

Challenges Faced to Ex-Prisoners in Social Reintegration (A Study of Union Council Kunda)

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Abstract

The study get access to the concept of “reintegration” which generally refers to the social integration procedures planned to help out the offenders who are being released from a freedom deprived institution, such as prison, a detention center or a reform school, and help them face the challenges associated with their return to the community. For this purpose, the data was collected from 50 ex-prisoners in which majority of the respondents indicated that low level of education young age and type of family were the major contributors to their criminal activities. The main focus of my study was to know how ex-prisoners reintegrate with their family, their society and how they after release living within the society. The study was conducted in union council Kunda, all the respondents were having a low level of education and mostly were jobless. The recommendation in my study includes educating the people up to high level of education and to make them aware of consequences of ex-prisoners’ failure in successful reintegration, and suggestion to the government includes installation of the system of probation and parole in prison system in Pakistan to treat the prisoners according to their behavior.

Keywords: Prison, offenders, ex-prisoners, reintegration, probation, parole.

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1. Introduction

Prison is an organization which is used for the incarceration of individual who has been under arrested into custody by a judicial court or who have been dispossessed of their freedom following a conviction of a crime. Until the late 18th-century prison was used mostly for the incarceration of defaulter people charged with an offense and awaiting trial, and convicts awaiting the obligation of their punishment generally death of shipping overseas. A sentence of incarceration was infrequently imposed then only for small crimes. As the use of capital punishment began to refuse in the late 18th century, the prison was gradually used more by the court as punishment, in time becoming the principal means of punishing the severe offenders. The use of incarceration then increased universally, often through means of majestic empires that brought the practice to countries with no local model of prison by the early 21st century a greater part of states has to get rid of the death penalty, and detention was, therefore, the most severe form of punishment their court could enforce^[1]. People may be kept in prison until they are brought in to trial which is been charged with a crime, those people may be sentenced for a specified period of time who are been found guilty of a crime. Jail and prison are also used by authoritarian regimes besides of its use for punishing a civil crime. Prison can only be used for more than one-year period of time for detaining people. And for the punishment of a person who is been sentenced for less than one year should be kept in jail. These apparatus of political domination are used to penalize what is considered political crimes. Without other legal progression or trial, this use is against the law under most forms of a rule governing the fair administration of justice. Prisoners may be kept in a military prison or prisoners of war camps during the time of war, and confinement camps may be used for a large group of civilian prisoners^[2].

2. Imprisonment

Imprisonment is the way of punishment which is used for protecting citizens from wrongdoers. On the other hand, it is the essential ideology of the correctional system that plays an important role in the rehabilitation of inmates and proper part of society after their punishment^[3].

Further, Prison does not provide permanent shelter to prisoners, but their stay in prison is for rehabilitation while they are in advancement period to new and sincere life into society. Similarly, people imagine that those who offended the society and send into rehabilitation institutions should come back the community and received as a newborn individual after regular rehabilitation procedure. On the other hand, people have forgotten to realize that long period prisoners used up in correctional institution showing them to varieties of social, health, economic and psychological problems which damaged their initiative and social skills which they had before imprisonment^[3].

3. Social reintegration

When a person comes back into society following incarceration and the support given to him/her in the society are known as social reintegration. In a broader perspective, it includes an amount of involvement undertaken following a hold to redirect offenders away from the illegal justice system to another measure, including a curative justice procedure or proper treatment. It also includes community-based authorized arresting rather than incarceration in an effort to make easy the social reintegration of offenders in the public. Rather than subjecting them to the marginalizing and detrimental outcome of incarceration. It includes aftercare intercessions and correctional programs in prison for those who are sentenced to incarceration^[4].

The term “reintegration” generally refers to reentry or resettlement. In simple words intercessions, services and programs intended to help prisoners to live respectable lives following their release in the community. However, the reader is cautioned in opposition to using the word “reintegration” too accurately, as it should be clear that, in various cases, the criminals were not previous to their confinement, effectively integrated into the community, and were in general marginalized, and often had failed to acquire the position and behaviors that result in most people functioning effectively in society^[5].

In latest years, more importance has been placed on designing widespread interventions, based on a stability of care, to provide regular support to offenders within and outside of prison. It should be kept in mind that preparation should be started before the offenders’ release. Following their release, the intercession should support their immediate transition from prison to the community and emphasize the gains achieved throughout prison treatment and continues until a successful reintegration in a community (Fox, 2012). This approach is often referred to “throughcare”, a structure-wide form of intercession^{[5][6]}. Regardless of their method, all interventions are best delivered as part of an incorporated series designed to deal with an individual offender’s particular issues and challenges. And improved consideration has been given to “strength-based” approaches to make use of individual and community resources in order to help release offenders face their challenges and successfully reintegrate the community^[7].

4. Challenges faced to ex-prisoners

At the time of release, those offenders who are confined in correctional institutions have faced a variety of social, economic and personal challenges that have a tendency to become barriers in crime-free lifestyle^{[8][9]}. Some of these challenges are directly linked with the penalty of imprisonment and are a result of offenders’ past experiences and the following complicated back to the community^[5].

Offenders may have a record of poor employment or unemployment, physical or emotional misuse, a history of segregation and marginalization, and attachment to a criminal free lifestyle that began at early age. So offenders may also be challenged by physical or psychological disabilities and physical condition problems that may be associated with substance abuse and drug addiction. Some offenders have lack of skills such as illiteracy, poor interpersonal skills, low level of education, poor cognitive functioning, lack of planning and financial management skills that also become complicated for them to compete and achieve something in the community. Offenders also face some challenges at the time of their release that includes finding suitable housing with little means, access to a range of everyday necessities, access to support and services for their particular needs, managing economically with little or no savings until they begin to earn some legal compensation. The period of transition can be particularly difficult from custody to the community for offenders and contribute to the stress that is associated with being supervised in the community. The duration of imprisonment may itself have had some “collateral effects” upon many offenders ^{[5] [6]}.

The offenders of imprisonment may have missing of their businesses, occupations, personal belongings, and their ability to keep up housing for their self and family; they may have lost their personal relationship and imprisonment may have damaged their social network, they may have psychological health problems and attitudes. In particular, homelessness may place youth are a risk of offending ^[10]. The failed reentry of offenders into society may cause major problem both in monetary and in term of public safety. The expenses of programs to help offenders in social reintegration must be charged not in favor of the benefits of avoiding these particular future social and monetary costs.

According to Bellair and Kowalski, the greatest obstacle for ex-offenders is employment. Finding felony friendly employment is an issue for those individuals who have a criminal background. Ex-offenders usually work for low wages, and it is difficult for an individual to sustain life with a low income as it is difficult with no income. Low income or no employment can maybe lead ex-offenders to feel that they will way out to criminal activity in order monetary exist in society. The cycle of criminal activity causes many ex-offenders to violate probation or parole that results in another incarceration. Individuals who are released into an area where there are high opportunities for a job for ex-prisoners are less likely to commit a crime again. An individual is more likely to have a successful reentry if he or she returns to a positive environment ^[11].

The offenders who are suffering from a disease known as drug addiction also have a great risk of recidivism. A large number of ex-prisoners are returned to prison either due to committing new crimes or for violating their parole or supervision condition. On using drugs an individual can also be taken back to

prison or jail. One can also be taken to prison if his/her tests for illegal substances become positive ^[11]. An individual can benefit greatly from substance abuse treatment instead of imprisonment if he suffers from substance abuse issues. Those offenders who receive residential drug treatment facilities have Forty-five percent fewer chances of reoffending than those who are incarcerated in prison or jail due to drug usage ^[12].

Social support is also responsible to a great extent for successful reintegration of ex-offenders in the significant period leading up to prison release, in general, it is considering a worrying time for prisoners ^{[13][14]}, it is described as the “gate fever effect” by some investigator. Among other mental effects, this condition is characterized by anxiety and irritability, happening just earlier to release ^[21] (Cormier, Kennedy, & Sendbuehler, 1967). As well, only a handful of studies have observed variety and degree of change in the emotional state of prisoners by tracking a sample of prisoners from prerelease to the post-release stage, with most studies being outdated ^[14]. It is essential to discover the pattern of emotional state for ex-prisoners in the first few months of community reintegration in order to understand the power of their relatives and their weak point in coping with the stressors of returning to the community ^[14].

Numerous studies have examined the multiple, compound, energetic and interactive nature of variables influencing the reintegration of ex-offenders ^{[15][16]}. Challenges that recently released prisoners confronting have been reported by these studies, demands for obtaining fresh housing and proper employment, reestablishing of interpersonal association, achieving monetary steadiness, and dealing with substance misuse issue ^{[17][18]}. However, the compound relationships among contributing variables have been mostly unfamiliar in the existing literature on reintegration.

The literature on reintegration of ex-prisoners that have been taken together indicates that this group is characterized by psychological and physical health problems, including a high level of alcohol and drug use. Furthermore, ex-prisoners usually have restricted economical assets at their clearance ^[17]. Employment is without a doubt serious to improving the economical nervousness normally experienced by ex-prisoners and is a considerable feature in successful community reintegration. There is a range of obstructions that set the ex-prisoners at a real drawback in terms of achieving victorious reintegration ^[16].

It is also cleared that some ex-prisoners do not find steady housing for their residence and they are ignored in this sense ^[23] (Melbourne criminology evaluation and research unit, 2003) so this has a negative impact on individual life when he does not find sustaining livable, and affordable housing for their residence ^{[18] [19][18]} (Baldry, McDonnell, Maplestone, & Peeters, 2003; Nelson et al., 1999). The family support is important to help post-release conclusion for ex-prisoners which have been indicated by the level research on the social network and social support of prisoners and ex-prisoners ^[17]. Unluckily,

the ex-prisoners are marginalized after release, with partial friends and family network. Those with unhelpful family associations become visible mostly helpless to go back to crime and successive reconviction and reimprisonment. What is undecided from the writing on the reintegration assessed over is how the main variables significant to reintegration might relate with the expressive state of ex-prisoners^[17].

The prolonged process of criminal to the community from prison and then back to prison has made the sense that present prisons and community correction practices neither help in the public protection nor in the correction of criminals^[22] (Choucair, (2006). For this purpose, the researchers have conducted many studies with ex-prisoners' people mostly with male parolees with the aim to do something for them to reintegrate within the society. Such research basically reporting what happens during the period of release from prison and recidivism or reintegration process^[22] (Choucair, (2006).

5. Research methodology

The main theme of the study is to explore what challenges ex-prisoners reports that they face when they come back into society after being released. The study was conducted to gain information about the problems that ex-prisoners face. The tool that was used for data collection was a questionnaire. Respondents were asked questions about their employment, housing, social support, probation, and parole.

The data was collected from ex-prisoners who reside in Union Council Kunda. A sample size of 50 respondents was selected through snowball sampling technique; all the respondents have had a period of imprisonment in their life. The researcher collected the data through interview arranged face to face with the respondents. The data were analyzed through SPSS for finding the frequency and percentage distribution to know about the objectives of the study.

6. Result and discussion

Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents

S.NO	STATEMENT	MALE	FEMALE
1	Gender	(45)90%	(5)10%

The above table shows the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of their gender. Out of total 50 respondents, 45 respondents which make 90% of total respondents were male and the remaining 5 respondents which make 10% were female.

S.NO	STATEMENT	11-20	21-30	31-ABOVE
1	Age	(2)4%	(22)44%	(26)52%

This table illustrates the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of their age. The age was stratified into three classes, which was 11-20, 21-30 and 31-above, out of total 50 respondents two respondents which makes 4% were belongs to first strata 11-20, twenty-two respondents which make 44% of total sample size belongs to second strata which are 21-30 years, and the remaining 26 respondents which makes 52% of total respondents belonged to 31-above strata of age.

S.NO	STATEMENT	MATRIC AND UNDER	INTERMEDIATE- BACHELOR	MASTER AND ABOVE	ILLITERATE
1	Educational level	25(50%)	(4)8%	(5)10%	(16)32%

The upper table explains the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of their educational level, 25 respondents which makes 50% out of total respondents were matriculate and middle pass, 4 respondents (8%) out of total have intermediate and bachelor level of education, master and above strata of education comprises only 5 respondents which are 10% and the last category which is illiterate have 16 respondents (32%) of total respondents.

S.NO	STATEMENT	MURDER	ROBBERY	DRUGS	OTHERS
1	Crime/reason for imprisonment	(12)24%	(12)24%	(11)22%	(15)30%

The above table discloses the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of crime due to which they have been arrested, the cause of imprisonment of 12 respondents which makes 24% was murder that they have committed, 12 respondents (24%) were arrested because of robbery, 11 respondents out of total 50 respondents which comprises 22% were arrested because of drugs (Drug addiction and drugs businesses) and the remaining 15 respondents which is the majority and makes 30%

of total respondents were taken into custody because of different types of crimes such as fight, accident, breaking of laws etc.

S.NO	STATEMENT	FOR FASHION AMUSEMENT	BECAUSE OF POVERTY	REVENGE	I WAS NOT INVOLVED IN CRIME
1	Cause of committing the crime	(16)32%	(9)18%	(10)20%	(15)30%

This table explores the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of causes due to which they have committed the crime. 16 respondents of total 50 respondents which are 32% of total said that they have committed the crime just for fashion amusement, nine respondents (18%) claimed that they have committed the crime just because of poverty, 10 respondents (20%) said that they have committed the crime for taking revenge from their enemies and the remaining 15 respondents which makes 30% claimed that they were not involved in crime.

Psychological challenges

S.NO	STATEMENT	YES	NO
1	Does your society stigmatize you for your incarceration?	(25)50%	(25)50%
2	Do your surrounding people taunt you on your past?	(22)44%	(28)56%
3	Do you think the people you have in your surrounding trust you?	(24)48%	(26)52%
4	Do you feel shame in your past?	(32)64%	(18)38%

Statement number 1 in the above table shows the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of stigmatization. Half of the respondents which constitute 50% of total respondents said that their society stigmatizes them for their incarceration and the remaining 50% respondents answered as no.

Out of total 50 respondents, 22 respondents which constitute 44% said that their society taunts them on their past and the remaining 28 respondents which represent 56% of total respondents answered as no.

Statement no-3 in the above table describes the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of their thoughts about societal trust on them, on these question 24 respondents

which comprise 48% said that their society trust on them and the remaining 26 respondents which make 52% have answered as no.

The last statement discloses the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of feeling shame on their past, out of total 50 respondents 32 respondents which constitute 64% said that they feel shame on their past and the remaining 18 respondents (38%) answered as no.

Housing/family challenges

S.NO	STATEMENT	YES	NO
1	Did you come back to your old residence?	(46)92%	(4)8%
2	Does your family support you now?	(37)74%	(13)26%
3	Are you living with your family after being released?	(46)92%	(4)8%
4	Is your family attitude positive towards you?	(26)52%	(24)46%

In my research study most of the respondents 46 in number which comprises 92% said that they come back to their old residence and the remaining 4 respondents which make 8% answered as no when they were asked about the old residence.

Statement no-2 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of having family support after being released from prison, 37 respondents which constitute 74% said that their family supports them after being released and the remaining 13 respondents which make 26% said that their family does not support them.

Most of the respondents of my study are living with their family after coming back in to society from prison which was 46 in number and makes 92% of total respondents and the remaining 4 respondents (8%) said that they are not living with their family.

The last statement in the above table disclose the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of the attitude of their family towards them, 26 respondents which comprises 52% said that the attitude of their family is positive towards them and the remaining 24 respondents which is 46% of total respondents said that their family's attitude is negative towards them.

Employment challenges

S.NO	STATEMENT	ON JOB	JOBLESS
1	What is your current status?	(7)14%	(43)86%

Only 7 respondents (14%) of my research study out of total 50 respondents were on job and the remaining majorities which were 43 in numbers and constitute 86% of total respondents were jobless.

S.NO	STATEMENT	YES	NO	NOT YET ON JOB/APPLIED
1	Do you have a supporting job?	(12)24%	(24)48%	(14)28%
2	Do you face/faced difficulties in finding a job?	(28)56%	(20)40%	(2)4%
3	Do you think that employers offer low wages jobs to ex-prisoners?	(17)34%	(31)62%	(2)4%

The first statement in this table shows the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of their job strength, 12 respondents which compose 24% said that they have a supporting job, 24 respondents which makes 48% answered as no and the remaining 14 respondents which constitute 28% said that they are not yet on job.

The second statement explains that 28 respondents which comprise 56% said that they have faced difficulties in finding a supporting job after being released from prison, 20 respondents which make 40% said that have got the job easily and the remaining 2 respondents which makes 4% said that they have not yet applied for a job.

And the third statement clarifies that according to 17 respondents which comprise 34% employers offer low wages job to us if they know about our past, 31 respondents (62%) have disagreed with this statement and the remaining 2 respondents comprises 4% said they have not yet applied for any job so don't know about this.

S.NO	STATEMENT	YES	NO
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1	Does government extend its support to you in finding a job?	0	(50)100%
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When the respondents were asked about the support of the government in finding a supporting job after being released, all the respondents which were 50 in number said that they have no support of government to find a job after they are released.

S.NO	STATEMENT	YES	NO	I AM NOT ON PAROLE/PROBATION
1	Does your parole/probation officer help you in social resettlement?	0	0	(50)100%

The final and most valuable question in my research study was to ask the ex-prisoners about the help of parole and probation officers in social resettlement, on this question all the respondents answered that they are neither on parole nor on probation.

6.1 Recommendation

The first and most important recommendation is the provision of quality and higher education to every individual because I have found in my research study that majority of the respondents were educated but up to a low level such as Matric and middle. Every individual especially youth (below 30 years of age) should be aware to know about good and bad friends and deeds and to know about the reactions of every action. The second recommendation is to provide awareness in the society to make them sure that the ex-prisoners Are not other species than a human being and they are same as you. So they need to be supported and respected both for their own benefits and for society's benefits because if the society treats them negatively they will commit crimes again which will harm the society. The third recommendation is to make them skillful with technical and educational skills during their period of incarceration that will help them get to get a job easily. Because most of the respondents in my study claimed that they face/faced difficulties in finding a supporting job.

The final and most important suggestion to government is the installation of probation and parole system in our prison system because 100% of the respondents were neither on probation nor they were a parolee. It means that in our prison system there is no concept of probation and parole system. The system of probation and parole is very important because most of the respondents realize soon after they are incarcerated and they feel modification in him, but their modification means nothing then and they have

to complete their duration of punishment which is not good. And secondly, if the prisoners complete their duration and they do not have a modification in him and there is no system of probation then it's again harmful to the society, because if the prisoners are permanently released and they are still not modified they will commit crimes again without any fear.

7. Conclusion

Through my research study, I have found that most crimes are committed by males because where I have conducted my research study was a Pakhtoon society and females in that area were restricted to domestic boundaries so they have no or very limited interaction with outsiders. Therefore, they have very limited chances to be involved in crimes, and in male most of the crimes were committed by the people in very young age, because as the young generation cross teenage they start interacting with others in the society and their friends in the society may have different thoughts and ideas, so after getting entry to 20's decade they consider themselves as independent and because of that independence they often get involved in crimes.

Majority of the respondents were less educated and they have departed from school in center phase and started friendship with different type of people in the society such as drug addicts, criminals, and thieves, the number of less educated people were more than illiterate people because the illiterate people start working in fields and with mechanic in the very initial stage of age, so they have a specific mind setup. But those who leave education in center phase they have no idea to follow them, and because of that, they commit crimes often for fashion amusement to create a fear in surrounding people or for other reasons. In my research study I also have found that most of the respondents were stigmatized in the society for their past after they are released, and often people do not trust on them that is why they have feelings of shame. Majority of the respondents were coming back to their old residence after being released and living with their family, but the attitude of their family are not positive towards them. A large numbers of my research study respondents were from the low social background and have no supporting job after coming back to society from a freedom deprived institution. The most important and major finding of my study was, 100% of the respondents were neither on probation nor they were on parole. It means that here in our prison system we have no system of parole or probation.

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