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Stigma of Former Drug Offenders: Islamic and Restorative Justice Perspectives in the Contemporary Era

Abstract: This study offers a sociological and normative analysis of the persistent stigmatisation of former drug offenders and its implications for the implementation of restorative justice and Islamic ethical values in the contemporary Indonesian context. Employing a qualitative approach through field research and literature review, the study investigates the socio-cultural dynamics, public perceptions, and institutional obstacles that hinder the effective reintegration of ex-offenders into society. The findings indicate that former drug offenders often face multilayered stigma—manifesting in social exclusion, limited employment opportunities, and distrust within their communities—which significantly undermines the objectives of restorative justice. These challenges prolong the cycle of marginalisation and contradict the restorative principles of reconciliation, rehabilitation, and social healing. Moreover, the study reveals a gap between legal-normative frameworks and community practices, where punitive attitudes prevail over rehabilitative intentions. From the perspective of Islamic ethics, values such as *rahmah* (compassion), *taubah* (repentance), and *islah* (reconciliation) serve as essential moral foundations that advocate for the acceptance and reintegration of reformed individuals. These values emphasise the potential for personal transformation and the collective responsibility of society to facilitate restorative outcomes. This study recommends a holistic synergy between restorative justice mechanisms, Islamic ethical values, and public education initiatives to dismantle stigma, promote inclusivity, and foster a more humane justice system. The academic contribution of this research lies in its integrative framework that combines socio-legal theory with Islamic moral philosophy to critically assess the structural and cultural barriers to reintegration, offering a contextualised model for human-centred restorative justice in Muslim-majority societies.

Keywords: Islamic Values, Former Drug Offenders, Restorative Justice, Sociology of Law, Stigmatisation.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of narcotics abuse is a multidimensional issue that not only impacts individual health and law and order but also creates long-term social impacts for perpetrators, especially after they are released from prison.¹ In Indonesia, ex-narcotics convicts often experience discriminatory treatment and social rejection. They are considered "dangerous", untrustworthy, and unworthy of a second chance. This stigma does not stop at individuals but also reaches out to their families, exacerbating the process of social reintegration that is supposed to be part of post-criminal recovery.² In legal policy, restorative justice has been introduced as a more humanistic and restorative-oriented approach.³ Rather than focusing solely on punishment, restorative justice encourages the involvement of all parties—perpetrators, victims, and communities—to find standard solutions, including restoring the perpetrator's social position within the community. However, this idealism of restorative justice has not been fully realised in practice, especially for ex-narcotics inmates. They remain overshadowed by stigma despite having gone through legal processes and rehabilitation.⁴

This is where social and legal challenges intersect. Social stigma is often a significant obstacle to realising the goal of restorative justice. Rejection from the surrounding environment makes it difficult for ex-convicts to get jobs, access to education, and

¹ Fauzi Anshari Sibarani dan Erwin Asmadi, "Harmonizing Law Enforcement Officials Against Child Victims of Narcotics Abuse," *Justisi* 10, no. 2 (1 Februari 2024): 328-340, <https://doi.org/10.33506/js.v10i2.2834>.

² Nurwana Abubakar, La Ode Husen, dan Sri Lestari Poernomo, "Efektivitas Lembaga Pemasyarakatan Dalam Pembinaan Rehabilitasi Pelaku Penyalahgunaan Narkotika Dan Psikotropika: Studi Kasus Di Lapas Narkotika Klas II A Sunguminasa," *Journal of Lex Generalis (JLG)* 3, no. 9 (6 September 2022): 1465-1481.

³ Tri Imam Munandar dkk., "Restorative Justice in Narcotics Crimes Investigation: Implementation, Challenges and Obstacles," *Mimbar Keadilan* 18, no. 1 (19 Februari 2025): 159-170, <https://doi.org/10.30996/mk.v18i1.11961>.

⁴ Abdul Madjid dan Milda Istiqomah, "Restorative Justice: A Suitable Response to Environmental Crime in Indonesia?," *Krytyka Prawa* 15, no. 3 (1 September 2023): 86-100, <https://doi.org/10.7206/kp.2080-1084.622>.

participate in social activities.⁵ Furthermore, this creates a risk of recidivism as they are pushed back into their old neighbourhood or illegal activities. Ironically, the legal system that has opened up opportunities for recovery is hampered by unsupportive social realities. Islam has a deep view of sin, repentance, and forgiveness as a value system. In many verses and hadiths, Islam affirms that everyone has the right to change and return to the right path.⁶ Values such as *rahmah* (compassion), *taubah* (repentance), and *islah* (peace) are essential principles in building an inclusive society.⁷ However, in contemporary social practice, these values are often reduced in dealing with ex-narcotics inmates. If contextualised with a restorative approach, Islam can make a significant contribution to eroding stigma and building a more just social consciousness.

Several previous studies have attempted to examine the problem of rehabilitation and recovery of former narcotics users, but they tend to be partial and have not addressed the issue of stigma in the framework of comprehensive social reintegration. Wulandari and Budisetyani (2020), for example, examined the motivations of former narcotics addicts who worked as rehabilitation counsellors.⁸ Although this study contributes to understanding post-rehabilitation personal transformation, it does not explicitly examine external factors, such as social stigmatisation, that can hinder their reintegration into society.

Likewise, the study by Ramadhani and Dasalinda (2020) highlighted the self-adjustment of victims of drug abuse in undergoing social rehabilitation. This research opens up space for psychosocial analysis, but it is still limited to aspects of individual

⁵ Rizky Fauzi, Watni Marpaung, dan Nurul Huda Prasetya, "Restorative Justice Concept in Islam & Its Implementation in National Criminal Law from Islamic Legal Philosophy," *JURNAL AKTA* 12, no. 1 (7 Februari 2025): 49-59, <https://doi.org/10.30659/akta.v12i1.43727>.

⁶ Syariful Alam, Nu'man Aunuh, dan Yaris Adhial Fajrin, "The Concept of Restorative Justice in Islamic Criminal Law: Alternative Dispute Settlement Based on Justice," *KnE Social Sciences* 9, no. 1 (5 Januari 2024): 642-651, <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v8i21.14779>.

⁷ Muh Awaluddin Kadir, Muh Shuhufi, dan Misbahuddin M, "Efek Jera Pemidanaan Dalam Hukum Islam Dan Penerapannya Di Indonesia," *Socius: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial* 1, no. 11 (5 Juli 2024), <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.12666985>.

⁸ I. Gusti Ayu Ratih Wulandari dan I. Gusti Ayu Putu Wulan Budisetyani, "Gambaran Motivasi Mantan Pecandu Narkotika Yang Bekerja Sebagai Konselor Rehabilitasi Narkotika," *Jurnal Psikologi Udayana*, 26 Februari 2020, 132-143.

adaptation without deeply relating how the social construction of society plays a role in prolonging the social burden they face.⁹ On the other hand, Hilmi (2020) has raised the importance of internalising Islamic values in the rehabilitation process, which gives an idea of the potential of spiritual approaches as an instrument of recovery.¹⁰ However, this study has not touched on the specific dimensions of social reintegration and the relevance of Islamic concepts such as repentance, *rahmah*, and *islah* in dismantling the stigma construction of former narcotics inmates.

From these three studies, no study has systematically combined a sociological approach to social stigma with Islamic values in a single analytical framework to strengthen restorative justice. This gap demonstrates the importance of an interdisciplinary approach that not only captures the individual side of ex-convicts or the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs but also critiques the social systems and cultural values that underlie their exclusion. This research aims to address this gap by analysing how social stigma against ex-narcotics offenders is a serious challenge to the realisation of restorative justice, as well as how Islamic values can be actualised to encourage a more humane and inclusive process of social reintegration. Therefore, this research is here to fill the gap by combining the perspective of legal sociology, Islamic values, and the concept of restorative justice in understanding and responding to the stigmatisation of ex-narcotics inmates. The novelty of this research lies in an integrative approach that is not only descriptive but also offers a conceptual model of restorative justice based on Islamic values. Thus, this research is expected to contribute academically to developing socio-legal theory and build a more inclusive policy foundation.

In this study, the author addresses a central research question: How can a sociological and Islamic values-based approach be employed to reduce the social

⁹ Fharah Dhiba Ramadhani dan Dwi Dasalinda, "Penyesuaian Diri Korban Penyalahgunaan Napza dalam Menjalani Rehabilitasi Sosial di Sentra Handayani Jakarta," *TERAPUTIK: Jurnal Bimbingan dan Konseling* 7, no. 2 (31 Oktober 2023): 123-131, <https://doi.org/10.26539/teraputik.721150>.

¹⁰ Fuad Hilmi, "Internalization of Islamic Values in Drug Rehabilitation," *IJNU: Indonesian Journal of Nahdlatul Ulama* 1, no. 1 (29 September 2023): 1-15.

stigmatisation of former narcotics offenders and support the development of a contextual restorative justice model in contemporary Indonesia? This overarching question encompasses the exploration of the forms and dynamics of stigma, the challenges of implementing restorative justice, and the potential of Islamic ethical values—such as *rahmah* (compassion), *tawbah* (repentance), and *islah* (reconciliation)—to facilitate the social reintegration of ex-convicts. By answering this question, the study aims to contribute to academic discourse in legal sociology, criminology, and Islamic jurisprudence and offer practical insights for policymakers, legal practitioners, and civil society in building a more just, inclusive, and compassionate justice system. Former offenders should not be seen as threats but as individuals with the right to reclaim dignity and participate meaningfully in society.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a socio-legal framework, focusing on field research.¹¹ The primary aim is to explore the dynamics of social stigmatisation against former narcotics offenders and the challenges they face in the implementation of restorative justice aligned with Islamic values in the contemporary context. This approach is chosen for its ability to capture the lived experiences of ex-offenders and the complex social perceptions that shape their reintegration. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with key informants, including former inmates, religious leaders, law enforcement officials (such as prosecutors and correctional officers), and community figures. In addition to interviews, the researcher conducted participatory observation in the social environments where ex-offenders reside and gathered relevant documents such as legal policies, media reports, and court decisions.

The collected data were analysed using thematic analysis to identify patterns of stigmatisation, forms of social exclusion, and public perceptions of justice and restoration.

¹¹ Matthew B Miles dan A. Michael Huberman, *Analisis data kualitatif: buku sumber tentang metode metode baru* (Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia Press, 2014).

This research also integrates a social interpretation of Islamic values—particularly the concepts of *rahmah* (compassion), *tawbah* (repentance), and *islah* (reconciliation)—derived from contemporary Islamic jurisprudence and ethical literature, to develop a contextual and value-based restorative justice model. Data validity was ensured through source and method triangulation¹² and credibility checks via expert judgment. Through this field-based approach, the study aims to generate strong empirical findings that contribute to the formulation of a restorative justice model that is more inclusive, humane, and aligned with Indonesia's socio-religious context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Form and Dynamics of Social Stigmatisation of Ex-Narcotics Prisoners

Social stigmatisation of ex-narcotics convicts is still a strong phenomenon in Indonesian society. Field research shows that the forms of the stigma they face are diverse, ranging from negative labelling and discriminatory treatment to systematic social exclusion. Most former narcotics inmates admit that they are often referred to as "relapse addicts" or "failed people" by their surroundings.¹³ Even in social interactions, they are usually considered moral and security threats, so society tends to stay away from them without seeing the rehabilitation process or personal changes they have undergone.¹⁴

Social stigma does not stop at individuals who have served sentences but also at their families. There are cases where ex-convict children are treated differently at school because of their parents' backgrounds, or PKK mothers shun their wives because they are considered to bring disgrace to the community. This form of discrimination shows that the social sanctions given by the community to ex-narcotics inmates are much longer and more painful than the formal criminal sanctions they have undergone in correctional institutions. This situation worsens their psychological condition and reduces their chances

¹² Burhan Bungin, *Analisis Data Penelitian Kualitatif* (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 2003).

¹³ Sigit, Personal Interview, 2024.

¹⁴ Personal Interview, 2024.

of recovery and re-entry into society.¹⁵ Facts on the ground also show that ex-convicts often experience rejection when they return to look for work.¹⁶ Many companies explicitly reject job applications after knowing their criminal history, especially those related to narcotics. Even when they have had skills or training certificates acquired during their time in detention, social stigma remains a significant barrier. This creates a vicious cycle: former drug users who want to change are hampered by a social system that does not give them space to prove themselves.

In the religious context, the form of rejection is also clearly visible. Some informants in the study said they were no longer involved in spiritual activities such as recitation, mosque takmir, or religious-based cooperation. They are considered not yet "holy" even though they have repented, and are even considered to pollute community worship activities.¹⁷ In fact, in Islamic teachings, the principles of repentance and *rahmatullah* affirm that every servant has the opportunity to improve themselves. However, this spirit of inclusivity is often not reflected in the social and religious practices of the community. The social and cultural context of the local community greatly influences the dynamics of this stigma. In areas with low levels of education and minimal legal understanding, the stigma against ex-narcotics convicts is stronger and more entrenched. People tend to view a person's past as an identity that is inherent forever, so they find it difficult to accept the changes or rehabilitation that have occurred. This view is reinforced by mass media narratives that often highlight former drug users as a public threat without showing the humanitarian side and their struggle to recover.

On the other hand, in environments that have an active role of religious leaders, extension workers, or non-governmental organisations (NGOs), acceptance of ex-narcotics convicts tends to be more open. In some fostered communities, ex-convicts are even allowed

¹⁵ Eva Achjani Zulfa, "Optimalisasi Pendekatan Restorative Justice terhadap Victimless Crime (Penyalahgunaan Narkoba) sebagai Solusi Lapas yang Over Kapasitas," *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai* 6, no. 1 (28 April 2022), <https://doi.org/10.31004/jptam.v6i1.3684>.

¹⁶ Rudi Santoso, Personal Interview, 2024.

¹⁷ Rangga Pati, Personal Interview, 2024.

to share their experiences in da'wah forums or skills training as a form of positive contribution. This shows that stigma is not absolute but rather the result of social construction that can be reduced or corrected through education, humanistic religious approaches, and community policy interventions.¹⁸

This phenomenon indicates that the main problem in the social reintegration of ex-narcotics convicts does not lie in personal intentions or readiness but rather in the structural and cultural resistance they face.¹⁹ The restorative justice process will not run optimally when society cannot distinguish between past mistakes and potential changes. Instead of being a space for recovery, society has become a second court of judgment that is more painful and destructive.²⁰ Thus, systemic efforts are needed to change the public's perspective on ex-narcotics convicts, including through public education, strengthening da'wah based on inclusive Islamic values, and forming policies that encourage the involvement of ex-convicts in social development. Without all of that, the stigma will continue to be a significant obstacle in the effort to realise restorative justice and genuine social reintegration in the contemporary era. The following is a table that summarises the forms of social stigma against ex-narcotics inmates based on the narrative and field findings in the research:

Table 1. Negative Stigma of Ex-Narcotics Inmates

Aspects	Forms of Stigma Experienced	Impact on Ex-Inmates	Influencing Factors
Negative Labeling	It is called a "relapse addict", a "failed person", or a "burden on society".	Feeling inferior, psychologically depressed, and having	Lack of public education about

¹⁸ Dita Permata Aditya dan Wenty Marina Minza, "Relasi Sosial Pada Mantan Pengguna Narkoba Yang Diasingkan," *Journal Psikologi Forensik Indonesia* 1, no. 1 (1 November 2021): 32-44, <https://doi.org/10.71088/jpfi.v1i1.2>.

¹⁹ Maimun Maimun dkk., "Dampak Penyalahgunaan Narkoba Terhadap Perkembangan Moral Anak," *Antropocene: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Humaniora* 3, no. 2 (28 Mei 2023): 59-67, <https://doi.org/10.56393/antropocene.v3i2.1648>.

²⁰ Nur Alifya dan Michiko Mamesah, "Pengaruh Stigma Masyarakat Terhadap Pembentukan Konsep Diri Remaja Penyalahgunaan Narkoba Di Yayasan Bersama Kita Pulih (BESAKIH)," *INSIGHT: Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling* 10, no. 1 (2021): 53-66, <https://doi.org/10.21009/INSIGHT.101.08>.

		difficulty getting social support.	rehabilitation and recovery.
Social Discrimination	Rejection in the world of work, being shunned by neighbours, and being excluded from community activities.	Difficulty reintegration, loss of motivation to change, and feeling unappreciated.	Conservative social norms and limited legal knowledge.
Impact on the Family	Children are treated differently at school; the PKK environment shuns wives.	The family is also stigmatised, the quality of family life deteriorates, and social pressure is layered.	A social construct that associates the disgrace of the individual with the extended family.
Religious Rejection	Not involved in the recitation, mosque takmir, and cooperation is considered "not yet holy".	Spiritually and socially inhibited, feeling a loss of place to return to society.	Lack of internalisation of the value of repentance and inclusivity in religious communities.
Media Narrative	The media often highlights the negative side of former users without acknowledging their struggles to recover.	The public is increasingly sceptical of rehabilitation; the stigma is widely strengthened.	Sensational and uneducational media framing.
Differences in Social Context	Communities with religious leaders/NGOs are more open and supportive than conservative and less educated communities.	The chances of recovery and acceptance are greater in a supportive environment.	There are progressive local figures, coaching programs, and a humanist approach based on religion.
Reintegration Barriers	Structural and cultural rejection, even though the individual has changed.	The reintegration process failed, and ex-convicts were at risk of returning to the old circle (recidivism).	The absence of a long-term support system and inclusive policies.
Solutions and Interventions	The need is for public education, strengthening friendly Islamic da'wah, and affirmative policies for ex-convicts.	Opening up space for participation, building public trust, and reducing systemic stigma.	Collaboration between stakeholders: government, religious leaders, NGOs, and the media.

Source: Author's Interpretation

The table illustrates the various forms of social stigma faced by ex-narcotics inmates, ranging from harmful labelling social discrimination to rejection in religious activities and its impact on their families. This form of stigma not only hinders the rehabilitation and

social reintegration process but also worsens the psychological condition of former inmates. Factors that reinforce this stigma include the low level of public education, lack of legal understanding, and negative narratives in the mass media that tend to highlight the criminal side without raising the humanitarian aspect and the struggle to recover. Conversely, accepting ex-convicts is more open and participatory in environments with active religious leaders, NGOs, or extension workers. This shows that stigma is not absolute but a social construct that can be corrected through education, inclusive religious approaches, and policy interventions that support their recovery and social engagement. Therefore, changing people's perspectives is key to realising restorative justice and humane social reintegration.

Challenges in the Implementation of Restorative Justice for Ex-Narcotics Prisoners

The challenges in implementing restorative justice for ex-narcotics inmates in Indonesia are still very complex and layered. Public resistance to the recovery approach is the root of the main problem. In many cases, society still sees justice through a retributive lens: that the perpetrator of the crime must "pay" for his wrongs through severe punishment rather than being restored to contribute back to society.²¹ This view is often reinforced by media narratives that highlight the element of criminality rather than the humanitarian aspect of a former inmate.²² As a result, the idea of restorative justice that focuses on healing social relationships and the reintegration of perpetrators is challenging to accept widely. One of the facts on the ground shows that former narcotics inmates are often faced with systematic social rejection, even after serving their sentences and showing behaviour changes. For example, in interviews with several ex-convicts at a coaching institution, they admitted that they were not invited to RT meetings, were not involved in religious activities,

²¹ Daud Tober, Bachrul Amiq, and Wahyu Prawesthi, "The Application of Restorative Justice in the Handling of Narcotics Crimes," *COURT REVIEW: Journal of Legal Research* (e-ISSN: 2776-1916) 5, no. 02 (2025): 27-34, <https://doi.org/10.69957/cr.v5i02.1771>.

²² Fatin Hamamah, "REHABILITATION ON VICTIMS OF DRUGS ABUSE IN JUDICIAL DEVELOPMENT," *International Journal of Law Reconstruction* 5, no. 2 (6 November 2021): 354-366, <https://doi.org/10.26532/ijlr.v5i2.17923>.

and were even rejected when they wanted to register for work.²³ This situation creates social isolation that severely hinders long-term recovery efforts. In this context, restorative justice becomes difficult to implement because its values are not yet culturally rooted in society.

The absence of clear technical regulations and implementation guidelines is also a structural obstacle. Although the concept of restorative justice has been recognised in several policies, such as Attorney General Regulation Number 15 of 2020, its application in narcotics cases is still limited. Many law enforcement officials, including prosecutors and police, still view narcotics crimes as pure crimes that must be dealt with firmly, not given room for recovery. In fact, in the case of users or people with an addiction, restorative and rehabilitative approaches are more relevant than repressive approaches.²⁴ The lack of civil society involvement also exacerbates this condition. Social reintegration programs involving religious leaders, NGOs, and community groups are still challenging to find consistently and systematically. Many regions do not have a mechanism for assisting ex-convicts after being released from custody.²⁵ In some areas with such initiatives, the program relies on volunteers or local figures and has not received structural support from the local government. The disconnect between the justice system, social institutions, and communities makes ex-convicts walk alone in the face of stigma.

From a religious perspective, much space still needs to be filled to make Islamic values the foundation of social recovery.²⁶ Principles such as repentance, rahmah (compassion), and islah (peace) have not been widely used as the main narrative in

²³ Santoso, Personal Interview.

²⁴ Mohammad Hakim Pratama Rahim, Dian Ekawaty Ismail, dan Apripari Apripari, "Hambatan Pelaksanaan Restorative Justice Pada Tindak Pidana Narkotika Di Kepolisian Resort Gorontalo Kota," *Jaksa : Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Hukum Dan Politik* 2, no. 2 (19 Januari 2024): 258-266, <https://doi.org/10.51903/jaksa.v2i2.1691>.

²⁵ Dewi Sartika, Rina Khairani Pancaningrum, dan Joko Jumadi, "Restorative Justice Terhadap Tindak Pidana Narkotika Sebagai Strategi Penanggulangan Overcrowding Di Lembaga Pemasyarakatan," *JATISWARA* 38, no. 1 (31 Maret 2023): 113-123, <https://doi.org/10.29303/jtsw.v38i1.529>.

²⁶ Supardi Mursalin dkk., "Fiqh Tolerance in a Contemporary Context: The Response of State Islamic Religious University Students to Religious Extremism," *MILRev: Metro Islamic Law Review* 3, no. 2 (30 Desember 2024): 287-319, <https://doi.org/10.32332/milrev.v3i2.9866>.

accompanying ex-convicts. Many ex-convicts state that the process of changing themselves starts from spiritual awareness during their sentences.²⁷ Unfortunately, many mosques and religious forums in the community are still closed to their participation. This indicates that a bridge has not been built between spiritual and social justice values promoted by restorative justice. Another obstacle that emerges is the weak public education regarding the importance of restorative justice. Many do not understand that justice's primary purpose is to punish and restore social relations damaged by crime. Without a sustainable educational campaign, society will continue to produce stigma and rejection of former inmates. Field facts show that when the community is given understanding, such as in counselling activities or community dialogue, resistance to ex-convicts tends to decrease, and acceptance becomes more open.²⁸ In the context of policy, the integration of restorative justice with narcotics rehabilitation programs is also not optimal. Many rehabilitation institutions work separately from the legal and correctional systems. Thus, even though a person has completed medical and psychological rehabilitation, they are still included in the category of "criminal" in the eyes of the public. This misalignment shows the need for cross-sectoral synergy between legal, health, social, and religious institutions so that restorative justice can run comprehensively and sustainably.

Actualisation of Islamic Values to Support Social Reintegration

The actualisation of Islamic values such as *rahmah* (compassion), *taubah* (repentance), and *islah* (reconciliation) has great potential in shaping a more humane approach to the social reintegration of ex-narcotics convicts.²⁹ These principles affirm that every individual has the opportunity to change and be accepted back into society. In QS. Az-Zumar [39]:53, Allah calls upon His servants who go beyond the limit not to despair of

²⁷ Abubakar, Husen, dan Poernomo, "Efektivitas Lembaga Pemasarakatan Dalam Pembinaan Rehabilitasi Pelaku Penyalahgunaan Narkotika Dan Psiktropika."

²⁸ Ardi Nefri dan Iyah Faniyah, "Pertimbangan Penyelidik Dalam Penghentian Penyelidikan Tindak Pidana Narkotika Berdasarkan Restoratif Justice," *Ekasakti Legal Science Journal* 1, no. 4 (7 Oktober 2024): 313-320, <https://doi.org/10.60034/pwmr1d81>.

²⁹ St Nur Syahidah Dzatun Nurain, "Prinsip Keadilan Sosial Dalam Islam," *Jurnal JINNSA (Jurnal Interdipliner Sosiologi Agama)* 4, no. 1 (23 Agustus 2024): 35-51, <https://doi.org/10.30984/jinnsa.v4i1.1048>.

His mercy, signifying that the door of forgiveness is always open. The Prophet's hadith also shows that true repentant sinners are treated with respect and are accepted back into the social life of Muslims.³⁰ However, in reality, these values have not been fully implemented in the social life of the Muslim community in Indonesia. Field research shows that people are still faster to stigmatise than to give them a second chance. Public attitudes toward ex-convicts are often based on fear and suspicion rather than on a spirit of compassion and forgiveness. This shows the gap between the teachings of Islam, which are rahmatan lil 'alamin, and the exclusive social practices of those who have been guilty.

The main obstacle in actualising these Islamic values is the da'wah approach, which is still normative and commemorative. Many religious leaders only emphasise aspects of sin and punishment without being accompanied by messages of empathy and reintegration. In interviews with several former inmates, they admitted that they had been treated as "bearers of disgrace" by the religious environment. In fact, with a more inclusive approach to da'wah, religious leaders can be at the forefront of encouraging people to accept back those who have repented and show change.³¹

The strategic role of religious leaders as agents of social transformation is significant in this context. With qualified religious knowledge and a respected position in society, dai and ulama can help build a bridge of understanding between ex-convicts and the wider community. They can explain to the congregation that in Islam, people are not judged based on the past but on their determination and deeds after repentance. If this narrative is put forward in sermons, lectures, and other religious forums, then social resistance to ex-convicts can be significantly reduced.³² In addition, the value of *islah*, which means reconciliation, is very relevant in restorative justice and social reintegration. In Islamic

³⁰ Ibrahim Nainggolan, "Lembaga Pemasarakatan Dalam Menjalankan Rehabilitasi Terhadap Narapidana Narkotika," *EduTech: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Dan Ilmu Sosial* 5, no. 2 (10 Agustus 2019), <https://doi.org/10.30596/edutech.v5i2.3388>.

³¹ Arifin Ilham, Personal Interview, 2024.

³² Muhammad Mustajab dan Putri Handayani, "Peran Tokoh Agama Dalam Pemberantasan Narkoba," *Jurnal Tahqiq : Jurnal Pemikiran Hukum Islam* 16, no. 2 (31 Juli 2022): 74-87.

teachings, resolving social conflicts and restoring individual relationships are essential to substantive justice. The principle of *islah* encourages the community to repair relationships damaged by criminal events, including giving space to repentant perpetrators to return to live a dignified life. Unfortunately, understanding *islah* as a social mechanism is still not widely used in community-based religious programs.

Exclusive religious practices are also an obstacle to social reintegration. For example, ex-convicts are often excluded from spiritual activities such as recitations, mosque cooperation, or even congregational prayers. This creates a social gap that further strengthens the stigma.³³ Their participation in spiritual activities can be a very effective psychological and social recovery medium. By building a religious forum open to all groups, including former prisoners, the Islamic values of inclusivity and *ukhuwah Islamiyah* can be genuinely felt. Field facts also show that in communities that apply a humanist religious approach, the reintegration of ex-convicts goes better. Some Islamic boarding schools-based foster communities or NGOs, for example, provide space for former drug users to participate in training, *da'wah*, or other social activities.³⁴ This proves that when Islamic values are used as a practical guide, stigma can be reduced, and the chances of recovery are greater. Ex-convicts feel valued, not judged, and given the trust to prove their change. Thus, the actualisation of Islamic values in support of social reintegration is theologically significant and strategically social. When Muslims truly practice the values of *rahmah*, repentance, and *islah* daily, reintegration is no longer a burden but part of a collective responsibility to create a more just, inclusive, and compassionate society.³⁵ This step requires cooperation between religious leaders, social institutions, and the general public so that the stigma against ex-narcotics convicts can be eliminated gradually and sustainably.

³³ Hapni Laila Siregar dkk., "Analisis Peran Agama Islam Dalam Menanggulangi Penyalahgunaan Narkoba Di Kalangan Remaja," *Madani: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* 2, no. 5 (5 Juni 2024), <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11489278>.

³⁴ Ilham, Personal Interview.

³⁵ Hasan Sazali, Mailin Mailin, dan Aidil Rizki Rangkuti, "Program Komunikasi BNN Kabupaten Batu Bara Dalam Pencegahan Dan Peredaran Narkoba Berbasis Nilai Kearifan Lokal," *Jurnal Diversita* 9, no. 1 (9 Juni 2023): 18-27, <https://doi.org/10.31289/diversita.v9i1.6754>.

Integration of Sociological Approaches and Islamic Values in Formulating Contextual Restorative Justice Models

The integration of sociological approaches and Islamic values in formulating a contextual restorative justice model is a response to the social reality of ex-narcotics convicts who are still experiencing systemic discrimination. The study found that the stigma they face does not stem solely from individuals but from entrenched social structures—whether in the form of negative labels, community exclusion, or economic barriers.³⁶ Therefore, the restorative justice approach cannot be normative-formal only but must be contextual and touch the root of the socio-cultural problems that surround ex-convicts. The proposed contextual restorative justice model consists of three main elements: first, strengthening the inclusive perspective of society through education based on the values of rahmah (compassion) and islah (reconciliation). This education must be directed to the general public, religious leaders, educators, law enforcement officials, and the mass media. This is because a change in society's paradigm about ex-convicts can only occur if there is a transformation of collective consciousness. Educational materials emphasise the importance of opening the space for forgiveness and restoring social relationships in line with Islamic teachings and the principles of social justice.³⁷

Second, the active involvement of religious leaders and civil society in social recovery forums. Research shows that religious figures have a significant influence on shaping public opinion. In some assisted communities, the involvement of religious leaders in accompanying ex-convicts contributes significantly to reducing social resistance. By voicing the values of repentance and justice in lectures, Friday sermons, and recitations, these figures can become a bridge between former criminals and the society that once rejected them. Third, the importance of affirmative local policy support for ex-narcotics

³⁶ Riyansyah Riyansyah dan Sintong Arion Hutapea, “Efektivitas Restorative Justice Dalam Penyelesaian Kasus Penyalahgunaan Narkotika Di Indonesia,” *Mahkamah : Jurnal Riset Ilmu Hukum* 2, no. 2 (9 April 2025): 70–77, <https://doi.org/10.62383/mahkamah.v2i2.566>.

³⁷ Kadir, Shuhufi, dan M, “Efek Jera Pemidanaan Dalam Hukum Islam Dan Penerapannya Di Indonesia.”

inmates. Facts on the ground show they are often left behind in development, especially in access to work, social assistance, and economic training. Local governments, religious institutions, and NGOs can design community-based reintegration programs that provide a safe space for ex-convicts to participate actively.³⁸ For example, mosque-based entrepreneurship programs or Islamic boarding schools, skills training involving prison alums, and open discussion forums that unite ex-convicts with residents.

This model is based on a sociological approach that maps how stigma structures work through social actors such as families, educational institutions, and religious institutions. In this approach, ex-convicts are not positioned as morally "problematic" individuals but as part of a community that needs space to recover and contribute. The reintegration process is a two-way interaction: ex-convicts are committed to change, and society allows that change to occur reasonably and with dignity. Scientifically, this idea aligns with the approach to social fiqh developed by progressive Islamic figures in Indonesia, such as KH. Sahal Mahfudz and KH. Ali Yafie. Social fiqh emphasises the importance of contextualising Sharia values to answer the challenges of the times.³⁹ In this context, justice is understood as a legal process and an effort to reconstruct harmonious social relations. This contextual restorative justice model is a praxis form of living and dynamic Sharia values.⁴⁰

More than that, integrating Islamic values in restorative justice opens up the space for spirituality in social recovery. The reconciliation process is based on social logic and the strengthening of moral and spiritual dimensions for both the perpetrator and the victim. The spirit of repentance and Allah's grace are the main foundations of the idea that no human being is closed to the path of goodness. This distinguishes the Islamic-based

³⁸ Jaya Kusuma, personal Interview, 2024.

³⁹ Jumain Azizi dan Opan Satria Mandala, "Analisis Pemikiran Ali Yafie Dan Sahal Mahfudz Dalam Fiqih Sosial Terhadap Perkembangan Hukum Islam," *JURNAL MAHASANTRI* 2, no. 2 (28 Maret 2022): 398-423, <https://doi.org/10.57215/pendidikanislam.v2i2.147>.

⁴⁰ Arbanur Rasyid, "Social Fiqh and Its Implications for Community Life in Society 5.0," *AlAhkam* 31, no. 2 (31 Oktober 2021): 141-60, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ahkam.2021.31.2.8219>.

restorative model from the secular approach that only emphasises reparations or the restoration of social relations without a transcendent dimension.⁴¹ Thus, the contextual restorative justice model based on Islamic values not only offers a practical solution to the social stigma of ex-narcotics convicts but also makes a theoretical contribution to the development of justice discourse in Indonesia. When sociological approaches and religious values meet within a single framework, the process of social reintegration becomes more inclusive, dignified, and in line with the principles of substantive justice in Islam.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that former drug offenders continue to face systemic social stigmatisation, manifested through negative labelling, exclusion from communal and religious life, and limited opportunities for reintegration. Such stigma extends punishment beyond the prison term and undermines the principles of restorative justice, which ideally seek to repair harm and rebuild social relationships. However, implementing restorative justice remains limited due to the absence of clear regulatory frameworks and a prevailing punitive mindset. Islamic values such as *rahmah* (compassion), *taubah* (repentance), and *islah* (reconciliation) offer a normative foundation for reintegration, yet they are not fully reflected in social or religious practices. The study finds that a normative, decontextualised religious understanding often perpetuates exclusion rather than promoting social healing. In response, this research proposes a contextual model of restorative justice rooted in Islamic values, consisting of three core components: public education grounded in *rahmah*, active participation of religious and community leaders in reintegration processes, and local policy support for social and economic inclusion of former offenders. This model fosters a more just, compassionate, and transformative society. Future research should conduct

⁴¹ Fathorrahman Fathorrahman, "Pandangan Fikih Sosial K.H. Ali Yafie dan Kontribusinya terhadap Kajian Pembangunan di Indonesia," *Asy-Syir'ah: Jurnal Ilmu Syari'ah dan Hukum* 50, no. 2 (1 Desember 2016): 355-378, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajish.v50i2.235>.

comparative and ethnographic studies across regions to understand how local cultures and religious communities shape reintegration efforts.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Fatah Chotib Uddin was primarily responsible for designing the theoretical framework and research methodology, conducting the sociological analysis of the data, and drafting the main sections of the discussion, particularly regarding restorative justice and Islamic values. Sri Sulistyawati contributed to data collection and verification, contextualised the socio-legal aspects of stigma against former drug offenders, and integrated sociological perspectives with contemporary legal policy considerations. Kartina Pakpahan and Roswita Sitompul conducted the literature review, contributed to integrating Islamic ethical principles in the data analysis, and edited and revised the manuscript to meet academic and publication standards. All authors participated in conceptual discussions, contributed to the critical revision of the manuscript, and approved the final version for publication.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors state that no conflicts of interest are associated with this study. All findings and analyses presented in this article are the result of objective research and are not influenced by personal, financial, or professional interests that could affect the integrity and objectivity of the study.

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