

Social factors contributing to recidivism among discharged prisoners: *A case study of Mukobeko Maximum correctional facility in Kabwe district, Central Province of Zambia.*

By

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God the Almighty for His protection and guidance and to my entire family, especially my wife Mrs. Simasiku Agatha and my children; Arthur, Fatima, Vivian, Owen, and Paul. I also wish to dedicate this work to all my colleagues who provided any assistance during this journey.

DECLARATION

I Mwizabi Paul Simasiku do declare that this research report is my original work and has not and will not be submitted for a degree award or similar qualification in any other university or institution of higher learning.

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ACRONYMS

CDCR - California Department of Correction and Rehabilitation

SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Sciences

MRPDQ -Male Recidivist Personal Data Questionnaire

ZCS -Zambia Correctional Service

DISCLAIMER

This research report paper represents the opinions of the author, and is the product of professional research. It is not meant to represent the position or opinions of Maximum Correctional Facility or any member of staff at the facility. Therefore, any errors are the fault of the author.

ABSTRACT

Recidivism cuts across in most nations in the world with its negative consequences on individuals, social and economic spheres of life. Despite various intervention strategies, the rate of recidivism has been on the increase. The present study was designed to determine social factors contributing to recidivism among discharged prisoners at Mukobeko Maximum Correctional Facility. The study adopted a qualitative research method, using the descriptive survey research design. The sample for the study consisted of one hundred respondents, consisting of sixty five recidivists and thirty five correctional officers from Mukobeko Maximum Correctional Facility, in Kabwe. The sampling technique that was used in the study was purposive sampling. Primary data was obtained from the participants using three major instruments namely; Self Administered Questionnaire, Male Recidivist Personal Data Questionnaire (MRPDQ) and interview guide for prisoners with very low literacy level. On the other hand, secondary data was obtained from text books, Journals and other publications. The study revealed that there are social factors contributing to recidivism among discharged prisoners at Mukobeko Maximum Security Correctional Facility. Despite various intervention strategies, the rate of recidivism has been on the increase. The study also revealed that there were several obstacles which inhibit re-entry of prisoners back into society. Further, the study highlighted the importance of the family and society in re-integrating discharged prisoners. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that the correctional authorities should prepare the prisoners and their families for re-entry. Therefore the families of prisoners and the communities they return to should be ready to help inmates become reintegrated with a view to preventing recidivism.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study by bringing out background information. The background to the study is followed by the statement of the problem under investigation, the research objectives and questions as well as the significance of the study. Besides, the chapter presents the theoretical frame work in which this study is situated and the definition of terms as they have been used in this study.

1.1. Background

Correctional institutions commonly known as prisons all over the world have been established with the sole objective of providing rehabilitation services to convicts/offenders. These correctional facilities are built and run to house incarcerated prisoners and thereby ensuring public safety. The ultimate aim is to have citizens that will observe acceptable norms and values in public society and hence stand low in any chances of risk of re-offending after being discharged. The prisoners have problems needing attention; regrettably, the correctional authorities have limited resources and rarely, if at all, have the ability to implement wide-ranging treatment programmes. Thus decision makers and correctional administrators always tend to put issues related to safety and security ahead of factors related to treatment and rehabilitation of prisoners.

Unfortunately, lack of emphasis on how to address core problems through innovative programmes has had inadvertent effect of showing correctional practices and thus the focus has remained on developing better and more effective techniques for safely incarcerating more offenders. While correctional budgets have soared over the past decades, governmental support available to confront issues like the prisoner re-entry crisis had not taken pace in most correctional facilities.

Crime, as well as recidivism, pervades all the societies of the world. Recidivism remains a considerable problem which faces societies and governments throughout the world (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2012). In the published review of recidivism among

released prisoners in 30 American states, over 67.8% of the 404,638 prisoners released in 2005 were re-arrested within 3 years while 76.6% were arrested within five years. According to Osayi (2013), recidivism has not only been on the increase in Sub-Saharan Africa, but has become a major social problem affecting society, governments, multinationals, as well as humanitarian organizations the world over.

Although there have been controversies on the definition and measurement of recidivism, the Congressional Research Service defines recidivism as “the re-arrest, reconviction, or re-incarceration of an ex-offender within a given time frame” (Holzer, 2003). Because of systemic legal and societal barriers, once ex-offenders are released, it is more difficult for them compared to the general populace to find gainful employment, secure a consistent source of housing, and generally function in society. Often viewed as sub-citizens, ex-offenders are perpetually punished for crimes. The causes of these restrictions are systemic and affect ex-offenders at all levels of society.

In addition, recidivism is defined as a return to prison (Florida Department of Corrections 2014). According to Payne (2007), recidivism refers to repetitious criminal activity and is synonymous with terms such as “repeat offending” and “re-offending”. A recidivist, according to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR, 2014) is an individual convicted of a felony and incarcerated in a CDCR adult prison that was released to parole, discharged from CDCR during a defined period and subsequently returned to prison during a specified follow up period. A recidivist offender is generally seen as one who engages in repeated criminal activity. For the purpose of this study, recidivism refers to repeated imprisonment of ex-convicts who have served at least one prison term before. Recidivism is one of the most fundamental concepts in criminal justice. It refers to a person's relapse into criminal behavior, often after the person receives sanctions or undergoes intervention for a previous crime. Recidivism is measured by criminal acts that resulted in re-arrest, re-conviction or return to prison with or without a new sentence during a three-year period following the prisoner's release.

Efforts have been made by different researchers to offer explanation on factors that could be responsible for the increase in the rate of recidivism. A study by Dooley et al. (2014), reports that prison gang membership increases the probability of both re-arrest and recidivism. In a separate

report by the Florida Department of Corrections (2014), it is stated that factors that predispose criminals to re-offend include drug abuse, criminal history, educational level, lack of stable marriage, nature of offence and age of first arrest among others. In a different paper, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (2014) identified overcrowding, level of community support for offenders; cost avoidance, procedural discretion as predictors of recidivism. Liem et. al., (2014) in a paper that examined recidivism among homicide offenders concludes that peer influence, age at first offence, criminal history and socio- economic factors are some of the indicators that could lead to general criminal recidivism.

In Nigeria, researchers have alluded to the fact that there is an increase in the rate of recidivism and that male offenders have greater propensity to reoffend (Osayi, 2013). A study by Igbo and Ugokwe (2003) listed prison environment conditions and negative attitude of the public towards ex-convicts as two major factors responsible for the increase in recidivism. Ugwuoke (2010) submitted that stigmatization, defective prison system which promotes the dissemination and exchange of criminal influences and ideas are the causes of the increase in recidivism in Anambra State, South East, Nigeria. Chenube (2011) identified alcohol and drug abuse as being directly linked to crime and recidivism.

Osayi (2013) reported that educational attainment and peer group influence are predictors of increase in the rate of recidivism among male prisoners in Ekiti State, South West Nigeria. Other predisposing factors which increase recidivism among male recidivists in Nigeria are gender, marital status, and number of siblings, family background, imprisonment terms and type of crime (Abrifor et. al., 2012).

Although there have been an increasing number of research studies that have been undertaken to understand the factors that contribute to recidivism, there has been little effort devoted to the role of emotion and emotional intelligence as a predictor of recidivism. There is also a dearth of studies and literature on recidivism and emotional intelligence generally. Emphasis has been more on physical factors and not on socio-economic, psychological as well as emotions and emotional intelligence.

The concerns highlighted in the background by Californian Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and Nigerian researchers on recidivism are common to the Zambian situation, particularly Mukobeko Maximum Correctional Facility in Kabwe district.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The difficulties of prisoners returning home are well-documented in the literature. Released prisoners typically face obstacles in obtaining employment and stable housing often due to lack of work skills, stigma, and low levels of educational attainment. Many also experience difficulties in returning to a problematic family and social environment, unresolved substance abuse and mental health problems which prevents inmates in establishing a conventional prosocial lifestyle. A typical situation for released offenders is arriving home “with very little money, resources, or social capital, and because of their felony record they are unable to obtain employment in the public sector or find housing. Most scholars argue that because of these deficits, successful reentry for many prison inmates is both difficult and unlikely”. Recidivism of inmates leads to congestion at Mukobeko Maximum Correctional Facility resulting in communicable or contagious diseases. Recidivism also leads to high exchange of criminal elements among inmates within the facility.

1.3. Research objectives

Main objective

The overall objective of this study is to identify the social factors which contribute to recidivism among discharged prisoners in Zambia so as to fully inform the correctional facilities in preparing inmates adequately for successful reintegration into society upon release.

Specific Objectives

1. To identifying obstacles for successful re-entry of prisoners back into society
2. To determine the role of the family or society to discharged prisoners in terms of reducing recidivism
3. To investigate the level of skills prisoners possess after discharge from prison

1.4. Research questions

Main Research Question

What are the key social factors that contribute to recidivism among discharged prisoners in Zambia?

Sub Questions

1. What are the obstacles for successful re-entry of prisoners into society?
2. What is the role of the family or society to discharged prisoners in terms of reducing recidivism?
3. Do prisoners possess adequate marketable skills to prevent them from re-offending after being discharged from correctional facilities?

1.5. Research Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H₀): exposing inmates to social factors would not result in change in the rate of recidivism.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_A): exposing inmates to social factors would result in change in the rate of recidivism.

1.6. Significance of the study

The research findings of this study will provide relevant information that would be useful to the Zambia Correctional Service and society in general in understanding issues that need to be addressed in the fight against recidivism among prisoners in Zambia. The study would furthermore help the Zambia Correctional Service in re-orienting its prisoner rehabilitation programmes and approaches with the aim of enhancing successful re-integration of ex-convicts into society. The study will also contribute to the identification of the critical gaps, weaknesses and challenges in the current rehabilitation programmes among the correctional facilities. The study is also significant in rehabilitation programmes aimed at addressing the challenge of recidivism at the facility. Lastly but not the least, the study will provide a platform for tailoring an efficient and effective correction and rehabilitation programme that can reduce the cases of recidivism.

1.7. Conceptual framework

Independent Variable

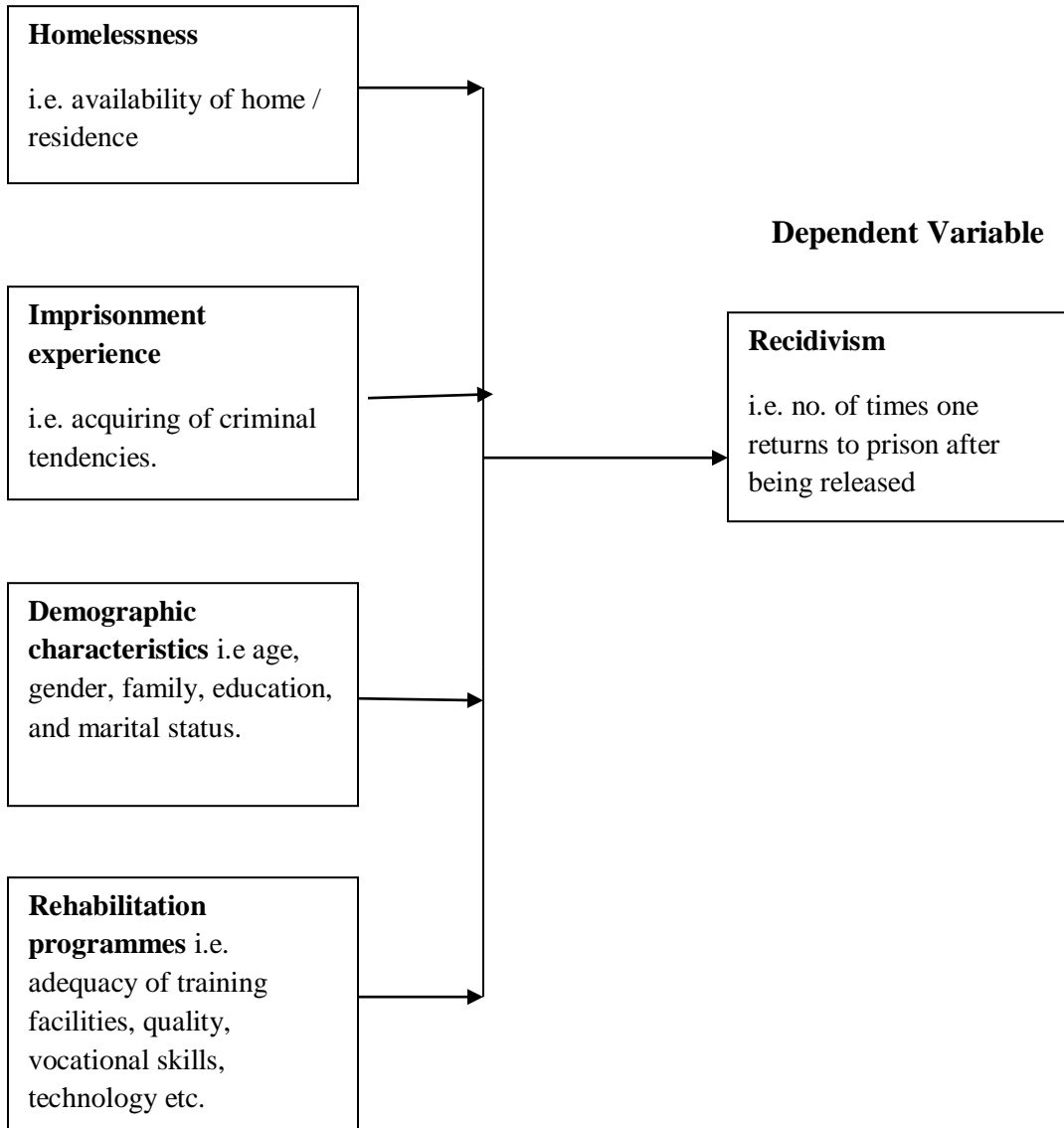


Figure 1.

The figure above shows the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Rehabilitation programmes, demographic characteristics, imprisonment experience, homelessness and stigmatization factors all have an influence on the dependent variable.

The conceptual framework hypothesizes that there is a relationship between the stigmatization; that is; people's attitude on imprisonment and recidivism. The second independent variable shows that there is a percentage that homelessness or availability of a home / residence could lead to recidivistic behaviours of convicted prisoners. Besides, figure 1 shows that there is a certain percentage that imprisonment experiences influence the number of times one returns to the correctional facility after discharge. The fourth variable which consists of age, family, education and marital status among others depicts the existence of a relationship that demographic characteristics affect recidivism. Lastly, the rehabilitation programme which includes; adequacy of training facilities, quality and technology would reflect its relationship and the recidivistic behaviours within the correctional facility settings. In this case, rehabilitation programmes and reintegration programmes can influence recidivism rates if put in place.

1.8. Scope of the research

The researcher carried out an investigation on the social factors which make discharged prisoners to re-offend in the society. The period of focus was from 2005 to 2017. The data was collected within a period of three months at Mukobeko Correctional Facility. This study was confined to Mukobeko Correctional Facility only because time and resources would not allow for it to be extended to other correctional facilities in Zambia.

1.9. Limitation of the study

- The study covered only Mukobeko Maximum Security Correctional Facility in the country, therefore the findings would not apply to the other correctional facilities where similar or same problem existed.
- The study deals only with recidivism, hence other factors that may have the same impacts to the prison were not looked at.

1.10. Delimitation of the study

- The study could not disclose the names of and position of the respondents because most individuals would not like their identity and details to be made public.

1.10. Definition of terms / operational definitions

Recidivism: is the act of a person repeating an undesirable behavior after they had either experienced negative consequences of that behavior, or had been trained to extinguish that behavior.

Prisoner: means any person, whether convicted or not, under detention in any prison or correctional facility.

Inmates: Offenders housed under one roof or dormitory

Vocational skills: Hands on or practical activities aimed at reducing inmate recidivism

Efficiency: The amount of resources used to achieve a goal.

Effectiveness: The degree to which the employee achieves a stated goal.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

Chapter two discusses livelihood, family, society, social connections and expectations upon release, collateral consequences, systemic changes, early life factors, in-custody behaviours and experiences and employment and recidivism among others.

2.1. Overview of recidivism

Recidivism or prisoner reentry has emerged as one of the foremost social problems of the twenty-first century and for that reason, it has garnered considerable attention from scholars interested in developing and testing theories of crime and social change, understanding the process and experience of reentry, and identifying and evaluating ways to improve successful inmate transitions back into society (Bushway, 2003). However, as Lattimore et. al., (2010), has recently emphasized, “despite some promising advances over the last two decades, it is clear that prisoner reentry remains an important and unresolved national issue.

This situation makes reentry of discharged prisoners to remain a prominent problem. Prison populations, for example, have continued to grow; inmate programming and services have declined relative to prison growth; and ex-prisoners face increasingly more barriers to civic engagement, housing, employment, and welfare benefits (Gideon and Sung, 2010; Lynch and Sabol, 2001; Petersilia, 2003; Travis, 2005; Weisberg and Petersilia, 2010). Such factors assume greater importance at a time when national and state economies have declined substantially (Gottschalk, 2010; Inman, 2010; Johnson, Collins and Singham, 2010) and when the profile of most inmates; poverty, limited education, health problems, histories of drug abuse and addiction, poor employment histories (Petersilia, 2005) places them at risk of being disproportionately affected by sustained down-turns in the economy.

Precisely because of this situation, a large body of scholarship has turned to examining programs, policies, and practices that can reduce recidivism. This work has identified a large array of efforts that have demonstrated effectiveness or show promise of effectiveness (Travis, 2005). Alongside of such research has been an emerging literature aimed at describing prisoner experiences during and after incarceration and how these experiences, as well as services, programs, and supervision, may affect recidivism. The 1992 federal Serious and Violent

Offender Reentry Initiative, for example, involved the allocation of over \$100 million in grants to states, with the goal of fostering greater policymaking and scholarly attention to understanding and improving the reentry process (Lattimore et al., 2010). There nonetheless remains a considerable need for studies that can provide greater insight into how incarceration experiences may affect re-entry, and, more broadly, how ex-prisoner recidivism can be reduced (Clear, 2010). Such studies have the potential not only to further efforts to reduce recidivism, but also to inform theoretical efforts aimed at understanding why some individuals turn away from or continue a life of crime.

Recidivism is, therefore, one of the most fundamental concepts in criminal justice which refers to a person's relapse into criminal behavior, often after the person receives sanctions or undergoes intervention for a previous crime. Recidivism is measured by criminal acts that resulted in re-arrest, reconviction or return to prison with or without a new sentence during a three-year period following the prisoner's release (Freeman, 1992). According to Petersilia (2003), the difficulties of prisoners returning home are well-documented in the literature. Released prisoners typically face obstacles in obtaining employment and stable housing often due to lack of work skills, stigma, and low levels of educational attainment (Petersilia, 2003).

2.2. Livelihood

According to Freeman (1992), many prisoners have limited education and work experience, which makes it difficult for them to secure employment after they are released. According to several studies, “about 70 percent of offenders and ex-offenders are high school dropouts, Freeman (1992)”. As a result of incarceration and involvement in the criminal justice system, many former prisoners are viewed negatively by former employers or by individuals within their former professional networks, if they previously had one. The combination of a limited professional network and a conspicuous résumé gap can make it very difficult for ex-convicts to get an interview with a prospective employer.

As already highlighted above, the difficulties of prisoners returning home are well-documented in the literature. Released prisoners typically face obstacles in obtaining employment and stable housing often due to lack of work skills, stigma, and low levels of educational attainment

(Petersilia, 2003). Many also experience difficulties in returning to a problematic family and social environment, unresolved substance abuse and mental health problems, and numerous other challenges in establishing a conventional prosocial lifestyle (Petersilia, 2003; Visser and Travis, 2003). A typical situation for released offenders is arriving home “with very little money, resources, or social capital, and because of their felony record they are unable to obtain employment or find housing, Petersilia, (2003) argues that because of these deficits, successful reentry for many prison inmates is both difficult and unlikely”.

Besides, research has shown that offenders who are released from prison reenter their communities with a considerable likelihood of reoffending and eventual re-incarceration. The most recent large-scale national study on recidivism found that two thirds of prisoners released in 1994 were rearrested within 3 years and about one quarter were-incarcerated within that period (Langan and Levin, 2002). More recent studies at the state level suggest that recidivism rates are still high, including one study reporting that 22% of a sample of released offenders were re-incarcerated within a year of release (Visser, Yahner, and La Vigne, 2010) and other studies showing rates as high as 80%. On the other hand, for those who do not reoffend within 3 years of release, the likelihood of re-incarceration at a later time is greatly diminished (Greenfeld, 1985). Within 3 years, about 95% of released state inmates with drug use histories return to drug use (White, 1998), 67% of drug offenders are rearrested (41% for a new drug offense), 47% are reconvicted, and 25% are sentenced to prison for a new crime (Langan and Levin, 2002). The time to recidivism is shorter for drug-involved offenders than other types of offenders.

According to Sampson (2002), some have argued and demonstrated that criminal behavior is influenced not only by individual characteristics but also by the neighborhood characteristics (for example, concentrated disadvantage and lack of collective efficacy) in which individuals live. The neighborhood environmental context has been found to influence behavior above and beyond individual explanatory variables and may provide an important additional independent level of explanation for examining the likelihood of re-incarceration for offenders released back to the community (Kirk, 2009). Perhaps one of the more important community influences on criminal behavior is the offender’s social networks in the neighborhood. Interactions with criminally involved peer networks in the community may increase the likelihood of reoffending (Andrews et al., 2006) and these networks have a spatial expression. That is, one would expect to

see a “spatial contagion” effect living in proximity to others who are reoffending will increase the likelihood of an individual also reoffending.

Many prisoners have limited education and work experience, which makes it difficult for them to secure employment after they are released. According to several studies, “about 70 percent of offenders and ex-offenders are high school dropouts.” As a result of incarceration and involvement in the criminal justice system, many former prisoners are viewed negatively by former employers or by individuals within their former professional networks, if they previously had one. The combination of a limited professional network and a conspicuous resume gap can make it very difficult for ex-convicts to get an interview with a prospective employer.

According to the Urban Institute, around 75% of formerly incarcerated men have a history of substance abuse, and a significant percentage suffer from physical and mental health issues (that is; 15 percent to 20 percent report emotional disorders). That limits their employability in that employers may not view them as “job ready” (Holzer, 2003).

Many employers worry about being sued for damages resulting from “negligent hiring.” An employer can be held liable for exposing the public to a potentially dangerous individual, so many balk at the idea of hiring someone with a criminal record. Holzer (2003) adds that in 72 percent of negligent hiring cases, employers have lost and faced an average settlement of \$1.6 million, powerful disincentive to hire potentially “risky” individuals.

Fortunately for many former inmates, employer interest in an ex-offender rises when they find out that the crime was nonviolent or drug-related. Hozler (2003) argues that; so long as the individual remains drug-free and has gained relevant work experience (either inside or outside of prison); there is more employer interest in hiring.

2.3.Family

Studies have shown that prisoners who maintain consistent contact and connection with their families during their sentences have a lower recidivism rate than those who do not (Women Prison Association 1996). Over half of incarcerated adults are parents of minor children, which means they may miss out on many of their children's critical and formative years (Harrison and Beck 2002). Unfortunately, there are obstacles to maintaining consistent contact with family, and challenges for ex-offenders once released.

Adams (1992) has emphasized, the "loss of contact with the outside world, especially with regard to family members and other persons with whom significant relationships have been established, is a burdensome experience for the majority of inmates" that may have consequences for reentry. A focus on family visitation thus is responsive to calls for prisoner reentry scholarship that identifies ways in which in-prison experiences and social ties influence recidivism (Travis, 2003). Also, many theoretical arguments have been advanced that persuasively argue that family visitation should reduce recidivism.

Visitation has long been a feature of prison systems (Adams and Fischer, 1976). However, it has not always been enthusiastically embraced by corrections officials despite arguments that inmate ties to communities may improve prisoner adjustment and reduce recidivism (Bales and Mears, 2008). Bales and Mears (2008), further states that with the growth in prison populations and the concomitant concern about ex-prisoners and their transition back into society, there is renewed interest in efforts, such as family visitation that may improve re-entry outcomes.

Despite the arguments for viewing family visitation as an effective tool for reducing recidivism, the evidence to date is in fact limited. Indeed, as one recent study found, the evidence "remains scant and is mixed" (Bales and Mears, 2008). A few empirical studies were found that examined how being visited affects prisoner reentry and the studies that investigated visitation and recidivism typically did not employ multivariate models or other approaches to controlling for selection bias. Other problems were identified as well. For example, extant work, dating back to pioneering work typically has focused only on inmates from one facility, on a special program such as furlough or home visitation, on just one type of visitation, such as visits from spouses or family, or on recidivism in general rather than on different types. Bales and Mears' (2008)

research overcame several of these problems and found that visitation indeed appeared to reduce recidivism. They did not, however, have complete visitation histories for the inmates in their sample and they did not employ a matching methodology for visitation in general or for types of visitation specifically; they also did not examine how visitation may influence different types of recidivism. Other recent work suggests that inmate social ties to the outside world may contribute to reduced recidivism (La Vigne and Travis, 2004), but these studies have not directly measured in-prison visitation or in turn, whether, net of a range of factors, it is associated with less recidivism.

Hairston (1988), states that visitation may sustain or strengthen an inmate's social bond and by extension, insulate or constrain him or her from an impulsion to engage in crime. The continuation or activation of social ties to the outside world while residing in a prison setting may assume particular importance because the theory anticipates that the bond must be sustained to exert an effect. "Visitations offer inmates the only face-to-face opportunities they have to preserve or restore relationships that have been severed by imprisonment". Visits do appear to improve inmates' post-release family relationships (La Vigne, Naser, Brooks, and Castro, 2005). These relationships in turn provide a vehicle through which informal social control, vis-a-vis social bond, can be exerted during and after incarceration. They also may affect the extent to which incarceration serves as a harmful turning point in the life course of crime. By this logic, greater numbers of family visits should cause greater reductions in recidivism because each additional visit should further strengthen an inmate's social bond.

Also, visitation may temper the strain that inmates feel during and after incarceration. The premise for anticipating such an effect flows from the observation that prison entails many deprivations not least of which is the potential loss of social ties that inmates had prior to imprisonment (Adams, 1992). As inmate accounts and reviews of the prison adjustment, literature suggests one of the central concerns that inmates express is the isolation from the social networks in which they previously belonged and participated (Adams, 1992). Accordingly, from a general strain theory (Agnew, 2006) perspective, visitation may reduce the feelings of loss, frustration, and hopelessness associated with having one's ties to family, friends, and community severed (Adams, 1992). At the same time, it may provide, as Hairston (1988) has argued, a

source of support for coping with and surviving prison, especially those aspects; the “variety of negative stimuli” (Agnew, 2006) that are strain-inducing and that create a criminogenic effect. In addition, family visitation may sustain or create social networks that, upon release, enable ex-prisoners to negotiate challenges and barriers to successful reentry and so reduce the strains that confront released inmates (Travis, 2005). This perspective, too, anticipates additive beneficial effects of multiple family visits on recidivism, because a single visit may be an insufficient buffer against the strains of imprisonment.

Additionally, family visitation may temper potential labeling effects associated with incarceration. The experience of imprisonment can lead an inmate to develop or cement an identity as “offender,” and incarceration itself can result in society labeling him or her as “offender” recent work illustrates how these processes can unfold and how social support can help ex-prisoners to view themselves less as “offenders”, despite the myriad social forces that serve to reinforce an ex-prisoner’s status as, first and foremost, a criminal (Petersilia, 2003; Travis, 2005) and more as prosocial individuals who have something different than crime to offer the world. Viewed in this way, visits by the family during incarceration can enable prisoners, upon release, to avoid labeling influences and in turn, recidivism. Here, again, a labeling approach suggests that there may be an additive effect of visitation on recidivism.

Further, family visitation may, as noted above, sustain or create social relationships that provide ex-prisoners with access to resources and support, including assistance with obtaining housing, employment, and social services (Hairston, 1988). For instance, ex-inmates who received family visits are more likely to report having relatives who can help them find jobs, battle addictions, and make ends meet (La Vigne et al., 2005). Such assistance may reduce the likelihood of offending through a range of mechanisms, including increasing social bonds, reducing strain, and allowing for changes in self-identity and self- and other-labeling. Regardless of the intervening mechanism specified, the central notion highlighted by both social support theory (Cullen, 1994) and social capital theory (Sampson and Laub, 1993; Cullen, 2001) is that relationships are central to how individuals think about themselves and negotiate the social world. Activities such as visitation that facilitate continued contact with or upon release from prison, access to social networks provide a critical platform from which to avoid criminogenic influences and to become

exposed to, or enmeshed in, prosocial influences. To the extent that visits strengthen inmates' ties to people who later provide instrumental support (Berg and Huebner, 2010), we can anticipate that visitation by the family members may have the greatest effect on property offending among others.

Society has several hurdles to successful reintegration of the discharged prisoners. The following are seven major obstacles to parent-child visitation in prison, which unfortunately largely remain obstacles and result in recidivism (Andrews and Bonta, 2010a):

- Insufficient information about visiting procedures
- Proximity of prison facilities; incarcerated men are, on average, few miles away from their children; incarcerated women are, on average, several miles away from their children
- Family inability to afford transportation to the prison
- Difficulty scheduling visits
- Visiting procedures are humiliating or uncomfortable
- Visiting areas are inhospitable for children
- Foster parents are unwilling to aid in visits

Andrews and Bonta (2010a), further adds that once ex-offenders return home, they are dependent on family members and must overcome years of limited contact, potential resentment, and a change in the household dynamic. According to the Urban Institute Justice Policy Center, just before release, 82 percent of ex-offenders thought it would be easy to renew family relationships; after returning home, over half reported it was more difficult than expected. Family members often assume a new financial and emotional burden when ex-offenders return home, having to support a dependent adult.

To ease reconnecting with family and lost years of parenting experience, some prisons have programmes to improve parenting skills. Although there is evidence that such prison-based programs are effective and beneficial for prisoners and their families, participation in such programs has declined in recent years (Berg and Huebner, 2010).

2.5. Individual-level predictors of recidivism

Given the high rates of persistent criminal activity and reincarceration among released prisoners and the resulting economic and human toll on communities, victims, offenders, and their families, it is understandable that there is such a substantial body of research and much theoretical discussion on how best to predict recidivism, as well as how to design strategies, interventions, and programs to reduce the likelihood of reoffending (Andrews and Bonta, 2010a) developed the Risk-Needs-Responsivity (R-N-R) model (Andrews et al., 1990; Andrews et al., 2006), which “has had considerable impact within justice and corrections in different regions” (Andrews and Bonta, 2010b). The risk factors described in this model were identified from a meta-analysis of prior research and include criminogenic factors that appear to increase the likelihood for reoffending: antisocial personality, procriminal attitudes, association with antisocial peers, social support for crime, substance abuse, poor family/marital relationships, school/work problems, lack of prosocial recreational activities, and past criminal history. This R-N-R model has been widely used in assessing offender treatment needs and in planning individual programmatic interventions based on the principles of “risk” (providing the most intensive treatment for those at highest levels of risk), “need” (matching services to specific criminogenic needs), and “responsivity” (matching the mode of services to the individual learning styles and abilities of the offender).

Aside from criminal history, these risk factors are all “dynamic” in the sense that they can change over time, and therefore, interventions can be developed to address these criminogenic domains of need (Andrews and Bonta, 1994). “Static” factors such as criminal history, age, gender, and race may also be predictive of recidivism, but these are not amenable to change and therefore cannot be targeted for interventions on an individual level. There has been extensive research examining the relationship between both kinds of these factors and recidivism. Indeed, Singh and Fazel (2010) identified 40 review articles and meta-analyses that examined the findings from 2,232 studies investigating various predictors of recidivism. Among the static factors that have been identified as predictors of recidivism are recent release, with the risk for reoffending declining over time (Huebner and Berg, 2011), prior arrests and prison sentences being African American (Gendreau et al., 1996; Steen and Opsal, 2007; Wehrman, 2010), male gender (Langan and Levin, 2002), and younger age (Huebner and Berg, 2011; Langan and Levin,

2002). Although statistically African Americans may have a greater likelihood of recidivism, this may reflect other factors that differentially affect blacks compared to other racial groups (poverty, unemployment, or racial bias). There is some evidence to suggest that predictors of recidivism are similar for both men and women (Makarios et al., 2010). Finally, type of offense appears to be related to recidivism, with property and drug offenses associated with greater risk.

Research on dynamic risk factors can potentially lead to the development of prison or community-based programs and interventions that can address offender needs and potentially lower the probability of reincarceration after release (Andrews and Bonta, 2010a, 2010b). The stigma of a prison record, low educational attainment, and lack of job skills among released offenders can create substantial barriers for finding employment and stable housing after release (Petersilia, 2003). For instance, lack of stable housing upon release (Makarios et al., 2010) and low educational attainment have been shown to increase the risk of recidivism. Stable employment reduces reoffending, although Bucklen and Zajac (2009) did not find that job acquisition predicted successful parole.

Marriage and reconnecting with the family can act as buffers to increase the likelihood of successful reentry because family members often provide a considerable amount of the tangible as well as emotional support for offenders initially after release (Sampson and Laub, 1993; Visher and Travis, 2003). However, some research suggests that returning home can also increase the likelihood of recidivism (Huebner and Berg, 2011), possibly because they may return to the same criminogenic social networks.

One of the strongest dynamic predictors of recidivism is drug involvement and continued drug use and the connections between the abuse of illegal drugs and crime have been well-documented (Belenko and Peugh, 2005). Histories of illegal drug use are common among inmates and other offenders, and more than 80% have indications of serious drug or alcohol involvement (Belenko and Peugh, 2005). National surveys of state prison inmates indicate that 82% of state prison inmates reported a lifetime use of an illegal drug and more than two thirds (68%) report having ever used illegal drugs regularly (Mumola and Karberg, 2006). In addition, 32% were under the influence of drugs at the time of the offense, and 16.5% reported committing their crime to get money to buy drugs.

Substance abuse may affect the likelihood of reoffending in multiple ways: by increasing financial needs at the same time as reducing the likelihood of obtaining and maintaining employment and family support, increasing the likelihood of reconnecting with negative peer social networks, committing other offenses while under the influence.

2.6. Society, Social Connections, and Expectations Upon Release

When ex-offenders are released from prison, they tend to find that their expectations for returning to normal life are not always realistic. This is especially true for prisoners who serve lengthy incarcerations because they are likely to face advances in technologies that are essential in new job markets and lack training that makes them viable candidates.

Most of the prior empirical and theoretical literature focuses on individual and social factors associated with recidivism. Only recently have empirical studies begun to investigate the role of the neighborhood environment on reentry outcomes. The focus on individual characteristics has occurred because the risk of reoffending has traditionally been viewed as individually determined. This perspective, however, ignores the body of evidence concerning the strong independent influence of neighborhood contextual factors that have been found to affect various other behavioral and health risk factors and outcomes, in such diverse domains as coronary heart disease and adult physical health (Diez-Roux, 2001), mental health disorders as well as criminal behavior. As Sampson et al. (2002) conclude in their review of the “neighborhood effects” research that investigates the relationship between crime and the neighborhood context, “the weight of evidence suggests that there are geographic ‘hot spots’ for crime and problem-related behaviors and that such hot spots are characterized by the concentration of multiple forms of disadvantage”.

If there is a relationship between neighborhood characteristics and crime, then it seems logical that there should also be a relationship between neighborhood context and recidivism for released inmates. Where ex-offenders live greatly affects their accessibility to both opportunities for institutional resources as well as personal networks that affect reentry outcomes (Clear, 2010). As Akers (1985) conclude, the “neighborhood context is fundamental to our understanding of why individuals offend, and potentially even more important for understanding

why former offenders offend again, yet we know very little about how the ecological characteristics of communities influence the recidivism rates of this population”

Only a few studies have actually examined the influence of the neighborhood context on recidivism empirically, and the findings have been mixed. One of the earliest studies to examine the effect of neighborhood context on recidivism found some small interaction effects between offender characteristics and neighborhood environmental context but no direct neighborhood influences. In contrast, Mumola and Karberg (2006) found strong neighborhood effects on rates of recidivism. Using data from different regions, they found that, controlling for individual characteristics, offenders returning to neighborhoods with higher levels of concentrated disadvantage were far more likely to be rearrested within 1 year than those returning to more affluent and resource-rich neighborhoods. The natural experiment that occurred as a result of Hurricane Katrina found evidence that ex-prisoners who relocated from devastated portions of New Orleans had reduced rates of recidivism compared to other former prisoners who could return to their old neighborhoods, suggesting some benefit deriving from a change in venue (Kirk, 2009). However, other recent studies did not find a similar relationship between neighborhood disadvantage and either timing of reconviction (Huebner, Varano, and Bynum, 2007) or risk of felony reconviction.

Recent research on the relationship between neighborhood context and recidivism among juvenile offenders is also informative. Harriston (1998) suggest that concentrated disadvantage and social capital influence drug offense recidivism, but not other types of offenses. Adams and Fischer (1976) observed that not only did certain individual factors such as ethnicity, parental criminality, and juvenile justice history predict recidivism but also a variable they termed spatial contagion. The concept of spatial contagion is derived from the notion of “peer contagion” in the youth criminal justice literature that posits that the likelihood of deviant behavior is increased through association with other deviant youth (Andrews et al., 2006).

Some have argued and demonstrated that criminal behavior is influenced not only by individual characteristics but also by the neighborhood characteristics (concentrated disadvantage, lack of collective efficacy) in which individuals live (Sampson, Morenoff, and Gannon-Rowley, 2002). The neighborhood environmental context has been found to influence behavior above and

beyond individual explanatory variables and may provide an important additional independent level of explanation for examining the likelihood of re-incarceration for offenders released back to the community (Kirk, 2009). Perhaps one of the more important community influences on criminal behavior is the offender's social networks in the neighborhood. Interactions with criminally involved peer networks in the community may increase the likelihood of reoffending (Andrews et al., 2006), and these networks have a spatial expression. That is, one would expect to see a "spatial contagion" effect living in proximity to others who are reoffending will increase the likelihood of an individual also reoffending.

According Dooley et. al., (2014), offenders who re-enter the prison system tend to come from a concentrated set of communities, which have "above-average rates for unemployment, percent female-headed households, and percent of families living below the poverty level." Dooley et. al., (2014), further adds that ex-offenders face massive obstacles when searching for employment anywhere, so to return with this disadvantage to an area that likely has low job prospects increases the likelihood of unemployment.

According to the one study, it revealed that it is not clear why prison officers were not considered helpful post-release (they were often given high marks for professionalism and accuracy of shared information, but still not considered "useful"). The information suggests that many prisoners who received after care help by officers did not expect it and may have entered the relationship with their officers with pre-engendered negative feelings toward them (Yeager, 2012).

Further, David Yeager, a social worker who works with older inmates who have served long sentences and have been out of society for an extended period and stated that that the two biggest adjustment challenges are living with less structure and having fewer social contacts. Prison life is extremely structured, and prisoners with long sentences become accustomed to it, resulting in feelings of shock and deep distress by its absence in the outside world. While they may return to their home communities or families, their social networks may no longer exist or have changed. This means released inmates must rebuild or create new social networks.

Besides, discharged prisoners may need to learn new ways of living. One of the most unexpected adjustments can be learning new technologies that replaced traditional systems. For example, prisoners with medium- or long-term sentences may have never used a smart phone or metro card. These may seem like minor adjustments to most of us since we experienced these changes gradually, but to learn them all at once, and to have them replace old routines, can be both difficult and disorienting.

Another obstacle facing released offenders who want to start a new life is the stigma of being an ex-convict (Dooley et. al., 2014). The stigma exists everywhere in their community: friends, workplace, even in the home, and follows the released wherever they go and obstructs a new way of life. Furthermore, most released prisoners don't know how to follow the rapid changes in society following a long period in prison. This leads to frustration and often contributes to them giving up in their struggle for a new life.

Dooley et. al., 2014, revealed that the two or three month period just after release, ex-prisoners can easily become vulnerable, socially and psychologically. Therefore, people refer to this period as the crime incubation period. If there is not enough support and care for released persons during this time it's very difficult to expect offenders to start a new life. Unfortunately, it is not easy to meet those support and care needs at this moment.

Further, in terms of behaviour and experiences in the community criminogenic needs practiced before or after custody, such as insecure accommodation, employment needs and substance misuse are identified as good predictors, even after controlling for criminal history, reinforcing the importance of interventions to address these issues in order to reduce re-offending. Specifically:

- Offenders who were homeless or living in temporary accommodation prior to their prison sentence were more likely to re-offend on release than those with more stable accommodation
- Offenders who reported Class A drug use after custody were more likely to re-offend than those who did not

- Prisoners who reported being employed at some point in the 12 months before custody were less likely to re-offend than those who had not been employed during the same period.

2.7.Collateral Consequences

Collateral consequences are legal restrictions unrelated to the original crime that apply to ex-offenders after their release from prison (Dooley et. al., 2014). This includes things like inability to access employment in the public sector.

The statistics highlight the tens of thousands of legal restrictions imposed on ex-offenders that they didn't face before their convictions. Some are explicit and permanent, such as an inability to apply for grants. Others are vaguely worded, and administrators often assume the strictest interpretation. For example, ex-offenders are not banned from public housing, although housing administrators can use a criminal record as cause to reject a candidate. Many housing administrators incorrectly think that they are required to turn down applicants with a criminal record, creating a widespread de facto ban on public housing.

2.8.Systemic Changes

The government should not use criminal history to screen out applicants before we even look at their qualifications. It is relevant to find out whether somebody has a criminal record.

There are a lot of legal barriers which the ex-prisoners face which become obstacles to assume productive and constructive roles in society after being discharged from prisons. Holzer et al.,(1996) states that in certain circumstances, ex-offenders are permanently banned from public employment, and most states have restrictions on the work of returning inmates in certain fields, such as jobs requiring contact with children, certain health services occupations, and employment with firms providing security services. Many ex-offenders in both private and public institutions routinely face employment discrimination based solely on having a criminal record, regardless of whether the former offense would affect their job performance or the safety of others.

Several states have laws that explicitly protect ex-offenders from discrimination based solely on having a criminal record when the offense does not relate to the job or pose a public safety threat

(Fishman 2002). Wisconsin, in particular, has significant safeguards to enable ex-offenders to obtain gainful employment. There is need to formulate laws to bar discrimination against ex-offenders in the private and public sectors, but specifically it should require that ex-offenders be excluded from jobs when their convicted crimes are “substantially related” to the circumstances of the position they seek.

Further, in many areas, an employer may be held legally liable for the criminal actions of its employees. Under the theory of negligent hiring, if an employer knows, or should have known, that an employee has a criminal past, that employer may be liable for criminal acts committed by the employee (Bushway, 1996).

2.9. Early life factors

Research has found that offenders who reported regularly playing truant from school as a child were more likely to go on to re-offend on release than those who did not.

Theoretical support for this concept comes from the mechanism of differential association theory and differential reinforcement theories (Akers, 1985) found that the spatial manifestation of peer contagion strongly influenced the likelihood of recidivism among delinquent youth. The likelihood of recidivism was enhanced by proximity to others who reoffended. Although the relationship between spatial contagion and recidivism has not yet been examined among adult offender populations, it is conceivable that the same mechanisms may also occur with adult ex-offenders. That is, living in proximity to ex-offenders who become re-incarcerated may increase the likelihood of recidivism, consistent with differential association theory (Akers, 1985). This may reflect the influence of negative peer associations within the neighborhood; more generally, association with deviant peers has been cited as a key risk factor for criminal behavior within the R-N-R framework (Andrews and Bonta, 2010a).

Besides, adverse childhood events have high rates of prevalence amongst the prison population (such as witnessing violence in the home, experiencing abuse, and being taken into care) and different levels of re-offending can be observed in the many offenders who experiences imprisonment (Dooley et. al., 2014). It is likely that these factors are associated with the

commencement of a criminal career (rather than re-offending specifically), emphasising the importance of preventative interventions, such as early childhood and familial interventions.

Reconviction in the year after release from prison can be linked to the prisoners' backgrounds, with a higher risk of reconviction amongst prisoners who report of having suffered abuse or witnessed violence in the home as a child; having been taken into care as a child; having been permanently excluded from school; having no academic qualifications; and having family members who had been convicted of a non-motoring criminal offence. Associations between prisoners' criminal histories (using self-reported and PNC variables) and re-offending on release are also reported (Dooley et. al., 2014). Dynamic factors relating to prisoners' immediate pre-custody situation can also be found to be important, with higher risk of reconviction amongst regular drug and alcohol users, those who were homeless or living in temporary accommodation prior to their sentence, and those who had not been in employment in the year prior to their sentence.

2.10. In-custody behaviours and experiences

According to Bales and Mears (2008), the offenders who are less willing to follow prison rules (that is, those who received additional punishment while in prison) are more likely to re-offend, after controlling for other factors; this suggests that there may be opportunity to identify and target a group of offenders for further engagement to reduce re-offending among the ex-prisoners. Bales and Mears (2008), further adds that Offenders who reported in their first interview in prison that they felt worried about spending time in prison are less likely to re-offend on release, compared with those who do not report feeling worried (after controlling for other factors, including previous offending). Differences are observed in re-offending levels according to participation in activities during custody such as paid work, interventions and family visits, however these do not remain significant once they enter into the model; this means that these factors are not independently associated with re-offending after release Bales and Mears (2008). These results may reflect study design limitations and in particular sample sizes.

Also, In-custody activities may be associated with offenders achieving other intermediate outcomes that support desistance. Prison-based activities such as family visits, paid work and

other interventions are important for engaging with offenders' attitudes, increasing their skills before release, keeping them occupied and strengthening and maintaining family ties.

2.11. Employment and recidivism

Most research regarding recidivism indicates that those ex-inmates that obtain employment after release from prison tend to have lower rates of recidivism. However, if employment opportunities become limited after release from prison, the ex-offender may relapse and find themselves back into prison. To enhance the employment of ex-offenders in the society, there need for stakeholders to liaise with employers and union representatives suggest that the following strategies could help alleviate some employer concerns and foster better connections between employers seeking to hire and ex-offenders seeking to work (Holzer, 2003):

- Provide structured transitional employment opportunities so that ex-offenders can build positive work experience and references upon release from prison;
- Increase and strengthen training in both soft and hard skills, and create more partnerships with employers to match technical training with their industry needs; and
- Create a marketing campaign to educate employers about how and where to hire qualified ex-offenders, available government incentives, and successes experienced by employers that have hired ex-offenders.

According to Holzer (2003), a great number of employers are reluctant to hire individuals with a criminal past, citing lack of skills and work history, untrustworthiness, and fear of liability for negligent hiring, among other things. Studies of employer attitudes and behavior have found the following themes with regard to hiring ex-offenders:

- Employers' use of criminal history background checks has increased over the past decade but is still not pervasive (Holzer, 2003)
- Employers are less willing to hire ex-offenders than any other disadvantaged group.
- Employers' willingness to hire ex-offenders varies according to the industry and position, the type and severity of offense committed by the applicant, and work experience since release
- Employers are not always consistent in what they say versus what they do when it comes to hiring ex-offenders

- Black applicants are more stigmatized by a criminal record than white applicants

In a 1996 study by Holzer 2003, almost two-thirds of employers surveyed in several major metropolitan areas, including Boston, revealed that they would not knowingly hire an ex-offender. Holzer, (1996) states that employers show how the type and severity of crime also influences employers' willingness to hire. When employers are asked whether they would consider hiring someone who had been convicted of a misdemeanor offense, most of them respond in the affirmative. However, these numbers drop dramatically for felony convictions among ex-inmates.

A 2003 study by Holzer found that employers' attitude toward hiring may be inconsistent with their actual hiring behavior. The Pager study looked at inconsistencies in hiring practices, including racial disparities. In the first stage of the study, pairs of young men were sent to apply, in person, for a total of 350 entry-level jobs (one member of the pair with a fictional criminal record and one without). Employer preference was measured by the number of return calls received by each applicant. Return calls were received by 34% of white applicants without a criminal record, 17% of white applicants with a criminal record, 14% of black applicants without a criminal record, and 5% of black applicants with a criminal record. When these same employers were surveyed by telephone several months later, in contrast to their actual behavior, 60% responded that they were somewhat or very likely to hire a drug offender regardless of the applicant's race (Holzer, 2003).

Survey research by Holzer in California (2003) found that industries most willing to hire ex-offenders are those that require little customer contact, including manufacturing, construction, and transportation, while service industries represented those most unwilling to hire ex-offenders. Even when formal skills are not required, virtually all employers expect employees to have basic job readiness skills, including the ability to show up every day on time, work hard, and be trustworthy.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0.Introduction

This chapter presents the outline of the procedure and approach that was followed in conducting the study. It gives a detailed presentation of the study location, research design, sampling procedures and sample size, target population, data collection instrument used as well as data analysis methods and presentation.

3.2.Study location

The study was conducted at Maximum Security Correctional Facility, in Kabwe, Central Province.

3.3. Research design

The basic design which was used in this study is the causal-comparative (ex post facto). In the causal-comparative or ex post facto research, the researcher attempts to determine the cause, or reason for existing differences in the behaviour or status of groups of individuals as defined by Bales and Mears (2008). When it is observed that groups differ on some variable, the researcher attempts to identify the major factor that has led to this difference. Causal-comparative studies are important in social science because several social variables cannot be manipulated and be used for experimental research. The research was both quantitative and qualitative in nature. In general, quantitative research specifies numerical assignment to the phenomena under study, whereas qualitative research produces narrative or textual descriptions of the phenomena under study.

3.4. Target population

A population is any group of individuals with at least one common characteristic which distinguishes that group from other individuals (Best et. al., 2006). The population in this study consisted of the 200 members of staff and inmates at Maximum Security Correctional Facility. The population also included the discharged prisoners who have recidivated in the past.

3.5. Sampling technique

The purposive sampling technique was used in coming up with the study sample for the correctional officers who were to be interviewed. Agnew (2006) defines purposive sampling as “a feature of qualitative research where researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgment of the typicality or possession of the particular characteristics being sought.” Besides, purposive sampling is a non probability sampling in which the decision concerning the individuals to be included in the sample was taken by the researcher based on the fact that these individuals (correctional officers) have been around long enough to have the knowledge of the research issue and also the willingness to participate in the research. This technique was also chosen because the sample size of the study was quite small when compared with probability sampling technique. The researcher chose to use senior and middle managers as well as subordinates because they had the information that was required to fulfill the research objectives of the study.

A multi-stage sampling technique was employed in coming up with a sample for the prisoners. In this regard, from the list of all prison inmates at Mukobeko Maximum Security Correctional Facility, the prison inmates were categorised into recidivists and non-recidivists. The rationale for the choice of this sampling technique was to ensure that only inmates who had a record of recidivism could participate in the study. After this stage a random number table was prepared so that any inmate on the recidivist list could participate in the study.

3.6. Sample size

According to Best et. al., (2006), a sample is a small proportion of the population that is selected for observation. In this study, the sample comprised of 65 recidivates and 35 Correctional officers. Besides, the sample size included the prisoners with offence types ranging from thefts, assaults and drug related offences.

3.7. Research instruments

The study made use of a questionnaire which had both structured and qualitative questions as the primary instrument for data collection. The questionnaires contained demographic information of the respondents, work experience, personal experiences on social as well as economic factors that the respondents attribute recidivism to.

Specifically, the major research instrument used was Male Recidivist Personal Data Questionnaire (MRPDQ) and interview guide. The MRPDQ is a self-designed, self-report instrument which was used to obtain biographical data such as age, family background, marital status, nature of offence, number of times of conviction among others from the participants. The biographical data was used for the descriptive statistics.

Questionnaire was the most preferable data collection instrument for the study because the respondents were almost always busy during working hours thus making it difficult to fix time for interviews. Besides, the senior management of the organization would not like to be observed while they are working thus making the observation method not appropriate for this study.

The researcher also supplemented the questionnaires with the interview guide due to the fact that some of the prisoners had poor educational background and very low literacy levels (as highlighted in the literature review) and could not manage to fill in the questionnaires.

3.8. Ethical issues

A letter of approval was obtained from the Zambia Correctional Service (ZCS) Headquarters to conduct the study at the Mukobeko Maximum Security Correctional Facility. The letter of approval was presented to the Officer In-Charge at the prison. Besides, an informed consent for the participants was obtained before the commencement of each interview. Participants were informed that anyone was free to opt out of the interview at any time.

3.9. Data collection procedure

Data for the study was collected by the researcher using interview guide (for inmates only) and self-administered questionnaires (for correctional officers and some inmates). The respondents were required to answer questions that were highlighted in the interview guide and also filling in the questionnaires by answering a number of questions.

In terms of recidivists who are inside the correctional facility, the intelligence officer helped in providing the list of prison inmates from where the list of recidivists was drawn while the reception officers at the prison assisted in arranging the recidivists in the hall which was used for the study. The researcher introduced himself and briefed the participants on what the research work was all about. After the briefing, those who were interested in participating in the study remained while the others left the venue. At that point a verbal consent from the participants was obtained. The researcher with the help of two reception officers in the prison administered the instruments to the participants while the researcher gave instructions on how to capture data using the interview guide. It took about three hours to complete the process. The researcher provided the participants with an information session on recidivism and expressed his appreciation to the participants for sparing some time to participate in the research study.

For correctional officers, data for the study was collected by the researcher using self-administered questionnaires. The respondents were free to answer the questions according to their own conscience without being compelled to satisfy the researcher. Information from these questionnaires constituted the primary data for the study.

3.10. Data analysis and presentation

Data was analyzed using two statistical packages, Microsoft Excel and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. The analysis was mainly based on descriptive statistics for the major variables of interest.

The data analysis was done by the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods. In general, quantitative method specifies numerical assignment to the phenomena under study. Besides, quantitative method ensures that data is classified into categories, themes and theory to allow

systematic analysis of the data collected, whereas qualitative method produces narrative or textual descriptions of the phenomena under study. With the two methods of analysis highlighted above, tables, charts and descriptive explanations were employed to illustrate data collected from the field to make the research findings more meaningful.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.0. Introduction

Chapter four presents a synthesis of findings from the sampled respondents. The findings from this research study reflect the key social and economic factors that contribute to recidivism among discharged prisoners.

4.1. Demographic characteristics of selected study sample

The study was designed to capture data from both male and female recidivists. However, study findings show that all the recidivists who are reported in the prison recidivist list are male. Therefore, the gender distribution of the respondents (recidivists) that participated in the research study was 100% male participants.

In terms of age distribution, majority of the recidivists are in the late teen to late youthful age groups. Statistically, the study findings reveal that 45% of the recidivists are in the age category of 30-39 years. This was followed by the 18-29 years age group which had 35% of the recidivists from the whole study sample. As indicated in the pie chart in figure 1, the number of recidivists tend to reduce with age. In this study the 40-49 years age category contributed 11% recidivists compared to 9% for those who are 50 years and older.

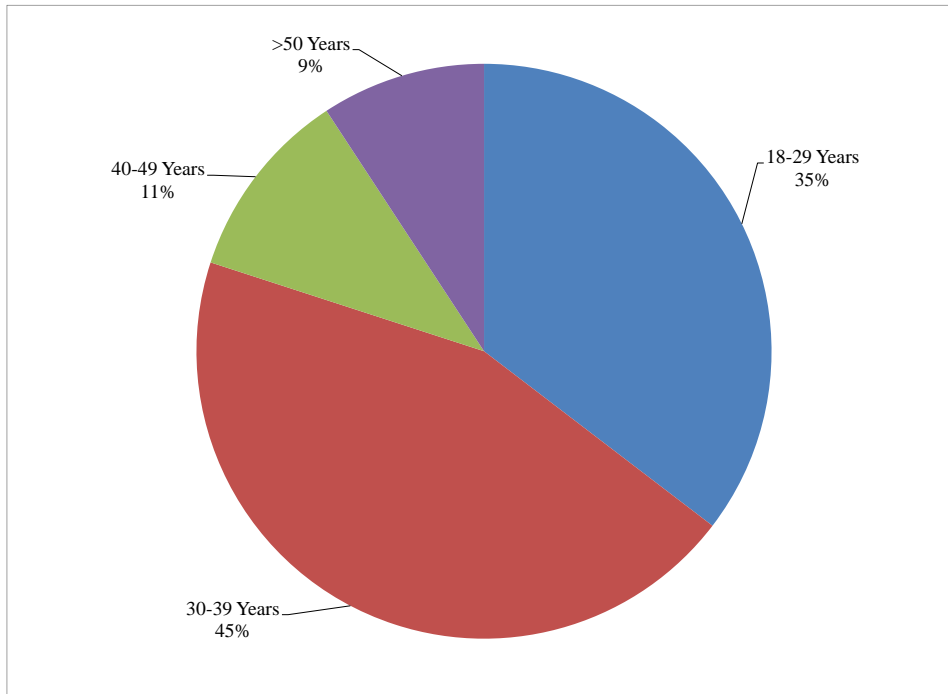


Figure 1. Percent share of Recidivists by age group

Source: Author, based on survey data

Family set up and responsibility was another social factor the study explored. Particularly, the study sought information on marital status of the recidivists. Findings, as reported in figure 2, indicate that 56.9% of the respondents were single with no marital commitments in their families. However 20% were married while 12.3% had divorced. Those who were separated constituted 6.2% and the widowed were 4.6%.

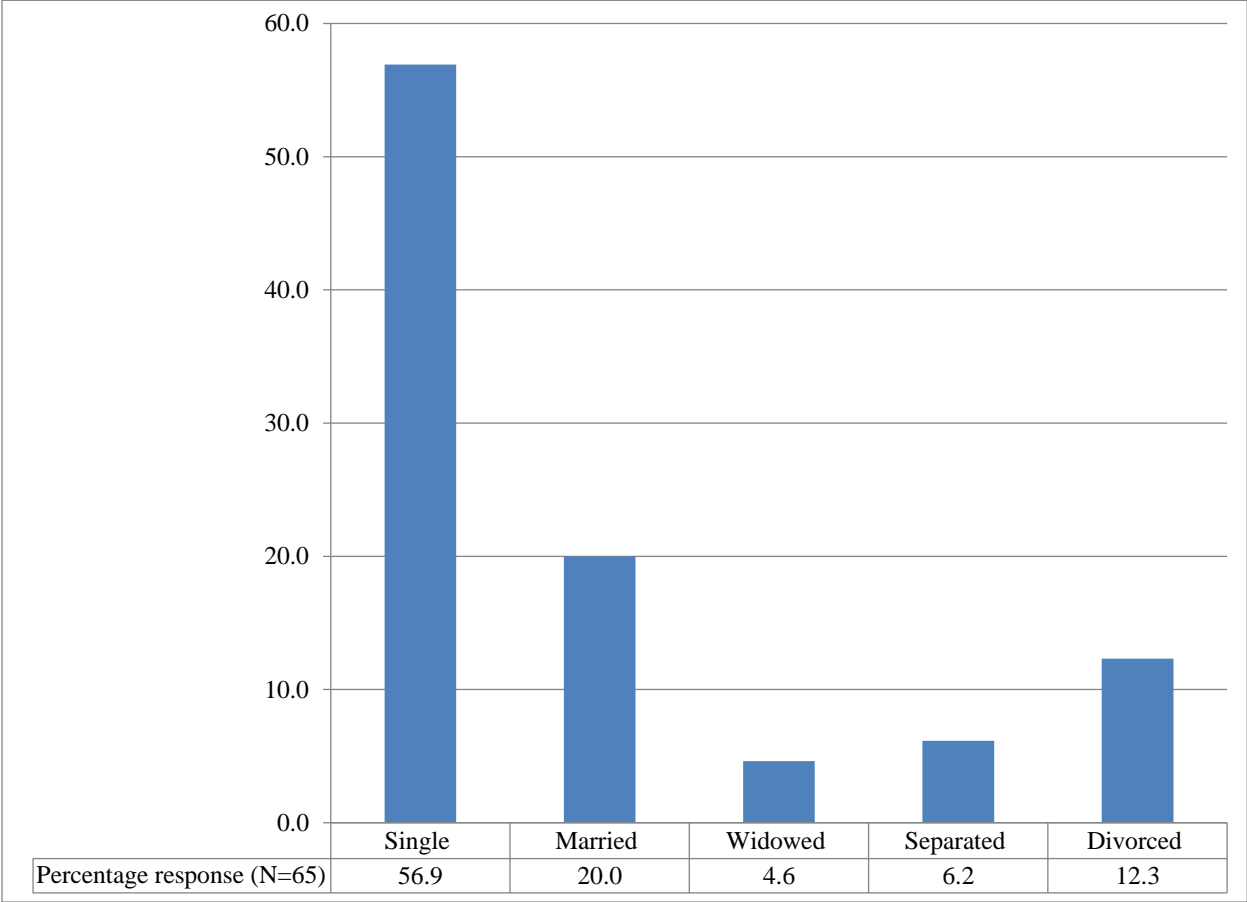


Figure 2. Marital status of sampled respondents

Source: Author, based on survey data

Education is a key pre-requisite to knowledge and acquisition of survival skills especially those skills that require some specialized level of understanding. Low literacy level accounts for cognitive and behavioural limitation in decision making as whether one should commit an offence or not. It also accounts for low interpretation of the law and hence committing offences time and again.

Study findings as represented in figure 3 reveal that about three quarters (76.9%) of the sampled recidivists have not acquired reasonable level of education and are basically in the illiterate category. The trends of responses also affirm the finding that education level is key in influencing an ex-convict’s chances of committing crime once discharged. The number of

recidivists who acquired secondary education was 16.9% while 6.5% represented those who have gone up to tertiary level.

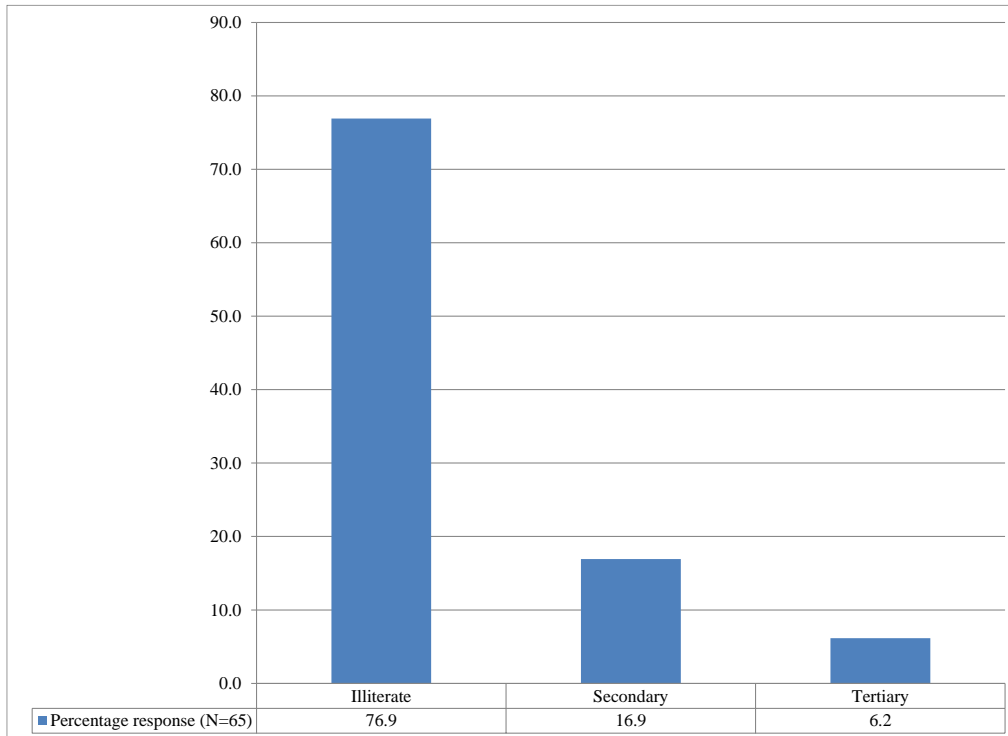


Figure 3. Highest education level achieved by recidivists

Source: Author, based on survey data

4.2.Nature of offences

The major offences committed by the recidivists were theft, assault and drug abuse related. The findings show that the recurring offences were dominated by offenders who committed theft related cases. Theft is a social challenge that is more related to poverty, unemployment, and to a greater extent lack of survival skills and low education level. In table 1, the study revealed that 36 (55%) respondents committed theft, 14 (22%) assault and 15 respondents representing 23% committed drug related offences.

Table 1. Percent response on nature of crime committed

Offence type	Percentage response
Thefts	55
Assaults	22
Drug related offences	23
Total	100

Source: Author, based on survey data

The sampled recidivists had a record of at least two previous convictions in their record before. The study findings (refer to Table2) show that majority (51%) of the respondents reported that they had two previous convictions before and were at the time of the survey serving a third conviction. On the other hand, 29% had served three convictions and were serving a fourth conviction while the rest (20%) have had more than three convictions before.

Table 2. Number of previous convictions

Number of convictions	Percentage
Twice	51
More than three times	20
At least three times	29
Total	100

Source: Author, based on survey data

4.3. Correctional officers' experiences on recidivism

Interviews with Correctional officers reported that most of the staff strongly agreed that ex-convicts with offences related to theft, physical assault and drug abuse are prone to recidivism.

Data in table 3 indicate that 80% of the Correctional staff agree that the discharged prisoners with offences of theft, assault and drug related crimes recidivate more, while 14% disagreed and 6% were not sure. The implication of the results confirm that the prisoners recidivate more likely on the basis or nature of the crime which could be related to livelihood issues such as socio-economic factors in family set-ups and society at large.

Table 3. Do discharged prisoners with offences of theft, assault and drug related crimes recidivate – Correctional Officers’ experiences?

Responses	Percentage
Strongly agree	43
Agree	37
Strongly disagree	11
Disagree	3
Not sure	6

Source: Author, based on survey data

4.4. Obstacles to successful re-integration in society

The study sought information from the recidivists on what they experienced as key challenges to re-integration back into society once discharged. These obstacles ranged from poor family acceptance, stigma, and limited economic survival skills among others.

4.4.1. Family and Society Role

The responses concerning the role of family and society in facilitating reintegration for discharged prisoners is highlighted in table 3. Responses from the majority (60%) of respondents reported that the family and society play a critical role in the reintegration of discharged prisoners. About 23% of the respondents reported that they were not sure if at all the family or society at large play a role in ex-convict re-integration in the public society. Almost one fifth of the interviewees (17%) indicated that neither the family nor society have a role to play in ex-convict re-integration. These findings show the importance of maintaining family ties between the prisoners and their families which in the long term has a positive bearing on lowering recidivism. On the other hand, lack of family ties during incarceration results in failure to trace families upon discharge and that may result in increased chances of re-engagement in crime due to frustrations.

Table 4. Response on role of family and society in prisoner re-integration

Responses	Percentage
Important	60
Not important	17
Not sure	23
Total	100

Source: Author, based on survey data

4.4.2. Trade and/or professional skill

Prisoner acquisition of some kind of survival skill in form of a trade or profession was found to be a critical issue for ex-prisoner re-integration in society. Findings from the survey give a report on the experiences that the interviewees have pertaining to the role of specialized skills on society re-integration among ex-prisoners. The primary data obtained from convicts indicate that 32% strongly agreed with the assertion that possession of marketable skills is critical in re-integration in society. However, 40% strongly disagreed with this assertion. About 48% of the respondents were not in agreement that discharged prisoners possess relevant and marketable skill required on the labour market, a situation which they felt could be a driving force for recidivism among ex-convicts.

Table 5. Do discharged prisoners possess marketable skills required for re-integration

Responses	Percentage
Strongly agree	32
Agree	8
Strongly disagree	40
Disagree	8
Not sure	12
Total	100

Source: Author, based on survey data

4.4.3. Correctional Officers' Experiences on obstacles to Ex-convict Re-integration

In order to capture the experiences and perceptions of the correctional staff on obstacles to ex-convict's obstacles to society re-integration, the study held individual interviews with the staff. Out of the total of 35 staff, 26 respondents representing 74% agreed that there are social factors which are posing serious challenges as obstacles to successful re-entry of prisoners in society. Four respondents representing 12% disagreed, whereas, 5 representing 14% were not sure.

The staff however, indicated that social and economic related obstacles to re-entry of prisoners back into society account for the increased influx of prisoners into the correctional facilities as evidenced by the high recidivism rates among offenders.

The major obstacle to society re-integration by ex-convicts as reported by 54% of the staff is the lack of specialized skills that could help them earn a living outside prison. However, some staff (23%) were not very sure of the major causes for recidivism. On the other hand, about 17% of the staff interviewed reported that most recidivists possess marketable skills even if they still engage themselves in crime that land them back into prison.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses findings that have been presented in chapter four above. The findings are related to social factors contributing to recidivism among discharged prisoners at Mukobeko Maximum Security Correctional Facility in Kabwe. This chapter relates the findings of the study to the existing literature, recidivism and practice. The discussion is presented thematically in line with research objectives of the study. Therefore, the objectives would be the titles under which the major findings of the study would be discussed. The objectives of the study were to:

- Identifying obstacles for successful re-entry of prisoners back into society.
- To determine the role of the family or society to discharged prisoners in terms of reducing recidivism.
- Investigate the level of skills prisoners possess after discharge from prison.

5.1. Obstacles for successful re-entry of prisoners into society

The results of the study revealed that there were obstacles to successful re-entry of prisoners back into society. These obstacles account for the individuals relapsing into criminal behavior and end up in the correctional facilities time and again.

In addition, correctional officers stated that there were social factors which make the prisoners to recidivate. The obstacles to re-entry of prisoners back into society accounts for the increased influx of prisoners into the correctional facilities due to high recidivism rates among offenders.

5.1.1. Education

In terms of the education background of the recidivists, the study revealed that a bigger composition (16.9%) of the respondents were below Grade 12 in the sample. Therefore, low literacy level accounts for cognitive and behavioural limitation in decision making as whether

one should engage in committing an offence or not. It also accounts for low interpretation of the statutes and hence committing offences.

The findings of the study are consistent with those of Bushway (2003) who stated that prisoners typically have lower education levels than the national norm. These low education levels make it difficult to provide inmates with the necessary job skills to gain employment where they can receive sufficient pay to support themselves and possibly their families.

5.1.2. Drug abuse

The research revealed that substance abuse was among the obstacles for successful re-entry of prisoners into society. Some research participants have been incarcerated numerous times and others have had a small number of correctional experience. Other participants in the study had substance abuse challenges and it appears that their re-entry experiences were more difficult than individuals who did not identify as substance users. This finding is consistent with Seiter and Kadela's (2003) findings that individuals with substance abuse issues are at higher risk for recidivism, in comparison to ex-offenders who do not suffer from addiction.

Besides, there are well-established links between drug misuse and offending, with a particularly strong link between the use of opiates and crack and acquisitive offending. Drug misuse is also associated with reoffending: higher reconviction rates have been observed among prisoners who said they had used drugs in the month before custody compared with those who had never used drugs or had used them less recently. The findings of the study were inline with Wright (2013), who stated that there are links between drug use and recidivism.

5.1.3. Unemployment

Seiter and Kadela (2003) suggest, "Finding a job is often the most serious concern among ex-inmates who have few job skills and little work history". The study's findings support this statement in the fact that the majority of the ex-prisoners expressed a need for employment stability. At the time of the study, only 40% percent of the ex-prisoners were employed, the remaining 60% were either looking for work or have been discouraged by previous job searches that did not turn out as expected.

The previous research studies have suggested that ex-offenders have a difficult time sustaining employment and when employment is sustained, it is generally low wages and low skill (Bellair and Kowalski, 2011). Employment plays a large role in sustaining one's life. Employment results in having money and money allows people to provide transportation for themselves, allowing them to sustain housing, and employment among many other things. When the discharged prisoners fail to sustain their livelihood, they end up committing offences and get back to the correctional facilities.

5.1.4. Housing

The study revealed that securing stable housing is another pressing need for inmates re-entering to society. The results of the study were consistent with the findings of Petersilla's study. Most inmates who leave prison do not have very much money and as a result, cannot provide housing for themselves (Petersilia, 2005). Majority of the participants (recidivists) of this study reported that they lived with a friend, family member, or were renting a room. The major challenge that was a theme for these individuals were that they wanted privacy and to live independently.

Offenders with accommodation problems have been found to be more likely to reoffend. Access to stable accommodation is important in enabling ex-offenders to access employment and training opportunities, which may in turn support their rehabilitation. Accommodation needs can also impact on family relationships and the chances of successful reintegration into the community on release from prison, which are important in reducing re-offending. The findings of the research were consistent with those of Wright' (2013) who stated that accommodation problems had been found to be linked to other offender needs: a survey of prisoners identified greater accommodation-related needs, including homelessness, among prisoners with alcohol or drug problems.

5.2. The role the family or society plays to help discharged prisoners from re-offending

The correctional officers revealed that the family / society was important in re-integrating discharged prisoners into the society. This result indicates that the family / society become important in reintegrating discharged prisoners. The results show the importance of maintaining

family ties between the prisoners and their families so that they become prepared to receive their relatives upon discharge from prison. On the other hand, lack of family ties during incarceration results in failures to trace families upon discharge and that may result in commission of crime due to frustrations experienced by the discharged prisoners.

This finding is congruent with the research of Visser, Bakken and Gunter (2013) who found that an ex-offender, who had social support would potentially fend better than an ex-offender who did not have social support. Consequently, the ex-offender who does not receive any social support may be likely to relapse into criminal activities.

5.2.1. Environment

The results of the study on the role the family or society plays to help discharged prisoners from re-offending were in agreement with the submission of Wilson (1987) who stated that; there were challenges with re-integration of inmates because many prisoners come from communities where the entire community atmosphere is one of being involved with illegal work. In this environment, the prisoner's association with their peers may have been one of differential association which produced deviant behavior. After release from prison, ex-inmates may be returning to the same community and peers who enabled their previous illegal behavior (Cullen, 1994). Social Learning Theory states that people imitate other people with whom they have close contact; therefore, close contact with peers who have demonstrated criminal behavior is a contributing environmental factor which leads to the prisoner's original criminal behavior. When ex-inmates return to an environment where they have close contact with peers who demonstrate criminal behavior that contact could lead to recidivism. To overcome this situation, prison work release programs would need to place ex-inmates in communities where legal work is the norm. Aftercare is an important step in reducing recidivism. Ex-inmates often begin their re-entry into society with good intentions but as months go by and social support and services dwindle, they tend to relapse to their previous criminal tendencies (Cullen, 1994).

5.3. Marketable skill level of discharged prisoners

In terms of whether prisoners possess adequate marketable skills to prevent them from re-offending after being discharged from correctional facilities, the study shows that prisoners possess inadequate marketable skills. Inadequacy in vocational skills comes in as result of

using obsolete tools and equipment that are found at Mukobeko Maximum Correctional facility. The study also revealed that there was generally a shortage of qualified staff to adequately train inmates prior to their discharge from prison. Consequently, inadequacy of skills can lead to relapse into criminal activities by the discharged prisoners.

5.3.1. Inadequate vocational skills

The finding of this research confirms the findings of a study which was done by the UN (2007), which stated that in many prisons where vocational training is provided, it tends to comprise traditional skills, such as woodwork, metalwork, and agricultural skills. While these may be highly useful skills, particularly in rural communities, modern economies even in low-income and transitional societies now require a wider range of skills. For this reason, it is important to obtain labour market information in order to give prisoners the best opportunities to obtain employment upon release. Offering courses carefully selected on the basis of local market needs should be a priority (UN 2007). Besides, the provision of inadequate marketable skills is responsible for inmates getting involved in recidivism. When an inmate is released from prison, employment is a critical factor as to whether he or she becomes a law-abiding citizen or commits more crimes. Vocational training provides individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to find and keep a job. Studies show that inmates who receive vocational training not only find employment, but are more likely to stay out of prison.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0. Conclusion

Poor social integration and structures at family as well as community levels, coupled with limited economic sources of livelihood are the major contributing factors to the high levels of recidivism. This is more pronounced among the economically active age group which falls below the age of 40 years. The weak social networks, especially the ever eroding extended family systems had even made the situation worse for the unemployed, unskilled and illiterate youths.

Abuse of drugs has had far reaching repercussions in terms of crime levels among the youth who are idle and resort to quick sources of income such as theft. Capacitation of youths has not taken centre stage in the re-integration of the youths into society, as such, many of them get back to the same situation of vulnerability once discharged from prison and as a result, they remain with no other option but to resort back to their criminal activities in order to survive.

6.1. Recommendation

- The correctional authority should implement coordinated community programs that could enable inmates and ex-offenders benefit from employment, treatment for their trauma histories and drug abuse problems, and help in preparing them for a productive life when they return to their families and communities
- Capacitating ex-offenders through linkage to some form of capital or production inputs is key to enable them start earning a living without much problems that could influence them to resort to criminal activities.
- There must be models for coordinated, multi-disciplinary, multi-systemic efforts to provide ex-offenders with opportunities to financially and emotionally support their families. Additionally, gender, class difference of inmates, ex-offenders, their families and communities must be considered in the design of programs and research.
- Provide structured transitional employment opportunities so that ex-offenders can build positive work experience and references upon release from prison.

- Increase and strengthen training in both soft and hard skills, and create more partnerships with employers to match technical training with their industry needs. In other words, there must be adequate skills provided to inmates to help them assume constructive and productive roles in the social environment.
- Create a marketing campaign to educate employers about how and where to hire qualified ex-offenders, available government incentives, and successes experienced by employers that have hired ex-offenders.
- Creating a policy on recidivism that would guide the government and the correctional service on how to handle recidivists so that they do not relapse in criminal activities once discharged.

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(Appendix I)

QUESTIONNAIRE (FOR CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS)

Dear respondent,

My name is Mwizabi Paul Simasiku. Am a student of Mulungushi University, pursuing a Master of Disaster Studies (MDS) Degree under Open Distance Learning (ODL). This questionnaire seeks to collect data on the topic: **Determining social factors contributing to recidivism among discharged prisoners.**

Your opinion on the subject matter will be most welcome. Besides, be assured of the confidentiality and anonymity for all the response you will provide in this study. I count on your cooperation. Thanks.

Tick in the appropriate box or write in the space provided.

A. Socio-demographic data

1. What is your gender? Male Female

2. Indicate your marital status. Single Married Widow Widower

 Separation

3. What is your age?
a. Between 18 to 29 years
b. Between 30 to 39 years
c. Over 40 to 49 years
d. 50 years and above

4. What is the level of your education?

- a. Grade 12 Certificate
- b. College certificate
- c. Diploma
- d. Degree
- e. Other (specify)

B. Work Experience

5. How long have been working with Maximum Correctional Facility?

- a. Less than 5 years
- b. Between 5 and 10 years
- c. More than 10 years

6. Do prisoners discharged from Maximum Correctional Facility recidivate?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Disagree
- d. Strongly disagree
- e. Not sure

7. Are there obstacles to successful re-entry of prisoners back into society?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Disagree
- d. Strongly disagree
- e. Not sure

8. If your answer is strongly agree or agree in Q.7 above. List obstacles to successful re-entry of prisoners back into society. (If your option is c, d or e in Q.7 above, skip Q.8)

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9. Is the family or society important in reintegrating discharged prisoners in society?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not sure

10. If your answer is **yes** in **Q.9** above, indicate the importance of family or society in reintegrating discharged prisoners. **(If your option is b or c in Q.9 above, skip Q.10)**

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11. Do discharged prisoners possess relevant and marketable skills required on the labour market?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Disagree
- d. Strongly disagree
- e. Not sure

12. **Justify** or give an **explanation** to the option you have chosen in **Q.11** above.

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13. Are there in-custody behaviours and experiences which make discharged prisoners to re-offend?

- a. Yes

b. No

14. If your answer is yes in **Q.13** above, list the in-custody behaviours and experiences which make discharged prisoners to re-offend. **(If your option in Q.13 is No, skip Q.14).**

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15. List the Social factors which make discharged prisoners to re-offend in the society.

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16. In your own opinion, how can correctional authorities reduce recidivism among offenders?

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(Appendix II)

QUESTIONNAIRE (FOR PRISONERS INSIDE THE FACILITY)

Dear respondent,

My name is Mwizabi Paul Simasiku. Am a student of Mulungushi University, pursuing a Master of Disaster Studies (MDS) Degree under Open Distance Learning (ODL). This questionnaire seeks to collect data on the topic: **Determining social factors contributing to recidivism among discharged prisoners.**

Your opinion on the subject matter will be most welcome. Besides, be assured of the confidentiality and anonymity for all the response you will provide in this study. I count on your cooperation. Thanks.

Tick in the appropriate box or write in the space provided.

A. Socio-demographic data

1. What is your gender? Male Female

2. Indicate your marital status. Single Married Widow Widower
 Separation

3. What is your age?
a. Between 18 to 29 years
b. Between 30 to 39 years
c. Over 40 to 49 years
d. 50 years and above

4. What is the level of your education?

- b. Grade 12 Certificate b. College certificate c. Diploma
- d. Degree e. Other (specify)

B. Imprisonment Experience

5. How long have been serving your sentence in Maximum Correctional Facility?

- a. Less than 5 years
- b. Between 5 and 10 years
- c. 10 years and above

6. How many times have you been convicted (number of convictions)?

- a. Once
- b. Twice
- c. More than two times

7. Do other prisoners discharged from Maximum Correctional Facility recidivate?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Disagree
- d. Strongly disagree
- e. Not sure

8. Are there obstacles to successful re-entry of prisoners back into society?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Disagree
- d. Strongly disagree
- e. Not sure

9. If your answer is strongly agree or agree in **Q.8** above. List obstacles to successful re-entry of prisoners back into society. (If your option is **c, d** or **e** in **Q.8** above, skip **Q.9**)

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10. Is the family or society important in reintegrating discharged prisoners in society?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not sure

11. If your answer is **yes** in **Q.10** above, indicate the importance of family or society in reintegrating discharged prisoners. (If your option is **b** or **c** in **Q.10** above, skip **Q.11**)

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12. Do discharged prisoners possess relevant and marketable skills required on the labour market?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Disagree
- d. Strongly disagree
- e. Not sure

13. **Justify** or give an **explanation** to the option you have chosen in **Q.12** above.

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14. Are there in-custody behaviours and experiences which make discharged prisoners to re-offend?

c. Yes

d. No

15. If your answer is yes in **Q.14** above, list the in-custody behaviours and experiences which make discharged prisoners to re-offend. **(If your option in Q.14 is No, skip Q.15).**

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16. State the Social factors which make discharged prisoners to re-offend in the society.

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17. In your own opinion, how can correctional authorities reduce recidivism among offenders?

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(Appendix III)

Interview guide for the recidivists (Inside the facility)

Mulungushi University

School of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Open and Distance Learning

Social - demographic section. (To be completed by the interviewer)

Name..... (With the consent of the participant)

Gender: Male/Female.....

Age.....

1. How many times have been convicted?
2. What factors made you to re-offend after you got discharged from the correctional facility?
3. Are the skills you learn in the facility adequate for you to earn a living?
4. Are there other obstacles to successful re-entry into society?
5. Is the family or society important in reintegrating discharged prisoners in society?
6. What are the in-custody behaviours and experiences which make discharged prisoners to re-offend while serving their sentences?
7. In your own opinion, how can correctional authorities reduce recidivism among offenders?
8. What behaviours cause discharged prisoners to re-offend in the social environment?
9. How do you rate the treatment of prisoners by officers? (Is it good, better or bad?)
10. What areas need improvement to reduce recidivism of prisoners?

(Appendix IV)

Letter of Consent for the recidivist

Mulungushi University

School of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Open and Distance Learning

Date -----

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a Master of Disaster Studies Student from Mulungushi University under the School of Agriculture and Natural Resources conducting a research on my dissertation on the topic: **“Determining social factors contributing to recidivism among discharged prisoners”**.

You have been selected to participate in this study. Please show your willingness to participate by signing on the provided slip.

I must hasten to inform you that the name(s) of the participants in this study who will remain anonymous if they so wish. Besides, the participation is voluntary and you are allowed to withdraw during the study without providing reasons for doing so.

Yours faithfully,

Mwizabi Paul Simasiku

I -----, have read and fully understood the contents of this letter. I therefore wish to give permission to the researcher to conduct an interview with me.

