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Prison Life Adaptation and Social Reintegration at Wonogiri Class IIB Correctional Institution

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Abstract

This study examines patterns of incarcerated individuals' everyday adaptation at Wonogiri Class IIB Correctional Institution, the internal and external conditions shaping those patterns, and their implications for preparedness for social reintegration. The qualitative descriptive research account refers to observations, interviews with incarcerated individuals and correctional personnel, and documentary materials. Three interconnected phases are identified: initial orientation through the Mapenaling programme, adjustment to institutional routines, and integration into inmate social networks. Adaptation is interpreted through sentence duration, psychological motivation, living conditions, officer–inmate relationships, family contact, and locally situated values of social harmony. Three interpretive patterns—active–productive, passive–conformist, and deviant–subcultural—indicate potentially different reintegration needs. Vocational and personal-development activities may support preparedness, but no post-release follow-up data establish actual outcomes or causality. The findings underscore the importance of rights-respecting correctional management, meaningful rehabilitation opportunities, and continuity of community support.

Keywords

correctional institutions; Indonesia; inmate adaptation; prison life; rehabilitation; social reintegration.

1. Introduction

Correctional institutions occupy a crucial position in Indonesia's criminal justice system. Their responsibilities extend beyond the execution of custodial sentences to the preparation of incarcerated individuals for an eventual return to social life. This orientation reflects the development of Indonesian correctional philosophy away from a predominantly retributive conception of punishment and toward personal development, rehabilitation, and reintegration (Eryansyah & IP, 2021). Everyday life during incarceration is therefore not merely a setting in which sentences are served: it is a social environment in which habits, identities, and expectations regarding life after release are continuously shaped.

The practical significance of this perspective lies in the interaction between institutional routine and individual agency. Educational activities, vocational training, religious guidance, social relationships, and staff supervision may each contribute to the formation of daily behavioural patterns. At the same time, confinement imposes restrictions on liberty, personal choice, mobility, and contact with the outside world. These restrictions can produce anxiety, social tension, and obstacles to participation in rehabilitation. A programme's formal availability should consequently be distinguished from the experiences and opportunities of the people expected to participate in it (Asmawati, 2022).

Law No. 22 of 2022 concerning Corrections provides an important normative context for Indonesia's correctional system. The legislation places personal and independent development, respect for rights, and preparation for social return within the objectives of correctional administration (Afrizal et al., 2024). Achieving those objectives requires more than compliance with institutional rules: it requires attention to whether daily conditions support self-development, preserve social ties, and reduce the difficulties associated with returning to family and community life.

The broader correctional environment in Indonesia is marked by persistent capacity constraints. Reported national figures for 2024 indicate of 265,346 residents against an aggregate capacity of 140,424 across 531 correctional facilities and detention centres, equivalent to approximately 89% above stated capacity (Dirgantara & Prabowo, 2024). Overcrowding can constrain physical space, supervision, access to activities, and the availability of psychological and social support. It may also intensify competition over resources and shape inmate social relationships. These national-level figures provide a contextual challenge; they should not be taken as evidence of the precise occupancy level at the Wonogiri institution.

The social reintegration of formerly incarcerated people presents a second challenge. Completion of a sentence does not itself guarantee employment, community acceptance, healthy family relationships, or freedom from stigma. Social exclusion, limited economic opportunities, and difficulties in readjusting to everyday decision-making may persist after release. Accordingly, an account of prison life should examine not only immediate adaptation within the institution but also the capacities that everyday activities may help develop for subsequent social participation. Prior studies address overcrowding, rehabilitation, and reintegration in various Indonesian facilities (Munir et al., 2024; Salam & Purwanto, 2022; Zulkarnain & Putri, 2023). a site-specific analysis can connect these concerns to the lived institutional rhythms and social practices of one facility.

Wonogiri Class IIB Correctional Institution provides the setting for this study. Rather than treating prison adaptation as a uniform or linear process, the article examines how institutional orientation, repeated routines, and informal inmate interaction combine to shape patterns of daily life. Two sociological explanations help organise the interpretation. The deprivation model focuses on the consequences of institutional restrictions, while the importation model draws attention to experiences and cultural dispositions brought into confinement. Together they offer a way to analyse both formal institutional pressures and social norms carried from the surrounding community.

The study addresses three research questions: how do patterns of incarcerated individuals' lives develop at Wonogiri Class IIB Correctional Institution; what internal and external factors are associated with those patterns; and what implications might these patterns have for readiness for social reintegration? Its contribution lies in an integrated, institution-specific interpretation of adaptation, institutional management, local social values, and reintegration preparedness. Because the study is qualitative and does not report longitudinal post-release tracking, its inferences about future reintegration are treated as reasoned interpretations rather than measured predictions or demonstrated causal effects.

2. Research Methods

Research design, setting and available sources

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive and analytical approach to examine the social dynamics of incarceration at Wonogiri Class IIB Correctional Institution. The institutional setting provides a bounded context for observing daily routines, rehabilitation activities, and interactions between incarcerated individuals and correctional officers. The research does not employ survey-based statistical inference; its purpose is to interpret patterns and contextual factors through qualitative evidence.

The reported primary sources comprise incarcerated individuals and correctional officers. Data collection is described as involving participant observation, interviews, and documentation, while secondary materials include scholarly publications, relevant legislation, and institutional records. The account identifies data collection, reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing as its analytical sequence, drawing on Sugiyono (2013). The available material is interpreted in relation to formal correctional procedures and descriptions of everyday institutional practices. The underlying participant, interview, and coding records have not been supplied for independent verification.

Table 1. Reporting inventory for the available qualitative research account

Reporting element	Information reported	Outstanding documentation
Research setting	Wonogiri Class IIB Correctional Institution	Dates and duration of fieldwork not reported
Primary participants	Incarcerated individuals and correctional officers	Number, characteristics, sampling and recruitment not reported
Data collection	Interviews, participant observation and documentation	Interview schedule, interview guide, observation log and source identifiers not supplied
Analysis	Collection, reduction, presentation and conclusion drawing	Coding examples, category-development record, discrepant cases and audit trail not supplied
Research ethics	Study setting includes incarcerated participants	Facility authorization, ethics approval/exemption, informed consent and protective safeguards not documented
Reintegration outcomes	Qualitative interpretation of adaptation and anticipated preparedness	No post-release follow-up, recidivism measurement or causal identification reported

Note. This inventory distinguishes information reported in the study from documentation not available in the submitted materials. Items marked as unavailable require author confirmation; their absence from this manuscript does not establish that the procedures were not undertaken.

Analytical procedure and interpretive boundaries

Three analytic dimensions organise the reading of the materials: (1) stages of adaptation and everyday institutional routines, (2) internal and external influences on inmates' daily life, and (3) possible implications for social reintegration. Concepts associated with deprivation and importation are used as interpretive perspectives, not as experimentally tested explanations. Descriptions of the Mapenaling orientation period, daily scheduling, personal development, vocational activities, staff interactions, and outside contact form the substantive basis for the themes reported below.

These three dimensions provide an organising framework for interpreting the reported material. Their alignment with the results should not be mistaken for a documented, independently reproducible coding procedure. The materials available for this article do not contain coded transcript segments, records explaining how categories were developed, examples of discrepant participant accounts, or an audit trail. Accordingly, 'phase' and 'pattern' are treated as interpretive classifications rather than empirically validated participant categories. Examination of original interviews and field notes would be needed to assess their consistency across participants.

Ethics, access and participant protection

The available research documentation does not specify the exact fieldwork dates, number or selection criteria of interviewees, interview duration, or examples of the original coding process. The status of institutional access authorization, research ethics approval or exemption, and individual informed consent is likewise not documented in the materials made available for this article. These omissions limit the transparency and verifiability of the reported procedure; they do not, by themselves, establish that the relevant safeguards were absent. Because incarcerated individuals have restricted autonomy, ethical assessment must attend particularly to voluntariness, confidentiality, and the risk of institutional coercion.

Facility permission and individual informed consent are distinct requirements: authorization to conduct fieldwork does not establish that a participant was free to refuse or withdraw without consequences. The available materials do not document whether officers were present during interviews, whether responses were accessible to institutional personnel, how identities were protected, or how interview and observation records were stored. These matters require confirmation against the original study records before publication. No participant quotations are reproduced here because original transcripts and permissions necessary for safe anonymization were not provided.

Scope of claims and study limitations

The analysis is limited to the institution and materials described in the manuscript. Statements concerning adaptation and readiness for reintegration represent qualitative interpretation of conditions during incarceration. No quantitative measurement of recidivism, comparative control group, or follow-up interviews with released participants are reported. Consequently, the findings cannot determine whether participation in a particular programme causes better post-release outcomes. The following findings should be read as an account of the reported institutional setting rather than a representative survey of Indonesian correctional institutions. Statements about staff interactions, programme participation, and local cultural norms describe themes in the supplied narrative; they cannot establish their frequency, distribution across participants, or effect on subsequent behaviour. This reporting distinction is central to the interpretation of Tables 2–4.

3. Results and Discussion

Three phases of adjustment in everyday prison life

The present account interprets inmate adaptation at Wonogiri Class IIB Correctional Institution as a process with three analytically distinguishable phases: orientation, incorporation into institutional routines, and integration into internal social networks. These phases are useful for organising the findings but should not be interpreted as fixed stages experienced by every individual in exactly the same order or duration. Personal circumstances and institutional conditions may produce overlapping or uneven trajectories.

During the orientation phase, newly admitted incarcerated individuals confront an unfamiliar physical and social environment alongside the immediate loss of freedom to organise their own daily

activities. The reported experience includes possible situational anxiety and culture shock during this transition. The institution's Masa Pengenalan Lingkungan (Mapenaling), or environmental orientation programme, is reported to run for approximately two weeks and introduces rules, rights, obligations, and everyday institutional expectations. Its practical relevance is twofold: it can clarify formal requirements while also providing a structured point of entry into relationships with staff and other residents.

The second phase involves growing familiarity with the institution's formal rhythm. The account describes morning religious activities and inmate counts, followed by participation in personal-development or vocational programmes, recreation, and an afternoon cell-locking routine. Repetition makes institutional expectations more predictable and may encourage punctuality and rule-compliant behaviour. Nevertheless, the formation of disciplined routines should not automatically be equated with preparation for independent decision-making beyond the institution. Reliance on a highly managed schedule can coexist with uncertainty about how to organise life after release.

The third phase concerns the formation of interpersonal relationships and informal norms. As inmates become familiar with the environment, shared routines and relationships may develop into an institution-specific subculture. Such networks can provide emotional support and practical knowledge, but prison subcultures can also reproduce hierarchies or informal pressures. The field account characterises officer supervision and a familial approach as contributing to a comparatively orderly social atmosphere in Wonogiri. This represents an institutional interpretation based on the reported field material rather than a comparative measurement of conflict rates across prisons.

These phases illuminate the tension between formal correctional organisation and informal socialisation. The concept of prisonization refers to the adoption of expectations and habits characteristic of prison life. Within this interpretation, religious spaces, vocational activities, and staff–inmate communication appear to provide socially acceptable points around which residents can organise their activities. An important question remains whether these practices foster agency and capacities transferable to community life or primarily facilitate adjustment to confinement itself.

Internal and external influences on inmate life patterns

The first category of influencing conditions is internal to the individual. The analysis identifies sentence duration, demographic and criminal background, psychological circumstances, and motivation for personal change. It suggests that people serving longer sentences may invest more in stable institutional routines, while those facing relatively short sentences may focus on immediate coping or anticipation of release. These observations should be understood as qualitative tendencies in the account rather than universal distinctions between sentenced populations. Personal motivation also appears relevant: participants who perceive rehabilitation as meaningful may be more inclined to pursue training and developmental activities.

The second category concerns external and institutional conditions. Physical facilities, available space, sanitation, access to rehabilitation, and patterns of supervision shape the opportunities within which inmates make choices. The reported account characterises environmental management at Wonogiri as relatively supportive despite the broader nationwide challenge of overcrowding. However, it does not report an independent facility-capacity audit, occupancy rate for the period studied, or systematic measurements of psychological stress. Such claims are therefore best treated as reported field impressions requiring fuller contextual evidence.

Interactions between correctional staff and inmates are another major dimension. The research account presents an interpersonal style described as humane and persuasive rather than

predominantly coercive. Such relationships may reduce uncertainty, offer clearer channels for resolving problems, and increase inmates' willingness to engage in organised activities. Transparent delivery of legally provided rights and benefits, including remission and integration programmes, is similarly discussed as a potential source of perceived fairness. Yet the level of compliance with rights-based standards should be assessed through corroborating records and inmate perspectives rather than inferred solely from formal policy.

Contact with family and other social networks outside the facility is also identified as an important influence. Physical visits and remote communication may help preserve relationships that can matter when a person returns to the community. This connection is significant because readjustment after confinement depends partly on resources and social acceptance that lie outside the correctional institution's direct control. The analysis thus places institutional rehabilitation within a broader network of relationships rather than treating it as a self-contained intervention.

The deprivation and importation models offer complementary explanations. From a deprivation perspective, loss of liberty, autonomy, security, access to goods, and intimate contact can influence how prison social life develops. The analysis suggests that rights provision, recreation, healthcare, and other institutional services may moderate these pressures. From an importation perspective, inmates bring prior experiences, values, and social expectations into confinement. In Wonogiri, the field account highlights Javanese social values such as ewuh pakewuh (reluctance to impose or cause offence) and rukun (social harmony) as potentially shaping everyday interactions and conflict avoidance.

In classical prison sociology, Sykes (1958) relates institutional adaptation to the deprivations of incarceration, while Irwin and Cressey (1962) emphasise social dispositions and inmate-cultural resources brought into custody. These perspectives are complementary interpretive anchors for this case: the available account describes both restrictions in daily autonomy and possible continuities of pre-incarceration norms. Neither explanation has been separately tested or weighted through a comparative empirical design in the present study.

These cultural interpretations require care. The presence of norms associated with harmony does not demonstrate that all inmates share the same cultural background or experience relationships without conflict. Nor does it establish that those values independently cause reduced aggression. More detailed evidence, including the composition of the inmate population and contrasting accounts, would strengthen the interpretation. Nevertheless, analysing imported values alongside institutional deprivation provides a richer explanation of prison social dynamics than either framework would provide in isolation.

Table 2. Theoretical interpretation of reported adaptation conditions

Reported theme	Relevant lens	Interpretation of reported material	Evidence not available for verification
Loss of autonomy; formal scheduling	Deprivation	Routine may reduce uncertainty while also sustaining reliance on external structure	Interview evidence distinguishing felt constraint from perceived stability
Prior experiences; Javanese expressions of harmony	Importation	Pre-existing social expectations may shape conflict avoidance and interpersonal negotiation	Cultural self-identification and contrasting inmate accounts
Staff relationships; programmes; facility resources	Institutional mediation	Supportive interactions may moderate experienced restrictions and programme access	Independent observations, participation records and discrepant evidence
Family contact and return-to-community expectations	External social connection	Continued relationships may inform anticipated reintegration support	Family/contact records and longitudinal post-release outcomes

Note. These are theory-informed readings of the source narrative, not newly observed episodes or demonstrated causal associations.

Adaptation patterns and anticipated social reintegration

The study's third theme addresses the relationship between everyday adaptation and preparedness for return to society. Three typological patterns are proposed: active–productive adaptation, passive–conformist adaptation, and deviant–subcultural adaptation. The typology is an interpretive tool developed in the manuscript; it is not based on a validated risk-assessment scale or measured post-release outcomes. Table 3 therefore describes possible psychosocial implications and anticipated challenges rather than assigning empirically verified success probabilities.

The categories can be differentiated analytically by the main response emphasized in the description: constructive involvement in developmental activities (active–productive), rule compliance with limited developmental engagement (passive–conformist), or association with disruptive relationships or rule violations (deviant–subcultural). These are provisional interpretive descriptors, not criteria tested on an independently coded sample. The available evidence does not establish whether particular individuals move between types; overlap and change over time therefore remain plausible questions rather than verified findings.

Table 3. Interpretive patterns of prison adaptation and potential reintegration implications

Adaptation pattern	Psychosocial interpretation	Potential reintegration implication	Limits of interpretation
Active–productive: sustained participation in vocational and personal-development activities	May support self-efficacy, useful skills, a more constructive self-concept, and reduced uncertainty about the future	Potentially supportive of reintegration readiness; actual employment and community outcomes remain unmeasured	Participation in programmes does not establish an independent or durable post-release effect.
Passive–conformist: compliance with rules without substantial engagement in developmental programmes	May maintain institutional order but leave personal agency and independent decision-making underdeveloped	Possible challenges when moving from a highly structured environment to community life	Orderly conduct may coexist with other patterns or change as circumstances develop.
Deviant–subcultural: involvement in negative informal networks or breaches of institutional rules	May reinforce conflictual identities or behaviours and constrain constructive social relationships	Possible additional barriers to reintegration; recidivism risk cannot be quantified from the available study	A description of disruptive interactions is not a validated predictor of recidivism.

Note. The three adaptation patterns represent provisional, interpretive descriptions rather than validated diagnostic categories. Neither classification stability nor post-release predictive accuracy was assessed.

Active–productive adaptation receives particular emphasis in the research account. Activities described include religious or personal guidance and opportunities connected with agriculture, mechanical work, and handicrafts. These activities may allow inmates to develop an identity broader than the offence for which they were convicted, along with capabilities relevant to life after release. Their potential contribution lies not only in occupational competence but also in routine, cooperation, and opportunities to experience constructive social recognition. Where certification is available, the usefulness of credentials will depend on their accessibility, credibility, and relevance to employment opportunities outside prison.

Passive–conformist adaptation illustrates the limitations of interpreting institutional compliance as rehabilitation. A person may obey rules and follow the daily schedule while remaining disengaged from activities that develop decision-making, social confidence, or future plans. In this sense, a stable prison environment may produce orderly behaviour without necessarily revealing how individuals

will respond when external structure is reduced. Reintegration preparation should therefore evaluate substantive participation and transferable capabilities, rather than institutional obedience alone.

The deviant–subcultural category highlights the risk that negative social relationships or repeated internal violations may hinder constructive adjustment. It is important, however, not to equate membership of an informal inmate network with criminality, or to assume that such patterns inevitably lead to further offending. The data presented do not include validated measures of new offences after release. The typology is most appropriately used to identify different support needs, including conflict resolution, psychosocial assistance, constructive peer relationships, and access to rehabilitation.

This interpretation is consistent with the broader emphasis on preparation through assimilation, conditional release, and other reintegration arrangements discussed by Zulkarnain and Putri (2023), as well as the role of rehabilitative programmes described by Hikmah and Ardhita (2025). Nevertheless, the relationship between training and eventual reintegration is mediated by conditions outside prison: employer attitudes, family resources, housing, discrimination, local economic opportunity, and the continuity of support services. The presence of potentially useful training therefore cannot, on its own, substantiate claims that stigma has been eliminated or that reoffending has been prevented.

Table 4. Distinguishing correctional participation, inferred preparedness and post-release outcomes

Analytical level	Evidence reported in this study	Permissible claim
Institutional experience	Descriptions of orientation, routines, interactions and vocational opportunities	Qualitative characterization of reported prison-life patterns
Potential readiness	Theory-informed implications of participation, agency, social ties and adjustment	Conditional, interpretive appraisal; not measured post-release success
Observed social reintegration	No post-release interviews, employment follow-up or repeat-offending dataset supplied	No inference about reintegration rates, causation, or reductions in recidivism

Taken together, the findings support an understanding of prison life as a process shaped by the interaction of personal motivation, institutional organisation, social relationships, and cultural expectations. Meaningful correctional practice should connect rights-based daily management with opportunities for personal development and deliberate preparation for outside life. The qualitative material is useful for identifying mechanisms and questions for practice, while longitudinal studies with formerly incarcerated participants are required to evaluate the actual long-term effects of different adaptation patterns.

4. Conclusion

This study describes three overlapping dimensions of adaptation at Wonogiri Class IIB Correctional Institution: orientation through Mapenaling, participation in formal routines, and the development of internal social networks. Their interaction illustrates how adjustment is shaped not merely by disciplinary rules but also by daily relationships, psychological needs, rehabilitation activities, and opportunities for meaningful participation. The analysis identifies internal influences, especially motivation, psychological circumstances, and sentence duration, alongside external influences such as living conditions, officers' communication practices, the delivery of rights, and family contact. Deprivation and importation perspectives help situate these experiences within both

institutional constraints and pre-existing social values. Javanese norms associated with interpersonal restraint and harmony offer a plausible interpretive consideration, although their actual effects require more direct evidence.

The three proposed adaptation patterns suggest different types of support that may be relevant to social reintegration. Active engagement in vocational and personal-development activities is plausibly beneficial for readiness, whereas rule compliance alone may leave important capabilities underdeveloped. Because the reported research contains no post-release tracking, these implications should not be framed as demonstrated causal relationships, verified success rates, or evidence of reduced recidivism. Future studies should report fuller methodological and ethical details, incorporate varied inmate perspectives, and follow participants after release to assess how institutional experiences relate to employment, belonging, wellbeing, and subsequent contact with the justice system. Accordingly, the typology is best understood as a guide for identifying questions about support needs—not as a diagnostic instrument or evidence of programme impact. A future study could relate documented participation and institutional experiences to independently measured indicators such as continuity of family contact, access to housing and employment, psychosocial wellbeing, and subsequent justice-system contact, while applying appropriate ethics safeguards.

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Publication Declarations

Author Contributions : Galang Cakra Buana: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, and Writing – Original Draft. Denny Nazaria Rifani: Investigation, Data Curation, Validation, and Writing – Review & Editing. Novia Christine Feoh: Methodology, Validation, and Writing – Review & Editing. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Ethics and Consent : This study was conducted after obtaining authorization from Wonogiri Class IIB Correctional Institution. The authors confirm that informed consent was obtained from the participants prior to data collection and that the study complied with applicable ethical principles and institutional requirements. Appropriate measures were taken to protect participants' privacy, confidentiality, and voluntary participation.

Data Availability : The data supporting the findings of this study consist of qualitative observations, interview materials, and documentary sources concerning adaptation and social reintegration at Wonogiri Class IIB Correctional Institution. Due to confidentiality obligations and the need to protect participants' identities, particularly incarcerated individuals, access to the underlying research materials may be restricted. De-identified data may be made available by the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to applicable ethical requirements, institutional authorization, and participant confidentiality safeguards.

AI Use Declaration : AI-assisted tools were used solely to facilitate the descriptive presentation and improve the clarity of the manuscript. The AI-assisted descriptions were subsequently paraphrased, reviewed, and refined by the authors in their own words. The authors critically reviewed the manuscript and take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of its content.

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