



Collaborative governance in pesantren-based character education for juvenile religious moderation

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ABSTRACT

In the correctional system, children require not only legal solutions but also rehabilitation through guidance, education, and character building based on the values of religious moderation. However, the implementation of rehabilitation programs at the Lembaga Pembinaan Khusus Anak (LPKA) still faces structural obstacles, such as limited human resources, facilities, and infrastructure, and institutional capacity. This emphasizes the importance of a collaborative governance approach involving non-governmental actors to achieve more comprehensive and inclusive rehabilitation. This study aims to analyze the implementation of collaborative governance in an Islamic boarding school-based character-building program oriented towards strengthening religious moderation at the Class I LPKA Tangerang. The method used was a qualitative approach through interviews, observation, and document analysis. The results show that the collaboration between LPKA and the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School can integrate resources, clarify institutional roles, and strengthen moderate, tolerant, and inclusive character education. This program increases children's participation in religious activities and their ability to read the Quran, and fosters attitudes of discipline, cooperation, and tolerance. These findings indicate that cross-sector collaboration is effective in strengthening social rehabilitation and internalizing the values of religious moderation.

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ABSTRAK

Pada sistem pemasyarakatan, anak tidak hanya memerlukan penyelesaian hukum, tetapi juga rehabilitasi melalui pembinaan, pendidikan, dan penguatan karakter berbasis nilai-nilai moderasi beragama. Namun, pelaksanaan program rehabilitasi di Lembaga Pembinaan Khusus Anak (LPKA) masih menghadapi kendala struktural, seperti keterbatasan sumber daya manusia, sarana dan prasarana, serta kapasitas kelembagaan. Hal ini menegaskan pentingnya pendekatan collaborative governance yang melibatkan aktor non-pemerintah untuk mewujudkan rehabilitasi yang lebih komprehensif dan inklusif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis implementasi collaborative governance dalam program pembinaan karakter berbasis pesantren yang berorientasi pada penguatan moderasi beragama di LPKA Kelas I Tangerang. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kolaborasi antara LPKA dan Pondok Pesantren Maskanul Huffadz mampu mengintegrasikan sumber daya, membagi peran kelembagaan, serta memperkuat pendidikan karakter yang moderat, toleran, dan inklusif. Program ini meningkatkan partisipasi anak binaan dalam kegiatan keagamaan, kemampuan membaca Al-Qur'an, serta membentuk sikap disiplin, kerja sama, dan toleransi. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa kolaborasi lintas sektor efektif dalam memperkuat rehabilitasi sosial serta internalisasi nilai-nilai moderasi beragama.

Kata Kunci: LPKA; moderasi beragama; pembinaan karakter; pesantren; tata kelola kolaboratif

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INTRODUCTION

One of the main factors contributing to violence and juvenile delinquency is the failure of character education systems within the family, school, and community, where weak early development is often exacerbated by social media influences and environments that tolerate violent acts (Aryani, 2023; Sinaga et al., 2025). Furthermore, according to the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), this delinquency has transformed into the digital realm, emerging as “*Juvenile Delinquency 2.0*” (see here: <https://ipol.id/2025/11/brin-teliti-fenomena-kenakalan-remaja-2-0-yang-bermigrasi-ke-dunia-digital/>). This evolving phenomenon is reflected in empirical data from the Directorate General of Corrections, which shows that between 2020 and 2024, the number of children in conflict with the law (ABH) fluctuated, peaking at 1,639 children in 2023 (see here: <https://data.goodstats.id/statistic/menelusuri-tren-jumlah-tahanan-anak-di-indonesia-tahun-2020-2024-ldbDb>). In the national context, this issue remains a fundamental and strategic problem requiring serious, collaborative attention (Nurusshobah, 2022).

Consequently, children serving sentences require a comprehensive rehabilitation process that upholds their right to education as a foundation for their future (Patty & Firmansyah, 2025). In the exercise of state functions, child law enforcement cannot be focused solely on the imposition of criminal sanctions. However, it must be carried out in tandem with the protection of children’s rights to receive guidance, education, and ongoing character development. Children in conflict with the law retain the right to humane treatment, access to education, and skills training as part of the rehabilitation process according to Undang-undang Nomor 11 Tahun 2012 tentang Sistem Peradilan Pidana Anak. Children who have been convicted are placed in a Special Juvenile Correctional Institution (LPKA) and are entitled to receive guidance, counseling, supervision, support, education, and training in accordance with Undang-Undang Nomor 22 Tahun 2022 tentang Pemasyarakatan (Sagita & Rafid, 2024).

The perspective on correctional services has shifted from a punitive approach to one focused on rehabilitation and restoration, placing the child at the center of the rehabilitation process (Sagita & Rafid, 2024). However, the rehabilitation of children at the LPKA still faces structural and systemic challenges. Najah at the Class II LPKA in Yogyakarta identified institutional challenges, including low motivation to learn, psychological issues, an unsystematic curriculum, and limitations in human resources, facilities, and funding (Najah et al., 2025). Similarly, Marya and Abdillah at the Class II LPKA in Pangkalpinang noted that resource and facility constraints negatively impact the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs and children’s psychosocial development (Marya & Abdillah, 2025). On a national scale, Susanto revealed structural weaknesses in educational services at LPKAs, with 15% of service quality falling into the “*poor*” category, 24% facing teaching staff shortages, and 18% lacking adequate facilities and infrastructure (Susanto, 2022).

Collectively, these findings indicate that rehabilitation challenges at LPKAs reflect not isolated institutional failures but a systemic governance gap requiring structural intervention (Najah et al., 2025; Susanto, 2022). These structural challenges underscore the need for a cross-sectoral approach, as the internal capacity of any single institution is insufficient to address the multidimensional complexity of juvenile rehabilitation (Ziauddin et al., 2023). Collaborative governance has emerged as a theoretically grounded response to this kind of governance gap, arising from policy implementation failures, resource constraints, and limited organizational capacity. It is increasingly used as a strategy to engage non-governmental actors in the integrated delivery of public services (Saleh et al., 2021). In the context of child development, fostering character values is a crucial aspect of the social rehabilitation process, focusing not only on

cultivating disciplined and responsible behavior but also on the internalization of moral and spiritual values that underpin a child's personality development (Jakandar et al., 2025).

A particularly relevant approach within this rehabilitative framework is the integration of values of religious moderation into character education. Religious moderation refers to perspectives, attitudes, and religious practices that emphasize balance, tolerance, respect for diversity, and the rejection of extremism and violence (Khasanah et al., 2023). Reinforcing values of religious moderation in education is essential for fostering a generation that is moderate, tolerant, and capable of contributing to social harmony (Arifin & Huda, 2024). For children in conflict with the law, this approach is particularly significant: integrating character education with religious moderation serves as both a preventive and rehabilitative strategy to support behavioral change and social reintegration (Syafii et al., 2025). In Indonesia, Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) have historically served as strategic institutions for this purpose, emphasizing moral development, exemplary conduct (*uswah hasanah*), discipline, and a contextual understanding of religion rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah (Anwar et al., 2024).

Their communal, role-model-based educational structure makes them effective environments for instilling moral and spiritual values and thus holds strong potential to support character development and foster religious moderation among juveniles in correctional settings (Zulaika et al., 2025). To map the development of research on collaborative governance, child social rehabilitation, pesantren, and character education, this study employs a bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer software on scientific publications retrieved from the Scopus database for the period 2016-2021, aiming to identify keyword associations and trends in research focus within these fields.

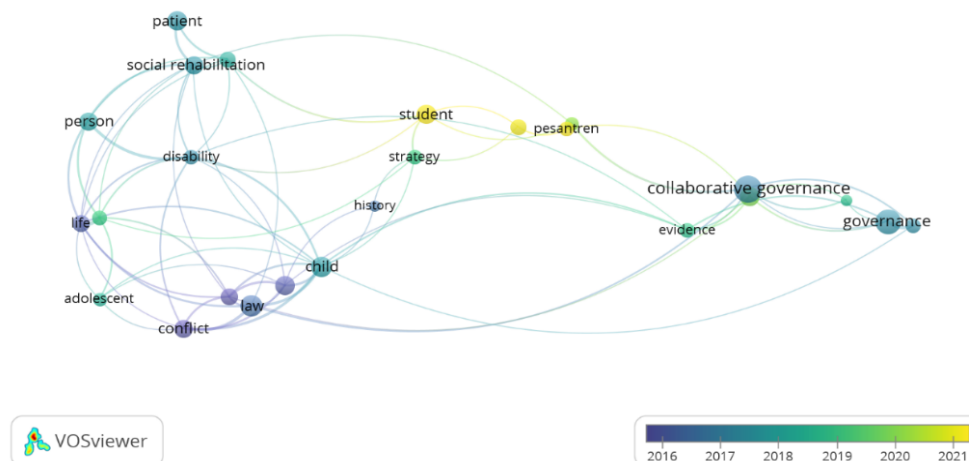


Figure 1. Visualization of the keyword trend overlay for collaborative governance, child rehabilitation, Islamic boarding schools, character education, and religious moderation for the period 2016-2021
Source: Scopus data processed by the author using VOSviewer (2026)

Based on the mapping results in **Figure 1**, the keyword “*collaborative governance*” occupies a central position with strong connections to the terms “*governance*,” “*pesantren*,” “*student*,” and “*child*,” indicating that collaborative governance is a key concept in cross-sectoral studies, particularly in institutional governance, education, and social services, and reflecting a broader shift from conventional governance models toward participatory approaches that involve diverse actors. A notable finding is the appearance of the keywords “*pesantren*” and “*student*” in yellow, indicating that these topics gained prominence more recently during the 2020-2021 period. This connection between “*pesantren*” and “*collaborative governance*” suggests that religious educational institutions are increasingly viewed as strategic actors in collaborative governance, serving not only as traditional educational institutions but also as partners in fostering moral, character, and religious values (Anwar et al., 2024; Mujahid, 2021).

In the context of this study, the bibliometric analysis indicates a significant research gap. Although the theme of collaborative governance has gained traction, its specific application within a pesantren-based character development framework in correctional institutions remains largely unexplored. Furthermore, religious moderation has not yet emerged as a dominant keyword in this body of literature, indicating that its role as a programmatic outcome in juvenile rehabilitation contexts still requires dedicated scholarly attention. Based on these bibliometric findings, this study holds theoretical and empirical relevance as it lies at the intersection of three strategic themes: 1) child rehabilitation; 2) collaborative governance; and 3) pesantren-based character education to strengthen religious moderation, an area that is academically and contextually significant in addressing the need for a more integrated, sustainable, and religiously moderate character development program at the LPKA. Specifically, the Tangerang Class I Special Juvenile Correctional Institution (LPKA) faces ongoing challenges in optimizing the rehabilitation of its residents, particularly in strengthening religious values and character development.

Limited internal resources and budgetary constraints restrict the institution's capacity to engage professional religious educators from outside, a structural barrier consistent with the national patterns documented across multiple LPKA sites (Najah et al., 2025; Susanto, 2022). This situation highlights a governance gap in the provision of comprehensive rehabilitation services for the wards. From a collaborative governance perspective, these institutional capacity limitations are not merely obstacles but entry points for building cross-actor partnerships (Wagner et al., 2021). In response to these conditions, the Tangerang Class I LPKA initiated a collaboration with non-governmental actors possessing substantive expertise in religious education and character development, without charging the institution for services, a scheme that reflects the principles of resource sharing and division of roles in collaborative governance.

In this collaborative initiative, the Tangerang Class I Special Juvenile Correctional Institution (LPKA) is partnering with the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School, which specializes in Quranic education and Islamic character development, making it a compatible partner for this rehabilitation initiative. The partnership demonstrates dialogue-based interaction, shared understanding of objectives, and a joint commitment to supporting the social rehabilitation of the wards. This collaborative model integrates religious approaches, character education, and social rehabilitation within a framework of shared governance between state institutions and community actors, aiming to strengthen moral and spiritual dimensions, encourage behavioral change, and support the sustainability of the social reintegration process for the juveniles in care.

Building on this governance gap and the collaborative initiative described above, this study addresses the following research questions: 1) how does the collaborative governance process work in the partnership between the Tangerang Class I LPKA and the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School; 2) how is the pesantren-based character development program implemented within this collaborative framework; 3) how does collaborative governance impact the guidance of wards, particularly in strengthening the values of religious moderation; and 4) what are the obstacles and challenges in implementing collaborative governance in this program. Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the collaborative model, dynamics, and implementation of collaborative governance in pesantren-based character development to strengthen the values of religious moderation among wards at the Tangerang Class I LPKA.

Literature Review

Collaborative Governance in Public Administration

The concept of collaborative governance has evolved alongside a shift in the governance paradigm, which increasingly emphasizes cross-sectoral participation in implementing public policy. In Indonesia, the adoption of a collaborative approach began to gain attention during the era of reform and decentralization, when the government system shifted toward a more participatory form of governance and opened space for the involvement of non-governmental actors in the policy-making process (Dewi, 2019). This development emerged as a response to the increasing complexity of public issues that could no longer be resolved through traditional bureaucratic approaches characterized by hierarchy and sectoral divisions. Theoretically, collaboration is understood as a mechanism for managing interdependence among actors to achieve shared goals that cannot be attained independently (Curşeu & Schruijer, 2020). Collaboration occurs when actors recognize positive interdependence, a condition in which the success of one party depends on the success of another (Laal, 2013).

In the practice of public governance, collaboration often arises from resource constraints, policy complexity, and limited organizational capacity, taking the form of cross-sectoral partnerships and governance networks that involve diverse actors (Bjärstig et al., 2024). The success of collaborative governance is determined by direct interaction among actors through face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, commitment to the process, and the achievement of a shared understanding (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Emerson and Nabatchi, in the book *“Collaborative Governance Regimes”* reinforce this perspective by emphasizing the importance of three key factors in successful collaboration: trust among actors, transparency in decision-making, and the fair distribution of resources. These three aspects form the collective capacity for joint action in public governance. Thus, collaborative governance can be understood as a governance paradigm that integrates cross-sectoral actors through participatory and deliberative mechanisms to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of public policy.

Pesantren-Based Character Education

Character education is a key concept in the modern education system, aimed at shaping individuals of good moral character, integrity, and the ability to make positive contributions to society. Generally, character education is understood as a planned and systematic process for instilling moral values, ethics, and virtues in students so that they can internalize and practice them in their daily lives (Anggreni, 2020; Gustiawan et al., 2022). This process focuses not only on cognitive aspects but also encompasses affective and behavioral dimensions in shaping a well-rounded personality (Kushariyati et al., 2024). Conceptually, character education aims to develop students' moral identity and ethical capacity as part of a continuous educational process. This perspective aligns with Pattaro, who describes character education as a conscious, school-based process aimed at fostering personal development in youth through the internalization and practice of virtue, moral values, and moral agency (Pattaro, 2016).

In the Indonesian context, the strengthening of character education is grounded in the national education system, which emphasizes the development of faith, piety, and noble character (Maisaroh & Untari, 2024; Sakban & Sundawa, 2023). This policy is further reinforced by various educational regulations, such as Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional and Peraturan Presiden Nomor 87 Tahun 2017 tentang Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter (Dharmawan et al., 2022; Tabrani et al., 2024). In practice, one model considered effective in character education is the pesantren-based approach. This model integrates moral, spiritual, and social values through a holistic approach that combines religious instruction with daily life practices within a structured environment (Hamid, 2024).

Pesantren hold a strategic position in character formation because their educational system is not only oriented toward the transfer of knowledge but also toward the internalization of values through exemplary behavior (*uswah hasanah*) and the cultivation of religious culture (Islamic et al., 2024; Mujahid, 2021). The strength of pesantren education lies in the integration of theological understanding, practical living, and intensive social interaction, through which values derived from the Qur'an and Hadith are internalized via sustained daily practices, thereby shaping a strong and consistent character (Hidayat, 2016; Ikhrum et al., 2023). Thus, the pesantren functions not only as an educational institution but also as a space for personal transformation, capable of balancing intellectual, spiritual, and social intelligence in students' character development (Sadiyah, 2022).

Religious Moderation

Religious moderation is an important concept that helps maintain peace and harmony in a society with diverse beliefs, such as Indonesia. Conceptually, religious moderation refers to a perspective, approach, and practice of religion that maintains a middle ground (*wasathiyah*), thereby avoiding extremist attitudes, whether overly liberal or overly radical. This approach emphasizes a balance between commitment to religious study and respect for the social and cultural diversity present in society (Nurlaili et al., 2024). From a public policy perspective in Indonesia, religious moderation is a strategic government priority, initiated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, to strengthen inclusive religious life, maintain national unity, and prevent radical ideologies (Haitomi et al., 2022). This approach does not blend religious teachings or diminish individual beliefs; rather, it emphasizes a fair, balanced, and proportionate perspective that allows believers to uphold their convictions while respecting others (Sulton, 2023).

In a diverse society, promoting this moderate framework through educational and social institutions is crucial for maintaining interfaith harmony, reducing potential conflicts, and reinforcing a shared national identity (Arimatea & Sukarna, 2025). In the fields of education and character development, religious moderation plays a vital role in fostering a welcoming, tolerant attitude toward diverse backgrounds. The values of moderation can be taught through a teaching-learning process focused on character development, such as honesty, openness, compassion, and the ability to communicate with people who are different. This approach demonstrates that religious moderation involves not only religious aspects but is also closely linked to the development of social attitudes that respect differences (Habibie et al., 2021).

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to gain a deep understanding of collaborative governance practices in the character development of juveniles undergoing rehabilitation through pesantren-based guidance. This method systematically describes stakeholder collaboration processes, interaction dynamics among actors, and program implementation mechanisms, focusing not only on enhancing religiosity but also on instilling key values of religious moderation, such as tolerance, balance, and respect for diversity. This research is a community service-based field study in which the author actively served as a researcher and teaching instructor at the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School, a collaborative partner in the LPKA's rehabilitation program. In this capacity, the author played a direct role in program planning, coordination with LPKA officials, periodic evaluations, and the implementation of religious education, including Quran instruction, character development, and the installation of religious moderation values.

The research locations include two main institutions: the Tangerang Class I Special Juvenile Correctional Institution (LPKA), the site for the rehabilitation program, and the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School, a collaborative partner in implementing the religion-based program. The research focuses on: (1) the LPKA and boarding school environments as the settings for program implementation; (2) the involvement of collaborative actors comprising representatives from the LPKA, the boarding school, and the wards; (3) the mechanisms for implementing the pesantren-based program, including the activity schedule, teaching methods, and forms of religious guidance; and (4) the program's impact on changes in the wards' character, particularly regarding religiosity, discipline, social behavior, and the reinforcement of religious moderation values.

The study participants were selected through purposive sampling, which involves deliberately selecting informants based on their knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in implementing the pesantren-based rehabilitation program. This study involved 15 informants: representatives from the Tangerang Class I LPKA (the head, head of rehabilitation, and head of education), the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School (the director and five teaching staff), and six participating wards. This composition provides complementary perspectives from policymakers, program implementers, and program participants, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the collaborative mechanisms, the dynamics of program implementation, and the impact on character development, particularly in instilling values of religiosity, discipline, and religious moderation.

The data collection process was intensively conducted from December 2025 to March 2026 through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and the collection of relevant documents. Data collection was conducted through three methods: (1) participatory observation across four mentoring sessions at the LPKA and the pesantren to obtain a realistic picture of implementation; (2) in-depth interviews with selected informants to gather insights on inter-institutional collaboration, implementation experiences, and actors' perceptions of character development and religious moderation; and (3) documentary study of activity reports, archives, program documents, and official websites to corroborate and verify the data obtained from observations and interviews.

Data analysis employs the interactive model of Miles in book "*Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*", comprising (1) data reduction to select and simplify relevant data; (2) data presentation to organize information into descriptive narratives, tables, or matrices that illustrate actor relationships; and (3) drawing and verifying conclusions to ensure consistency and validity between the empirical findings and their interpretation. To ensure data validity, this study employs source triangulation by comparing findings across three data collection techniques: observation, interviews, and documentary analysis, with iterative verification conducted at every stage of analysis. In addition, a VOSviewer-based bibliometric analysis was conducted to map conceptual relationships and research trends in collaborative governance, character development, and religious moderation, thereby strengthening the theoretical framework of this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Collaborative Governance Process in the Partnership Between the Tangerang Class I LPKA and the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School

The research findings indicate that the collaboration between the Tangerang Class I Special Juvenile Correctional Institution (LPKA) and the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School was carried out through a formal partnership formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed on February 17, 2025. This cooperation agreement serves as the foundation for both institutions to conduct mental and spiritual

guidance programs for the wards through Quranic education activities as part of efforts to strengthen religious character. The scope of the collaboration includes implementing a Quranic guidance program for the wards, the Binaan Santri Lembaga Pemasyarakatan (BSL) program, and joint evaluation activities of the guidance process. Both institutions agreed to organize guidance programs aimed at improving the wards' ability to read and understand the Qur'an and fostering a religious character that supports their social rehabilitation process.

Additionally, the guidance activities are designed to instill values of religious moderation, such as tolerance, balance in religious practice, and respect for diversity in social life. In practice, the Tangerang Class I LPKA is responsible for recruiting participants from among the wards, providing facilities for activities, and offering guidance and supervision throughout the rehabilitation program. Meanwhile, the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School is responsible for providing instructors and conducting mental and spiritual guidance through a Quran education program within the LPKA. Both parties also jointly evaluate the program's implementation to ensure its sustainability and effectiveness. The Head of the Tangerang Class I LPKA explained that this collaboration is a strategic step in strengthening the character development of the wards, particularly in spiritual and moral aspects, aiming not only to improve their ability to read the Quran but also to instill moderate religious values and foster a spirit of tolerance in community life.

"We view this collaboration with the Islamic boarding school as an effort to strengthen the mental and spiritual development of the children in our care. Through Quranic studies and character-building activities, we hope that the children will not only understand religious teachings in a textual sense, but also be able to develop a moderate religious outlook, respect differences, and possess better character when they return to society," (Interview with the Head of the Tangerang Class I LPKA, 2025).

From the boarding school's perspective, the director of the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School stated that this collaboration reflects the institution's commitment to its social mission of providing broader benefits to the community through educational and community service activities.

"Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School has a mission to benefit the community. One way we do this is by collaborating with the Correctional Institution to assist in the rehabilitation of inmates, particularly in religious matters. We hope that through Quranic education and the reinforcement of moral values, the inmates will have a spiritual foundation when they return to society, so that they can lead better lives and not repeat the same mistakes in the future," (Interview with the Director of the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School, 2025).

Implementation of a Pesantren-Based Character Development Program

The planning of a pesantren-based character development program at the Tangerang Class I LPKA began with a comprehensive assessment of the wards' conditions and needs. Based on interviews with representatives from the LPKA and instructors at the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School, the program planning process took into account the wards' religious backgrounds, social conditions, and experiences prior to their involvement with the legal system. This needs assessment was a crucial step in designing the program to ensure that the activities align with the wards' actual circumstances. Observations and documentation indicate that the population of juveniles at the Tangerang Class I LPKA comprises individuals from diverse religious backgrounds, with the majority being Muslim.

In 2025, the facility recorded a total of 126 juveniles, consisting of 87 Muslims and 39 non-Muslims, making religious composition a key consideration in the development of rehabilitation programs. In practice, the pesantren-based program focuses on Muslim wards, as the training materials emphasize reinforcing Islamic values, including Quranic studies, worship jurisprudence, and moral education. Nevertheless, the LPKA continues to provide religious guidance to non-Muslim wards in accordance with their respective religious teachings, as stated by the Head of the Guidance Section at the Tangerang Class I LPKA.

"The religious guidance program, in collaboration with Islamic boarding schools, is focused on Muslim wards because the materials provided are Islamic in nature, such as Quranic studies and the jurisprudence of worship. However, non-Muslim wards still receive guidance in accordance with their respective religious teachings through activities facilitated by the LPKA," (Interview with the Head of the Guidance Section, Tangerang Class I LPKA, 2025).

In addition to religious background, the nature of the offenses committed by the wards is another key consideration in designing rehabilitation programs. Based on documentation data from the Tangerang Class I LPKA, the wards come from a variety of criminal backgrounds, including theft, drug abuse, violence, and other offenses, indicating that the factors leading to children's involvement in conflicts with the law are complex and multidimensional. The distribution of inmate offenses is presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Number of Inmates at Tangerang LPKA I by Type of Crime

No	Types of Crimes	Number of Inmates at Tangerang LPKA I by Type of Crime (Year)				
		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
1	Public Order	5	11	13	11	15
2	Public Morals	2	2	1	4	6
3	Assault	1	3	7	5	6
4	Theft	4	10	7	2	13
5	Robbery	1	5	3	-	4
6	Extortion/Threats	-	-	2	1	8
7	Narcotics	-	3	5	14	13
8	Child Protection	25	43	45	43	27
9	Electronic Transactions	-	-	2	1	2
10	Sharp Weapons	3	16	-	3	20
11	Currency	1	-	-	-	7
12	Fraud	-	-	-	3	5
Total		42	93	85	87	126

Source: Internal document of the Tangerang Class I LPKA, compiled by the author (2025)

The data in **Table 1** indicate that the wards have diverse backgrounds of legal violations, which serves as the basis for designing rehabilitation programs that emphasize not only discipline but also moral and spiritual guidance as part of the social rehabilitation process. Based on interviews with instructors from the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School, a collaborative partner in this program, the character-building activities provided to the wards focus on reinforcing Islamic values through several key activities: Islamic

studies, sharing sessions serving as spaces for self-reflection (*muhasabah*), basic fiqh of worship instruction, as well as *tahsin* and memorization of short surahs of the Qur'an.

"The focus of our guidance lies within the scope of pesantren-based character education. The material covered includes moderate Islamic studies, such as basic fiqh of worship and an understanding of ideology in civic life, so that the students can become tolerant members of the Muslim community who do not marginalize any group or specific Islamic organization. In addition, we also provide sharing sessions and muhasabah as a means of self-reflection for the students," (Interview with an instructor at the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School, 2025).

The mentoring program is held regularly once a week, every Monday. The schedule alternates among Islamic studies, sharing sessions, and basic worship practices, while Quran recitation improvement and memorization of short surahs are incorporated into every session to foster religious practice. The implementation model is summarized in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Implementation Model for the Character Development Program

No	Training Program	Implementation Model
1	Islamic Studies	Held on a rotating basis every week
2	Sharing Session (Self-Reflection)	Held on a rotating basis every week
3	Basic Worship Jurisprudence	Held on a rotating basis every week
4	Qur'an Recitation Improvement	Conducted at every meeting
5	Memorization of Short Surahs	Conducted at every meeting

Source: Internal documents of the Maskanul Huffadz, compiled by the author (2025)

During each session, following the Islamic studies and sharing activities, the teaching staff divided the wards into small study circles to improve Quran recitation. The boarding school instructors also provided opportunities for those interested in memorizing the Qur'an to recite short surahs from memory.

"To strengthen their religious foundations, we teach Qur'anic recitation as the primary foundation for Muslims to read the Qur'an properly and accurately, which also serves as the basis for performing acts of worship. Additionally, we provide opportunities for students who are interested to recite short surahs from memory as part of the Qur'anic learning process," (Interview with an instructor at the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School, 2025).

Overall, the implementation of the pesantren-based character development program at the Tangerang Class I LPKA demonstrates a structured, collaborative approach to strengthening moral and spiritual guidance for the wards. The program emphasizes not only the enhancement of religious knowledge but also the cultivation of religious practices, self-reflection, and the reinforcement of moderate religious values in the wards' daily lives.

The Impact of Collaborative Governance on the Guidance of Children in Care

The implementation of a pesantren-based character development program through collaboration between the Tangerang Class I LPKA and the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School has had several positive impacts on the wards' development. Based on the results of observations, documentation of activities, and interviews with LPKA administrators, pesantren teachers, and the wards, the research findings indicate

changes in three key aspects: increased participation in religious activities, improved ability to read the Qur'an, and positive changes in the attitudes and behavior of the wards. This study used data on ward attendance at each weekly session, calculated and totaled monthly, to identify patterns of participation in the religious guidance program. Details of attendance frequency are presented in **Table 3**.

Table 3. Attendance of Wards in Religious Guidance Activities (January-December 2025)

No	Month	Attendance Rate	Description
1	January	227	Normal activities (4 weeks)
2	February	170	3 weeks (adjustment period leading up to Ramadan)
3	March	188	3 weeks (Eid al-Fitr holiday)
4	April	256	Normal activities (4 weeks)
5	May	266	Normal activities (4 weeks)
6	June	315	5 weeks (higher meeting frequency)
7	July	265	Normal activities (4 weeks)
8	August	268	Normal activities (4 weeks)
9	September	323	5 weeks (higher meeting frequency)
10	October	247	Normal activities (4 weeks)
11	November	267	Normal activities (4 weeks)
12	December	269	Normal activities (4 weeks)

Source: Internal document of Maskanul Huffadz, adapted by the author (2025).

As shown in **Table 3**, attendance exhibits a fluctuating but generally stable pattern throughout 2025. The decline in February and March reflects schedule adjustments ahead of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr, while peak attendance in June (315) and September (323) corresponds to the number of scheduled sessions in those months. Overall, these figures are best understood as indicators of participation intensity rather than of the number of unique individuals present, and they demonstrate consistent engagement with the program throughout the year. In addition to increased participation, the program's impact is evident in the improved ability of the wards who regularly attend tahsin classes to read the Qur'an. The development of Quran reading skills is presented in **Table 4**.

Table 4. Development of Quran Reading Skills Among Children in the Program

Reading ability categories	Program Start Date (January 2025)	Program End Date (December 2025)
Not yet fluent (still stuttering)	53	24
Fairly fluent	11	26
Fluent with basic tajwid	6	20
Total	70	70

Source: Internal documents of the Maskanul Huffadz, compiled by the author (2025)

The data in **Table 4** show a clear improvement in Quran reading skills after one year of participation. The number of wards who were not yet fluent decreased from 53 to 24, while the "fairly fluent" category rose from 11 to 26, and "fluent with basic tajwid" increased from 6 to 20. In addition, 16 wards completed the voluntary memorization of Surah Al-A'la through Surah An-Nas, a program designed for those who are ready and interested, ensuring it does not place undue burden on participants. Based on observations

during the guidance activities, wards who regularly participated demonstrated greater discipline in attending sessions, remained calmer during learning, and were more cooperative in adhering to the rules in the guidance environment. These changes were also evident in communal worship and daily social interactions within the LPKA.

Wards who had previously needed repeated reminders to participate in worship began to demonstrate greater awareness of how to engage in religious practices. These changes were reinforced by the following account from the Deputy Head of Education and Skills Training at the LPKA:

"Participation in congregational prayers has begun to increase. Whereas before the children had to be reminded and supervised more strictly, they now come and participate in congregational prayers more independently. In addition, changes are also becoming apparent in their daily interactions; for example, they are starting to use less inappropriate language when joking or talking with their friends," (Interview with the Deputy Head of Education and Skills Training, Tangerang Class I LPKA, 2025).

Several wards who regularly participated also expressed positive views, noting that the religious study sessions, Quran recitation practice, and *muhasabah* sessions deepened their religious understanding and fostered a more open-minded and tolerant perspective on diversity, as reflected in the following account:

"The activities at the boarding school help us better understand our religion and learn to read the Quran more effectively. Furthermore, we have come to realize that Islam is not rigid or judgmental, but rather teaches us to respect differences and foster tolerance both toward fellow Muslims and toward adherents of other faiths in our social lives," (Interview with a ward, Tangerang Class I LPKA, 2025).

These findings indicate that the implementation of the pesantren-based mentoring program not only strengthens religious knowledge but also fosters a more moderate and tolerant religious outlook and an appreciation for diversity in social life.

Barriers and Challenges in the Implementation of Collaborative Governance

The collaboration between the LPKA and the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School revealed certain implementation challenges, particularly regarding timeliness, participant engagement, and ward behavior during sessions. Regarding timeliness, activities frequently did not start on schedule due to the time required to gather the wards before sessions could begin, as noted by one instructor,

"During the implementation of activities, a common challenge is waiting for the students to gather, which takes quite a bit of time, so activities do not always start on time. Additionally, the 1:00 PM start time poses a challenge, as some students appear tired, some even fall asleep, and others leave the activity without permission," (Interview with an instructor at the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School, 2025).

Regarding participation, attendance fluctuated due to concurrent programs within the facility, as described by the Deputy Head of Education and Skills Training,

"Religious guidance activities run concurrently with other programs, such as interest and talent development activities. This affects the wards' attendance at each session. Additionally, health conditions and family visit schedules also contribute to participants' absences," (Interview with the Deputy Head of Education and Skills Training, Tangerang Class I LPKA, 2025).

Regarding behavior, during the early stages of the program, some wards exhibited disruptive conduct, including inattentiveness and excessive interaction. However, as the following account illustrates, this improved progressively over time,

"At the start of the program, there were several students who were disruptive, such as joking excessively and not paying attention during activities. However, after gradual guidance and education, the situation began to improve, and the students became more disciplined in participating in the activities," (Interview with an instructor at the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School, 2025).

Overall, the findings indicate that the implementation of this collaborative program is progressing but still faces challenges related to scheduling, participation management, and behavioral adaptation, all of which require continued strengthening in program design and coordination.

Discussion

The study reveals that the collaboration between the Tangerang Class I Special Juvenile Correctional Institution (LPKA) and the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School operationalizes collaborative governance in juvenile rehabilitation. Ansell and Gash note that such collaboration is driven by starting conditions, institutional design, collaborative processes, and outcomes (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Collaborative educational programs require synergy among actors and clear institutional design to function effectively (Indriani et al., 2025). Regarding starting conditions, this partnership emerged from a disparity between LPKA's need for religious guidance and its limited internal resources, specifically a shortage of religious counselors (Interview with the Administrator of the Class I LPKA in Tangerang, 2025). Conversely, the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School had the capacity, through its community service program, to fill this gap, demonstrating that complementary needs drove the collaboration.

In terms of institutional design, the partnership is secured by an MoU serving as a formal framework. The clear division of roles, LPKA providing facilities and supervision, while the pesantren delivers religious guidance, demonstrates how formal structures maintain stability and ensure program sustainability. Furthermore, the collaborative process developed progressively through dialogue and trust-building rather than instantly: initial informal communication in 2024 established the necessary face-to-face dialogue, which evolved into mutual trust and culminated in the formalized 2025 MoU. Regarding outcomes, this collaboration significantly improved student participation, Quranic reading proficiency, and behavior. Document data shows a consistent increase in activity attendance (Maskanul Huffadz Boarding School Document, 2025), supporting Ikhwani, who states that religious rehabilitation enhances engagement and fosters positive behavior in juvenile centers (Ikhwani et al., 2021).

Additionally, Quranic reading proficiency improved significantly: non-proficient wards decreased from 53 to 24, while those "proficient with basic *tajwid*" rose from 6 to 20. These outcomes reinforce Asnuddin's view that Islamic education is a crucial pillar for enhancing religious proficiency and character development during juvenile rehabilitation (Asnuddin, 2025). In a broader context, the results of this collaboration are also relevant to efforts to strengthen religious moderation. Religious moderation is understood as a worldview, attitude, and religious practice that takes a middle ground, upholds the principles of justice and balance, and avoids extremism. In its implementation, religious moderation is characterized by several key indicators: a commitment to the nation, tolerance, rejection of violence, and the ability to accommodate local culture (Qoumas et al., 2024). The implementation of rehabilitation programs through religious studies, improvement in Qur'anic recitation, and self-reflection demonstrates a process of internalizing

inclusive rather than exclusive religious values, capable of fostering a more balanced and adaptive attitude.

The wards are guided not only to strengthen their religious knowledge but also to develop social attitudes such as discipline, empathy, and self-control. This aligns with the findings of Kurniawan and Kuswanto, who indicate that character-based religious education helps reinforce moderate attitudes, prevent tendencies toward extremism, and foster religious tolerance (Kurniawan & Kuswanto, 2026). From an international comparative perspective, these findings are also consistent with a study by Ayeo-eo on the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders in the Philippines, which shows that values-based approaches and moral guidance play a significant role in the process of social reintegration and psychological recovery for children (Ayeo-eo, 2026). However, the research findings also indicate implementation challenges. Scheduling delays and fluctuating participation, both documented in the

The results section above indicates that coordination and participation management still require strengthening. This is consistent with Bryson, who states that cross-sectoral collaboration often faces challenges during the implementation phase, particularly in managing stakeholders and coordinating among institutions (Bryson et al., 2006). Nevertheless, these obstacles should not be viewed as failures but rather as part of an institutional learning process that enhances adaptive capacity, strengthens coordination, and improves program implementation design (Cheng et al., 2015). Thus, the collaboration between the LPKA and the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School serves not only as an instrument of social rehabilitation but also as a means of instilling the values of religious moderation in the context of juvenile rehabilitation, and continues to demonstrate strategic potential in supporting character development and social reintegration. However, it still requires strengthening in coordination, program design, and participation management.

Research Limitations

Although this study advances understanding of collaborative governance in pesantren-based LPKA guidance, several limitations apply. First, relying on 15 purposive informants and four observation sessions (December 2025-March 2026) may not fully represent broader stakeholder perspectives, such as families, or long-term program dynamics. Second, the bibliometric analysis was restricted to the Scopus database within a specific timeframe, potentially omitting relevant local or alternative database studies on pesantren practices. Furthermore, keyword co-occurrence analysis offers a general overview of research trends rather than nuanced, comprehensive depth.

Additionally, data collection is subject to potential confirmation bias: strategic institutional informants often offer normative narratives, and the author's position as a member of the teaching staff introduces interpretive subjectivity. While mitigated by source triangulation and continuous verification, these biases cannot be eliminated. Finally, the lack of standardized measurement instruments restricts assessments of religiosity, discipline, and moderation to qualitative contexts, limiting generalizability. Consequently, these findings remain contextual and exploratory, and future research should expand informant diversity, extend observation periods, incorporate broader bibliometric databases, and employ mixed-methods approaches with standardized quantitative instruments to enhance validity and generalizability.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the collaboration between the Tangerang Class I Special Juvenile Correctional Institution and the Maskanul Huffadz Islamic Boarding School successfully implements collaborative governance in juvenile rehabilitation, addressing all four research questions. Regarding the collaborative governance process, the partnership was driven by complementary needs, formalized through an MoU, and developed progressively through dialogue and trust-building. Regarding program implementation, the pesantren-based character development program was delivered through weekly sessions comprising Islamic studies, *muhasabah*, basic fiqh, and Quranic recitation. Regarding the impact on religious moderation, the collaboration significantly increased ward participation, improved Quranic reading proficiency, and fostered positive behavioral changes, such as discipline, self-reflection, and self-control, reinforcing the values of tolerance, balanced religious practice, and respect for social diversity.

Regarding obstacles and challenges, the program continues to face scheduling delays, fluctuating attendance, and early-stage behavioral adaptation, pointing to areas requiring continued strengthening. Based on these findings, several strategic recommendations are proposed. First, this MoU-based collaboration model should be replicated and expanded to other juvenile correctional institutions as part of a broader national rehabilitation strategy. Second, stakeholder coordination must be strengthened to manage activity scheduling and ensure consistent participation, directly addressing the challenges of delayed program initiation and fluctuating attendance. Third, future initiatives should develop evaluation instruments to track the program's long-term impact after the youth are released. Finally, further research is needed to examine the sustainability of religious moderation values among former wards post-reintegration and to assess the program's long-term effectiveness more comprehensively.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirm that the data and content of the article are free from plagiarism.

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