that the data were used solely for research purposes.

3. Discussion

The study analyzed 50 juvenile offenders at Tanjung Gusta Penitentiary in July 2024, focusing on demographic characteristics, types of crimes committed, and sentence durations. Below are the key findings, supported by a comprehensive table.

3.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study analyzed 50 juvenile offenders at Tanjung Gusta Penitentiary in July 2024, focusing on demographic characteristics, types of crimes committed, and sentence durations. Below are the key findings, supported by a comprehensive table.

50 juvenile offenders that were analyzed in this study were male (100%). Based on this study, 98% of the respondents were adolescent aged 10-18 years, while 2% of the respondents were aged 19 years. The majority of the respondents had completed middle school (56%), 36% had elementary school education, and only 8% had high school education.

The most prevalent crime that were committed by the respondents in this study was sexual violence, committed by 52% of the respondents. Other offenses included theft (16%), drug-related offenses (16%), weapon possession (10%), assault (4%), and murder (2%). The most common sentence duration was 1 - 3

years, affecting 74% of the respondents. Other sentence durations included less than 1 year (10%), 4- 6 years (14%), and 10-12 years (2%).

Table 1. Comprehensive Table of Respondents' Characteristics

Category	Subcategory	Number	Percentage (%)
Gender Distribution	Male	50	100
	Female	0	0
Total (Gender)		50	100
Age Distribution	10-18 years	49	98
	19 years	1	2
Total (Age)		50	100
Education Levels	Elementary School	18	36
	Middle School	28	56
	High School	4	8
Total (Education)		50	100
Types of Crimes	Sexual Violence	26	52
	Theft	8	16
	Drug-Related Offenses	8	16
	Weapon Possessions	5	10
	Assault	2	4
	Murder	1	2
	Other	0	0
Total (Crimes)		50	100
Sentence Duration	Less than 1 Year	5	10
	1-3 Years	37	74
	4-6 Years	7	14
	7-9 Years	0	0
	10-12 Years	1	2
	More than 12 Years	0	0
Total (Sentences)		50	100

4. Discussion

The rehabilitation of juvenile offenders is a critical component of the justice system, aiming not only to address the consequences of delinquent behavior but also to reduce recidivism and promote reintegration into society.^[4] This study's findings, alongside existing research and policies in Indonesia, highlight significant implications for improving juvenile rehabilitation programs.^{[5][7]}

4.1 Gender and Age Distribution

The study revealed that all respondents were male, reflecting broader patterns of juvenile delinquency in Indonesia, where boys are statistically more likely to engage in risky behaviors due to societal norms, peer influence, and limited parental supervision. Adolescence, particularly the 10-18 year age range, is a critical period marked by identity exploration, impulsivity, and vulnerability to external influences. This aligns with global research emphasizing the need for early, age-appropriate interventions to address these vulnerabilities through character-building and decision-making programs.^[12]

4.2 Educational Deficits

Education levels among respondents demonstrated a significant gap, with 56% having completed middle school and 36% only an elementary-level education. These findings are consistent with research showing that low educational attainment is a significant risk factor for delinquency. Poor academic engagement and school truancy are often precursors to criminal behavior, reflecting socio-economic and family-related disadvantages. Studies from Surabaya and Lombok have highlighted the success of educational programs tailored to juveniles, such as vocational training and formal schooling, in reducing recidivism and fostering long-term social reintegration.

4.3 Prevalent Offenses

Sexual violence emerged as the most frequent crime (52%), followed by theft and drug-related offenses (16% each). These findings align with national data indicating the prevalence of sexual and property-related crimes among juveniles.^[14] Addressing these crimes requires a multi-faceted approach, including community awareness campaigns, family counseling, and offender rehabilitation programs. For example, the "1 Hour Q-Time" program in Indonesia has been shown to foster family cohesion and reduce delinquency by improving communication and trust between parents and children.^[15]

4.4 Sentencing Patterns

Most respondents (74%) received sentences ranging from 1-3 years, consistent with Indonesia's Juvenile Criminal Justice System Act 2012, which prioritizes proportional sentencing and restorative justice. However, longer sentences for severe crimes, such as murder, highlight the tension between punitive and rehabilitative approaches.^[16] Research indicates that short-term sentencing can limit the time available for rehabilitation, suggesting the need for targeted, intensive programs during incarceration. Diversion mechanisms and community-based rehabilitation models have shown promise in reducing recidivism and facilitating societal reintegration.^[17]

4.5 Challenges in Rehabilitation and Policy Implications

Rehabilitating juvenile offenders in Indonesia faces numerous challenges that hinder the effectiveness of existing programs. Resource constraints, such as overcrowded facilities and insufficient funding, limit the availability of tailored rehabilitation services. Many correctional facilities lack adequate educational, vocational, and psychological support systems, which are essential for addressing the root causes of delinquency.^[17]

Furthermore, familial and socio-economic dynamics play a significant role in juvenile delinquency. Juvenile offenders often come from broken families or environments marked by poverty, abuse, or neglect, which exacerbates their vulnerability to criminal behavior. Despite efforts to incorporate family-based interventions, the lack of parental education and involvement remains a critical barrier to effective rehabilitation.^[9]

Additionally, societal stigma against juvenile offenders further impedes reintegration, as these individuals are often labeled as criminals, making it difficult for them to re-establish community ties and secure meaningful opportunities.^[14] To address these challenges, several policy implications emerge. First, restorative justice mechanisms, such as diversion programs, need to be expanded and better resourced to reduce reliance on punitive measures and provide a pathway for rehabilitation. These programs should be supported by specialized training for law enforcement and judicial officers to ensure consistent application.^[8]

Second, policies must prioritize educational and vocational training in correctional facilities. By integrating formal education with skill-building programs, juveniles can acquire tools for economic self-reliance and reduce their likelihood of recidivism.

Third, family-centered interventions, such as "1 Hour Q-Time," should be scaled up nationally to rebuild trust and address the familial issues contributing to delinquency.^[15] Fourth, trauma-informed care and mental health services must be incorporated into rehabilitation frameworks to address the psychological and emotional challenges many juvenile offenders face.^[17]

Finally, combating societal stigma requires public awareness campaigns and community-based rehabilitation initiatives. By educating communities about the importance of rehabilitation over punitive approaches, juvenile offenders can gain the social acceptance needed for successful reintegration. Taken together, these policy implications provide a roadmap for addressing the challenges in juvenile rehabilitation, enabling a more effective and compassionate justice system.^[6]

5. Conclusion

Rehabilitation policies must address the multifaceted nature of juvenile delinquency, combining restorative justice, education, family involvement, and mental health support. By implementing these strategies, Indonesia can create a more effective juvenile justice system that fosters rehabilitation and reduces recidivism.

This study highlights the demographic and behavioral patterns of juvenile offenders at Tanjung Gusta Penitentiary, emphasizing the need for comprehensive rehabilitation strategies. Despite its limitations, the findings underscore the importance of education, family involvement, restorative justice, and community-based approaches in reducing juvenile delinquency. Future research should address the limitations and expand the scope to provide a more holistic understanding of juvenile justice in Indonesia.

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