



Work-skill development for death row prisoners: A labour law and human rights perspective

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ABSTRACT

This study examines work-skill development for death row prisoners in Indonesian correctional institutions from the perspectives of correctional law, labour law, and human rights. The central gap addressed in this article is the absence of a specific legal framework that determines whether, how, and under what safeguards death row prisoners may participate in work-skill development programs. This study uses normative legal research with statutory, conceptual, and case approaches. The legal materials are analyzed through grammatical, systematic, and teleological interpretation, combined with doctrinal reasoning on the hierarchy of norms, restriction of rights, and state responsibility. The analysis shows that Indonesian correctional law recognizes prisoners' rights to guidance, occupational safety, wages, or work-performance premiums, while human rights law requires humane treatment and protection of inherent dignity. However, the current framework does not specifically regulate death row prisoners, creating legal uncertainty, institutional discretion, unequal access, and risks of exploitation. The novelty of this article lies in the formulation of "custodial vocational protection" as a normative model that distinguishes rights-based work-skill development from ordinary employment and exploitative prison labour. This article argues that death row prisoners are not workers in a conventional employment relationship, but they remain legal subjects whose participation in correctional work programs must be voluntary, safe, non-discriminatory, psychologically assessed, fairly incentivized, and institutionally accountable.

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1. Introduction

The Indonesian correctional system is normatively designed not only as a mechanism of punishment, but also as a framework for rehabilitation, guidance, and protection of human dignity. Law Number 22 of 2022 concerning Corrections affirms that correctional administration includes service, guidance, community supervision, care, security, and observation, while being grounded in respect, protection, and fulfilment of human rights. In this context, work-skill

development is an important component of correctional guidance because it provides productive activity, discipline, personal development, and opportunities for inmates to maintain their human capacity under state custody. Prison work may be valuable for incarcerated persons, but it must be regulated according to human rights standards and not reduced to exploitation or institutional control (UU No. 22 Tahun 2022).

The main normative problem lies in the tension between punishment and the continuing protection of rights. A death sentence authorizes the state to impose the most severe criminal sanction, but it does not suspend all other legal protections before execution. As long as death row prisoners remain under state custody, the state continues to bear responsibility to protect dignity, prevent degrading treatment, and provide meaningful correctional treatment. This tension becomes sharper when work-skill development is involved because the program stands between correctional discretion and labour protection. Without clear legal standards, it may either be denied based on security status or implemented as prison labour without adequate safeguards.

The issue becomes more complex for death row prisoners because they live under the uncertainty of execution while remaining under state authority. Contemporary research shows that capital punishment creates a contradiction between the expectation that prisoners may demonstrate personal reform and their legal status as persons awaiting death. Therefore, access to work-skill development should not be understood only as preparation for reintegration, but also as a means of preserving dignity, psychological stability, and humane treatment during the waiting period (Misra & Sikora, 2025).

This issue is also significant because capital punishment remains part of Indonesia's criminal justice practice. Globally, Amnesty International recorded at least 2,334 new death sentences across 48 countries in 2025, with at least 25,508 people under sentence of death at the end of the year. These figures show that the treatment of death row prisoners is not only a sentencing issue, but also a continuing correctional and human rights concern, especially amid overcrowding that limits rehabilitation, work training, mental health support, and individualized treatment (Death Penalty in 2025).

From a labour law perspective, work-skill development raises questions about the boundary between correctional guidance and labour protection. Prisoners are not workers in an ordinary employment relationship, yet their participation in productive activities still implicates occupational safety, fair treatment, non-exploitation, and dignity. In Indonesia, Article 9 letter j of Law Number 22 of 2022 recognizes prisoners' rights to occupational safety, wages, or work-performance premiums, but these rights have not always been implemented optimally in correctional work programs (Mantouvalou, 2024).

Previous studies on the death penalty in Indonesia have generally focused on the constitutionality of capital punishment, the right to life, clemency, execution procedures, and criminal policy. Studies on prison work and correctional guidance, on the other hand, tend to examine prisoners in general without specifically addressing the distinct legal status of death row prisoners. This leaves a precise research gap: existing scholarship has not yet developed an integrated legal analysis explaining the position of death row prisoners in work-skill development at the intersection of correctional authority, labour protection, and human rights obligations. The novelty of this article is not merely the discussion of work programs in prison, but the construction of a rights-based legal model that treats work-skill development for death row prisoners as "custodial vocational protection." Under this model, work-skill development is neither an ordinary employment relationship nor a discretionary prison activity, but a legally accountable correctional measure that must satisfy the standards of voluntariness, proportionality, occupational safety, fair incentive, psychological assessment, and complaint mechanism. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the legal basis, normative gaps, institutional barriers, and reform model for work-skill development for death row prisoners in Indonesian correctional institutions.

2. Method

This study employs normative legal research, as it focuses on the analysis of legal norms, legal principles, doctrines, and statutory regulations concerning work-skill development for death row prisoners in correctional institutions (Negara, 2023). It applies statutory, conceptual, and case approaches (Hamzani et al., 2024). The statutory approach is used to examine Law Number 22 of 2022 concerning Corrections, Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights, Law Number 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower, and other relevant regulations. The conceptual approach is employed to analyze the concepts of correctional guidance, legal protection, human dignity, work-skill development, and the rights retained by death row prisoners prior to execution (Noor, 2023). Meanwhile, the case approach is used to examine practical problems and the gap between legal norms and the implementation of work-skill development programs in correctional institutions.

The legal materials were collected through library research and analyzed qualitatively using doctrinal legal analysis. The analysis was conducted through four stages. First, grammatical interpretation was used to examine the wording of statutory provisions concerning correctional guidance, prisoners' rights, work training, occupational safety, and wages or work-performance premiums. Second, systematic interpretation was used to relate correctional law, human rights law, and labour law within the hierarchy of Indonesian legal norms. Third, teleological interpretation was used to identify the purpose of correctional guidance, namely rehabilitation, humane treatment, protection of dignity, and prevention of exploitation. Fourth, normative-prescriptive reasoning was used to assess whether the absence of specific technical standards for death row prisoners creates a legal gap and to formulate a rights-based model of custodial vocational protection. This method enables the study to explain the legal basis, identify norm conflicts and regulatory gaps, assess the restriction of rights, determine institutional responsibility, and formulate recommendations for strengthening work-skill development policies for death row prisoners (Testoni et al., 2020).

3. Analysis and Results

3.1. Legal Basis of Work-Skill Development for Death Row Prisoners

Work-skill development for prisoners should be understood within the normative framework of correctional rehabilitation, not merely as a disciplinary or administrative prison activity. Contemporary literature shows that prison education and vocational training provide rehabilitative and economic benefits. Stickle & Schuster (2023), through a meta-analysis of prison education programs, found that prison education reduces recidivism and improves post-release employment and wages, with the strongest effects found in vocational and college-level programs. This finding supports the view that structured work and education in prison function as rehabilitative instruments that preserve human capacity and social functionality.

In Indonesia, the legal basis for work-skill development can be derived from correctional law, human rights law, and labour law. Law Number 22 of 2022 concerning Corrections recognizes correctional administration as a system of treatment that includes guidance, care, security, and observation while upholding respect, protection, and fulfilment of human rights. Government Regulation Number 31 of 1999 concerning the Guidance and Supervision of Correctional Inmates also places work skills, vocational training, and production activities within the scope of correctional guidance. These provisions confirm that work-skill development is legally recognized as part of correctional treatment. However, the existing framework remains general and does not specifically regulate the participation of death row prisoners, despite their distinct legal and psychological vulnerabilities.

A hierarchical reading of these norms shows that correctional work-skill development cannot be treated as a matter of institutional discretion alone. Law Number 22 of 2022 occupies a higher normative position than internal correctional policies and therefore should guide all technical implementation within correctional institutions. When internal security considerations

are used to limit death row prisoners' access to work-skill programs, such restrictions must not contradict the statutory recognition of prisoners' rights to guidance, occupational safety, and work-performance premiums. The absence of technical regulation for death row prisoners does not create authority to exclude them automatically; rather, it creates an obligation for the state to formulate more specific standards.

The rehabilitative value of prison work must be balanced against its potential for exploitation. Mantouvalou (2024) argues that prison work may benefit incarcerated persons, but it also carries risks of abuse because it takes place behind prison walls, where prisoners' freedom of movement and choice of work are severely restricted. Therefore, labour law principles such as voluntariness, occupational safety, fair incentives, non-discrimination, and protection from exploitation should guide the regulation of correctional work programs.

Human rights provide the principal framework for ensuring that prisoners remain rights-bearing subjects rather than objects of punishment. Nikoleishvili (2025) argues that prisoners' rehabilitation is a human right that requires effective implementation, adequate resources, and institutional accountability. This is particularly relevant for death row prisoners because their legal status should not justify exclusion from meaningful activities. Testoni et al. (2020) further show that meaningful activities, relationships, health care, and education are central to preserving dignity during long-term imprisonment.

Nevertheless, formal recognition of rehabilitation does not guarantee effective implementation. Phelps (2011) demonstrates that prison rehabilitation often suffers from a gap between rhetoric and reality. In Indonesia, this gap requires specific standards for death row prisoners, including clear regulation, trained officers, adequate facilities, psychological assessment, safety standards, and complaint mechanisms. Accordingly, work-skill development should be treated as a rights-based correctional measure that preserves dignity, prevents exploitation, and supports humane treatment while death row prisoners remain under state custody.

Table 1. Functions of work-skill development in correctional institutions

Aspect	Main Finding	Relevance to Death Row Prisoners
Rehabilitation and reintegration	Prison education and vocational training reduce recidivism and improve post-release employment and wages.	Although death row prisoners may not be primarily oriented toward reintegration, structured training remains relevant for discipline, capacity, and humane treatment.
Human dignity and meaningful life	Meaningful activities, health care, education, and social relations help preserve dignity during long-term imprisonment.	Work-skill development can reduce passivity, preserve self-worth, and support psychological stability.
Risk of exploitation	Prison labour may become coercive, unsafe, underpaid, or controlled by institutional power.	Participation must be voluntary, regulated, safe, and protected from exploitation.
Human rights protection	Rehabilitation is increasingly understood as part of the state's positive human rights obligation.	Death row prisoners should not be automatically excluded from meaningful correctional programs.
Norm-practice gap	Rehabilitation is often recognized normatively but weakened by limited facilities, services, and institutional capacity.	Specific standards are needed to ensure effective and equal access to work-skill programs.

3.2. Human Rights Protection and the Dignity of Death Row Prisoners

Human rights protection for death row prisoners begins from the principle that criminal punishment does not extinguish the inherent dignity of the human person. A death sentence changes a prisoner's legal status, but it does not remove the prisoner from the protection of law. International human rights instruments, including the ICCPR, UNCAT, the Nelson Mandela Rules, and regional prison standards, affirm that persons deprived of liberty remain rights-bearing subjects and must be treated with humanity and respect for their dignity (Waagstein, 2023). This principle is also reflected in contemporary prison scholarship, which emphasizes

that prisoners should not be reduced to objects of institutional control, but must continue to be recognized as legal subjects with residual rights that are not lawfully restricted by a court sentence (Renzulli, 2022).

The state therefore has a positive obligation to prevent death row prisoners from being subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. This obligation includes ensuring humane detention conditions, access to health care, psychological support, legal assistance, religious services, and meaningful activities. Albano et al. (2023) emphasize that torture and maltreatment in prison must be examined not only as physical violence, but also as institutional practices that degrade human integrity. Similarly, Baffour et al. (2024) argue that overcrowding and harsh prison conditions create serious health and human rights concerns for prisoners, staff, and the wider community. These findings are relevant to death row prisoners because prolonged confinement under uncertainty may intensify psychological distress and deepen the punitive effect of imprisonment beyond the death sentence itself.

The vulnerability of death row prisoners is closely linked to the psychological burden of long and uncertain detention. Studies on prison mental health show that restrictive prison environments, limited resources, isolation, and institutional uncertainty can generate severe emotional and psychological harm (Johnson et al., 2021). For prisoners facing extremely long or terminal sentences, such conditions may erode meaning, identity, and psychological stability. Testoni et al. (2020) found that meaningful activities, education, health care, and family relationships are central to preserving dignity among life-sentenced prisoners. Although life imprisonment and death row imprisonment are not identical, both involve prolonged deprivation of liberty and heightened risks of dehumanization (Tonry, 2018).

Human dignity also provides the normative foundation for rehabilitation. Prison regimes should be designed to enable prisoners to live responsibly, maintain self-worth, and access opportunities for education, work, health, and social relations (Sylolypavan et al., 2023). Karthaus et al. (2019) argue that prison design and correctional practice should be ethically oriented toward rehabilitation rather than mere containment. However, critical scholarship warns that rights-based prison governance may sometimes strengthen bureaucratic control without substantially changing the lived experience of imprisonment (Armstrong, 2020). This means that the recognition of rights must be translated into concrete programs, adequate resources, and accountable implementation.

In this context, work-skill development should be understood as a human rights-based instrument for preserving dignity, mental stability, and legal personality. Meaningful work and education can help prisoners maintain identity, self-respect, and social connection, while reducing passivity and psychological deterioration. For death row prisoners, such programs should not be justified only by future reintegration, but also by the present obligation of the state to provide humane and meaningful correctional treatment. Accordingly, death row prisoners should not be automatically excluded from work-skill development solely because of their sentence. Any restriction must be based on legitimate, proportionate, and individualized security or psychological considerations.

3.3. Labour Law Perspective on Work-Skill Development in Correctional Institutions

From a labour law perspective, work-skill development in correctional institutions should be understood as a form of competency development rather than an ordinary employment relationship. Prisoners, including death row prisoners, do not occupy the same legal position as workers in a conventional labour market because their participation in correctional activities takes place within a custodial institution under the authority of the state. Nevertheless, the absence of a formal employer-employee relationship does not mean that labour law values are irrelevant (van der Valk et al., 2023). The principles of human dignity, equal treatment, occupational safety, fair remuneration, skill development, and protection from exploitation remain important normative standards in assessing whether correctional work training is implemented in a humane and rights-based manner.

Indonesian labour law provides an important conceptual foundation for this analysis. Law Number 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower regulates, among other matters, manpower development, equal opportunity and treatment, work training, job placement, employment relations, labour protection, wages, welfare, supervision, and sanctions in the field of employment. Although these provisions are primarily designed for workers in formal employment relationships, their underlying values are relevant to correctional work-skill programs because such programs involve productive activities, training, supervision, and the development of human capacity. Therefore, work-skill development in correctional institutions should not be treated merely as an internal administrative activity, but as a structured training process that must respect safety, fairness, and the personal development of prisoners.

The relevance of labour law becomes stronger because Indonesian correctional law itself recognizes work-related rights for prisoners. Article 9 letter j of Law Number 22 of 2022 concerning Corrections provides that prisoners are entitled to occupational safety guarantees, wages, or work-performance premiums. This provision demonstrates that the Indonesian correctional system does not view prison work only as a disciplinary obligation, but also as an activity that generates rights and requires legal protection. Recent Indonesian legal scholarship also notes that the implementation of this right has not always been optimal, particularly in relation to work protection and fair remuneration for prisoners participating in vocational activities. This indicates a gap between normative recognition and institutional practice.

In the context of death row prisoners, labour law principles must be applied with particular caution. Their participation in work-skill development should not be framed as forced labour, punishment, or institutional exploitation. Instead, it should be positioned as a voluntary and constructive activity aimed at preserving dignity, maintaining psychological stability, and developing personal capacity during the waiting period before execution. Mantouvalou (2024) argues that prison work may be valuable for incarcerated persons, but it also carries serious risks of abuse and exploitation because it takes place behind prison walls, where prisoners' freedom of movement and choice of work are severely restricted. For that reason, prison work must be regulated through labour and human rights standards so that it supports reintegration and dignity rather than exclusion and exploitation.

Work-skill development also has an important rehabilitative and psychological function. Even where death row prisoners may not be oriented toward social reintegration in the same way as ordinary prisoners, meaningful work training can still reduce passivity, strengthen self-worth, and prevent psychological deterioration. Studies on vocational training in correctional settings show that work training may contribute to social, economic, and psychological adaptation by providing inmates with skills, routine, and a sense of purpose. In this sense, the value of work-skill development for death row prisoners lies not only in future employment outcomes, but also in its capacity to sustain human dignity and constructive engagement while they remain under state custody.

However, the labour law perspective also requires safeguards against exploitation. Prisoners are structurally vulnerable because their liberty is restricted, their bargaining power is almost non-existent, and their work environment is controlled by correctional authorities. Yona argues that labour in prison is closely connected to legal structures, institutional identity, and power relations that may produce inequality if not carefully regulated. This insight is important for Indonesian correctional institutions because work-skill development must not be used to normalize unpaid, unsafe, or coercive labour. Any work program involving death row prisoners should therefore be based on voluntariness, clear procedures, occupational safety, proportional incentives, psychological assessment, and institutional accountability.

Accordingly, labour law provides a critical evaluative framework for work-skill development in correctional institutions. It helps distinguish rights-based vocational training from exploitative prison labour. For death row prisoners, this distinction is particularly important because their legal status may make them more vulnerable to exclusion from training or, conversely, to

participation without adequate protection. A labour law approach therefore requires that correctional work-skill programs be designed as humane, non-discriminatory, safe, and meaningful activities. Such an approach strengthens the argument that death row prisoners should not be denied access to work-skill development merely because of their sentence, while also ensuring that their participation does not result in exploitation or degrading treatment.

Table 2. Labour law principles relevant to work-skill development for death row prisoners

Labour Law Principle	Meaning in Labour Law	Relevance to Correctional Work-Skill Development
Skill development	Training is used to improve human capacity and work competence.	Work-skill programs should develop prisoners' abilities, discipline, and productive engagement.
Equal treatment	Individuals should not be treated differently without objective and lawful reasons.	Death row prisoners should not be automatically excluded from work training solely because of their sentence.
Occupational safety	Work activities must be carried out under safe and humane conditions.	Correctional work programs must ensure safety standards, supervision, and risk assessment.
Fair remuneration or incentives	Productive work should be accompanied by fair wages, premiums, or appropriate incentives.	Prisoners' participation should not become unpaid or exploitative labour.
Protection from exploitation	Labour should not be coercive, abusive, or degrading.	Work-skill development must be voluntary, regulated, and rights-based.
Human dignity	Labour regulation should protect the dignity and welfare of persons performing work.	Work training for death row prisoners should preserve dignity and psychological stability.

3.4. Legal and Institutional Barriers in Implementing Work-Skill Development

The implementation of work-skill development for death row prisoners faces both legal and institutional barriers. The first barrier is the absence of specific regulation governing the participation of death row prisoners in correctional work programs. Law Number 22 of 2022 recognizes prisoners' rights to guidance, occupational safety, wages, or work-performance premiums, but it does not provide specific standards for death row prisoners (Reagan et al., 2024). As a result, correctional institutions may apply different policies depending on security considerations, institutional capacity, and internal discretion. This creates legal uncertainty and may lead to unequal access to work-skill development programs.

The second barrier concerns the structural condition of Indonesian correctional institutions. Overcrowding remains a serious obstacle to the effective implementation of correctional guidance. World Prison Brief data show that Indonesia's prison system had an official capacity of 149,651 persons, with an occupancy level of 184.5% as of 31 December 2025. This level of overcrowding affects the availability of space, training facilities, supervision, and individualized treatment. In such conditions, work-skill development programs are often difficult to implement consistently, particularly for death row prisoners who may require stricter security arrangements and specific psychological support (Bullock & Bunce, 2020).

The third barrier is the limited institutional capacity to ensure safe, fair, and rights-based prison work. Correctional work programs require trained officers, adequate equipment, occupational safety standards, and clear mechanisms for wages or work-performance premiums. However, studies on prisoners' work-related rights in Indonesia indicate that budgetary constraints and limited supervision affect the implementation of occupational safety and health protection in prison work activities. This problem is significant because work-skill development may lose its rehabilitative value if it is carried out without safety standards, proper incentives, and accountable supervision.

The fourth barrier relates to the risk of exploitation in prison labour. Prisoners have limited bargaining power because their freedom of movement and choice of work are restricted by the custodial environment (Beichner & Hagemann, 2022). Mantouvalou (2024) argues that prison work may provide benefits for incarcerated persons, but it also creates serious risks of abuse and exploitation because prison authorities exercise extensive power behind prison walls.

Therefore, work-skill development for death row prisoners must not be treated as compulsory labour or institutional punishment. It should be based on voluntariness, safety, proportional incentives, and human rights safeguards.

The fifth barrier concerns the psychological condition of death row prisoners. Long and uncertain waiting periods before execution may cause severe psychological suffering, commonly referred to as the death row phenomenon. This condition can reduce prisoners' motivation, emotional stability, and ability to participate in structured work programs. Indonesian legal scholarship has also recognized that prolonged delays in carrying out death sentences may create serious psychological harm and raise concerns under the principle of humanity. Therefore, work-skill development for death row prisoners cannot be separated from psychological assessment, counselling, and individualized treatment.

These barriers show that the problem is not merely the absence of work programs, but the lack of a specific, rights-based framework for death row prisoners. Without clear legal standards, adequate facilities, trained officers, psychological support, and safeguards against exploitation, work-skill development may become inconsistent, ineffective, or even discriminatory. Therefore, the implementation of such programs requires a more specific correctional policy that integrates legal certainty, labour protection, security assessment, and human rights principles.

Table 3. Legal and institutional barriers in implementing work-skill development

Barrier	Main Problem	Impact on Death Row Prisoners
Absence of specific regulation	No clear technical standards for death row prisoners' participation in work programs.	Creates legal uncertainty and unequal access.
Overcrowding	Prison population exceeds institutional capacity.	Limits training space, facilities, supervision, and individualized treatment.
Limited institutional capacity	Lack of trained officers, equipment, safety standards, and supervision.	Reduces the quality and safety of work-skill programs.
Risk of exploitation	Prisoners have limited bargaining power and restricted freedom of choice.	Work programs may become coercive, unsafe, or unfair.
Psychological vulnerability	Long waiting periods before execution may cause anxiety, fear, and mental distress.	Reduces motivation and requires integrated psychological support.
Policy inconsistency	Implementation depends on internal discretion of each correctional institution.	Produces unequal treatment among death row prisoners.

3.5. Pathways to Reform: Strengthening Human Rights-Based Correctional Policy

Strengthening work-skill development for death row prisoners requires a specific, rights-based correctional policy. The first reform should focus on the formulation of clear technical regulations governing the participation of death row prisoners in work-skill programs. These regulations should define eligibility, voluntariness, security assessment, psychological evaluation, occupational safety, incentives, supervision, and complaint mechanisms (Auty & Liebling, 2020). Without specific standards, implementation will continue to depend on the discretion of each correctional institution, which may lead to unequal treatment and legal uncertainty.



Figure 1. Pathway to reform

The second reform concerns the integration of human rights principles into correctional governance. Death row prisoners should not be automatically excluded from work-skill development solely because of their sentence. Any restriction must be based on legitimate, proportionate, and individualized reasons. This approach is consistent with the principle that all prisoners must be treated with respect for their inherent dignity. Therefore, work-skill development should be framed not only as vocational training, but also as a dignity-preserving program that supports psychological stability, meaningful activity, and humane treatment.

The third reform is the improvement of institutional capacity. Correctional institutions need adequate training facilities, qualified instructors, occupational safety standards, and transparent mechanisms for wages or work-performance premiums. Officers should also receive training on human rights-based correctional treatment, mental health awareness, and the specific vulnerabilities of death row prisoners. These measures are necessary to ensure that work-skill programs do not become symbolic, unsafe, or exploitative.

The fourth reform is the integration of psychological support into work-skill development. Death row prisoners often face severe emotional pressure due to prolonged uncertainty before execution. Therefore, participation in work programs should be accompanied by counselling, psychological assessment, and individualized guidance. Work-skill development should not be imposed as a routine obligation, but offered as a constructive activity that helps reduce passivity, preserve self-worth, and maintain mental stability (Kalman et al., 2024).

Finally, reform should include stronger monitoring and accountability mechanisms. The Ministry of Law and Human Rights should establish national guidelines and periodically evaluate the implementation of work-skill development for death row prisoners across correctional institutions. Independent oversight bodies, human rights institutions, and civil society organizations should also be involved in monitoring compliance with human rights standards. Through these reforms, work-skill development can function as a humane and legally accountable correctional policy that protects dignity, prevents discrimination, and strengthens the rule of law within the correctional system.

Table 5. Reform directions for human rights-based work-skill development

Reform Area	Proposed Measure	Expected Outcome
Specific regulation	Establish technical standards for death row prisoners’ participation in work-skill programs.	Reduces legal uncertainty and policy inconsistency.
Human rights integration	Apply dignity, non-discrimination, humane treatment, and proportionality principles.	Prevents automatic exclusion and discriminatory treatment.
Institutional capacity	Improve facilities, instructors, safety standards, and incentive mechanisms.	Ensures safe, meaningful, and non-exploitative work training.
Psychological support	Integrate counselling, assessment, and individualized guidance.	Maintains mental stability and reduces passive suffering.
Monitoring and accountability	Establish national guidelines, periodic evaluation, and independent oversight.	Strengthens legal compliance and rights-based correctional governance.

Source: Author’s compilation based on Indonesian correctional policy, human rights principles, and prison-labour scholarship

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that work-skill development for death row prisoners constitutes an essential component of legal protection, human dignity, and human rights-based correctional governance because fundamental rights remain attached to prisoners until the execution of their sentence. Although Indonesian correctional law, human rights law, and labour law provide a normative basis for guidance, occupational safety, fair incentives, and protection from exploitation, the absence of specific regulations governing the participation of death row prisoners in work-skill development programs creates legal uncertainty, unequal institutional practices, and the risk of either exclusion from correctional activities or implementation without adequate safeguards. To address this gap, the study proposes the formulation of technical standards covering eligibility, voluntariness, security and psychological assessments,

occupational safety, incentives, supervision, and complaint mechanisms. The article's theoretical contribution lies in the development of the doctrine of custodial vocational protection, which positions death row prisoners not as ordinary workers but as rights-bearing correctional subjects whose participation in vocational programs generates state obligations grounded in correctional law, labour-protection principles, and human rights norms, thereby ensuring that work-skill development functions as a dignity-preserving and legally accountable correctional measure.

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