

Parole System: Effectiveness in Dealing with the Phenomenon of Recidivism among Parolee

Mohamad Fauzi Abdul Latib¹, Ahmed Ahmed Olaitan²

Faculty of Applied Social Sciences, University of Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA), Malaysia

Corresponding Author Email: fauzilatib@unisza.edu.my

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Abstract

Distinct and differing approaches have been effectuated by the Malaysian Prisons Department for the rehabilitation of prisoners being an institution specifically responsible in rebuilding and restoring inmates. These approaches are aimed in helping them to take afresh social and virtue roles such as husband, wife, father, mother, child, employee and lot more. However, among the approaches that have been introduced by the Malaysian Prisons Department, the Parole System plays an important role in ensuring that prisoners who are released on parole can return to society as a useful person. Thus, the prime objective of this research is to identify the key elements of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Parole System in dealing with the phenomenon of recidivism among Parolees. This is qualitative research that adopts a case study approach through in-depth interviews. The study was conducted in two Terengganu District Parole Offices, namely the Kuala Terengganu District Parole Office and the Hulu Terengganu District Parole Office, Malaysia. This research involved in-depth interviews with thirteen (13) parolees as research respondents. Sample selection was done through purposive sampling techniques and the data obtained was analyzed using thematic analysis. The results of the study found that there are three main elements to the effectiveness of the implementation of the Parole System in dealing with the phenomenon of recidivism among parolees, namely monitoring, moral support and the implementation of regular urine tests.

Keywords: Parole System, Effectiveness, Recidivism Phenomenon, Parolees

Introduction

For some individuals, the implementation of the parole system on prisoners can be a very scary phenomenon. This is because, through the implementation of the parole system, a violent criminal will be allowed out of prison and live a daily life in society (Ahmad, 2021). To the degree that some individuals in the society bring to bear that this situation can threaten their peace and endanger their lives and properties. Therefore, at the wake of government implementation of this parole system, some individuals consider that the government's actions are not accurate and can cause various problems (Aami & Hassan, 2020). However, due to the

country's legal and justice system and the problem of prisoner overcrowding that occurs in almost all prisons, the parole system is one of the alternatives in solving the problem.

The parole system was first introduced by Brockway Zebulon in 1876 (Carney, 2017). Brockway Zebulon is a penologist and is considered the 'Father of Prison Reform' in the United States as a result of the major reforms he implemented to prison institutions in the United States (Cromwell et. al, 2017). Brockway was born in Lyme, Connecticut in 1828 and began his career as a prison guard at the state penitentiary in Wethersfield, Connecticut at age 20. At age 23, he was promoted to the position of clerk at Wethersfield Prison. In 1861, when he was 33 years old, he took up the position of Prison Superintendent in Detroit where he tried to introduce the system of 'indeterminate sentence' (Carney, 2017).

In 1876 until 1900, he was the superintendent of Elmira Prison, New York. Elmira Prison was the first prison in the United States to focus on the rehabilitation of inmates (Carney, 2017). During his tenure as Superintendent of Elmira Prison, he introduced education programs, trade training, physical activity, 'indeterminate sentences', inmate classification and incentive programs (Carney, 2017). He introduced these programs on the belief that the main reason a prisoner is sentenced to prison is for rehabilitation and not merely to punish the prisoner. By giving them the moral and spiritual guidance, they need, he believes that this is the key to helping them change for the better and become useful citizens (Carney, 2017).

He also used the idea of 'indeterminate punishment' which would allow a prisoner to be released earlier than expected (Cromwell et. al, 2017). The 'indeterminate punishment' implemented by him has two parts. On the one hand, if a prisoner behaves well and follows all the rules imposed, then he will be rewarded. On the other hand, if a prisoner does not obey the rules, then he will be punished (Carney, 2017). This 'uncertain punishment' is what ultimately became the basis for the formation of the parole system. However, in 1893, his administration was placed under government investigation as a result of allegations of cruelty to prisoners at Elmira Prison and he retired at the age of 72 in 1900 after further criticism. In 1912, he wrote a book titled 'Fifty Years of Prison Service'. Zebulon Brockway died in 1920 at the age of 92 (Carney, 2017).

Literature Review

Dimension of Conceptual Issues: Parole System and Recidivism

What is the Parole System? Who was the person who first proposed the idea of the parole system? The Parole System is a method that allows prisoners to be released from prison conditionally before the end of the sentence convicted by the court for good behaviour (Baharuddin, 2022). The word 'Parole' is derived from the French word 'parole' which means 'promise'. While prisoners who undergo the parole system are known as 'parolee' (Nordin, 2022). Parolee refers to inmates who have been selected by the Prisons Department or Service to serve the remainder of their sentence outside prison because of their good behaviour while serving their sentence in prison (Ismail, 2020).

The Parole System is a Parole Order release system where eligible inmates can apply to be released to serve the remainder of their sentence outside of prison. It aims to open a second chance for prison inmates to start a new life with their families and the community (Kamal, 2022). However, prisoners who follow the parole system must engage in beneficial charity

work outside of prison with the supervision of parole officers. These people are supervised by Parole Officers based on laid down laws, rules and regulations (Ismail & Rahman, 2023).

The end in view of the implementation of the parole system in prison is to rehabilitate prisoners in the community and create cooperation between prison services and community (Kamal & Omar, 2020). Musa (2024) further emphasized that this system creates a network and intelligent cooperation between the community and the prison directly in the process of rehabilitation of prisoners. Subsequently, with the implementation of the parole system, it can reduce the recidivism rate among prisoners. Recidivism occurs when ex-prisoners who have been released are involved in any crime again (Dahlan & Ibrahim, 2024).

Parole System in Malaysia: A Background Study

Succeeding Malaysia's sixty years independence, the Malaysian Prisons Department is growing and has extensive experience in the field of rehabilitation. This is because the Department realizes that the admission of recidivism offenders can be reduced by using various effective and efficient approaches. Among the approaches used is to introduce the Human Development Plan (HDP) program which is a mechanism towards the total rehabilitation of offenders (Musa & Osman, 2024). Following the introduction of the program, another program to rehabilitate was introduced by the Prison Department, the Parole System. In the past, the role and responsibility of prison staff only functioned to ensure the control and safety of incarcerated prisoners until they were released (Jamal & Ahmad, 2021). But now since the introduction of the Parole System it plays an important role in ensuring that prisoners who are released on parole can return to society as someone who is useful to the country and complies with existing laws (Cheong & Musa, 2023).

This system has been implemented based on the amendment of the Prison Act 1995 in 2008 which came into force on 30 June 2008. The first release by Parole Order was a total of 64 prisoners on July 26, 2008 (Azmi & Rahman, 2021). Based on the latest statistics, a total of 16,500 prisoners, most of whom are youths, have completed the Parole System and since its implementation, a total of 26,000 applications have been considered to undergo this system (Baharuddin & Lim, 2022). The achievement of this system is good when as many as 99 percent of parolees obtain employment while the recidivism rate (repeat crime) of ODP is below 0.51 percent (Baharuddin & Lim, 2022).

The implementation of the parole system for a prisoner involves the process of supervision and the supervision is undertaken by a parole officer (Lim & Ahmad, 2021). In addition to rehabilitating prisoners with the involvement of community members, the implementation of the parole system also aims to reduce the overcrowding of prisoners in prisons (Mahmud & Aziz, 2023). Osman and Yusof (2020) stated that a parole officer who is assigned to supervise a prisoner is a prison officer who has extensive experience related to prisoners and has attended a course on the implementation of the parole system abroad. The period for a prisoner to follow the parole system depends on the decision made by the parole board that has been appointed by the head of a country (Musa & Osman, 2024). In the studies carried out by Musa and Osman (2024) the parole board usually that has been appointed is composed of seven members consisting of a member of the judicial and legal services, a senior officer of the prison department, a senior officer of the police department, a senior officer of the welfare department and three members of the community. If a prisoner who is following the

parole system violates any parole rules or is involved in any criminal activity, the prisoner will be dropped from following the parole system and imprisoned again (Dahlan & Ibrahim, 2024).

Almost all the prisoners who have been selected to follow the Parole System program in Malaysia since the first time it was implemented until today are prisoners involved in repeated drug abuse crimes (Ahmad & Hassan, 2020). According to the statement of the former Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi who is also the Minister of Home Affairs on March 19, 2018, the implementation of the parole system in Malaysia for 10 years has successfully reduced the repeat crime rate from 9.03 percent to 0.48 percent (Ahmad & Hassan, 2020).

Based on the statement of Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, clearly show that the implementation of the Parole System has an influence on the statistics of the decrease in repeated drug abuse and crime cases. Therefore, this paper discusses the extent to which the implementation of the parole system program implemented by the Malaysian Prisons Department has been able to achieved so far based on the research that has been carried out before. Therefore, this study was carried out to identify the elements of the effectiveness of the implementation of the parole system in dealing with the phenomenon of recidivism among Parolees. It is very important because it is a series to update the data and can further help formulate new strategies for the Malaysian Prisons Department, especially in the Parole and Community Services Division to be more comprehensive and efficient in the future.

Parole System Effects

Respective rehabilitation program implemented of course, has its own advantages. Likewise with the implementation of the parole system, comes with its own advantages when it is implemented. These advantages are often the elements of the effectiveness of the implementation of the parole system in dealing with the phenomenon of recidivism among parolee. In their recent study, Cromwell et. al (2017) one of the preferences pinpointed as a result of the implementation of the parole system in England was that people who are paroled are given the right to choose their own place of residence. This is so that the paroled person feels comfortable living in the house he chooses instead of living in a house determined by the prison. It is clear here that the prison authorities do not want to cheat and never deny the rights of parolees in determining their life needs. Herewith, prisons and parole centres do not provide housing or designate certain areas to be used as housing for parolees. However, paroled people are not allowed to live with friends who are also on parole (Cromwell et. al, 2017).

The effect of the parole system can also be linked to the study of Anglin (2016) in terms of the behaviour of people who follow the program itself. The people who undergo the parole process are less likely to return to the criminal behaviour that led to their imprisonment. The parole system program is specially designed to help prisoners return to society and play a social and dignify role as one of the members of society (Anglin, 2016). Also, in as much as while undergoing the parole system, a prisoner is required to work at any job opportunity that is not illegal. The requirement to work is aimed at supporting the parolee and his family members without having to depend on any party, either the prison or the other government (Kamal & Omar, 2020). This will not only guarantee sustenance for the parolee to continuing living in the society and without any discrimination and prejudice but also bring economic

benefits for both the prison and the government. The money released by the prison or the government to support the daily life of people who are paroled while serving a prison sentence can be saved and used for other needs (Hyatt & Ostermann, 2019).

Added to the above advantage was that by working, paroled people can feel that they have returned to work where they can get financial resources to support themselves and their family member. It will also make them to be independent and make their daily lives filled with activities that are beneficial (Ostermann, 2018). Consequently, it cut the mustard of those people who are parole to increase their self-motivation to live back in society without feeling inferior. Interactions between communities can also be improved because all this while they have been living far from society and only being in their own group (Weisburd, 2020). Parolees enjoy the privilege or required to work during their parole and are given the right to choose any job, they are interested in. Through the job, a parolee obtains financial resources to support himself and his family members (Davis & Mears, 2016).

In addition, one of the advantages of the parole system is religious freedom (Ahmad, 2021). During the period of parole, the parolee is given the freedom to follow any religious activity of his own free will. Different from their situation while in prison where they are required to follow religious activities that have been set by the prison authorities. Through this freedom, it gives a deeper impact to the people who are paroled because they attend religious meetings based on their desire to deepen their religious knowledge and change themselves (Ismail & Rahman, 2023). With this, it will also strengthen the relationship with religious members and thus be able to change the public's view of them. Beyond any doubt, the person who was paroled felt that he was now being accepted by the society (Ahmad, 2021).

Hyatt & Ostermann (2019) bring to light among the benefits of the implementation of the parole system in the United States. According to them, freedom of recreation is also one of the advantages found in the parole system. While on parole, the parolee is free to do any recreational activity as long as the activity does not violate the law. Paroled people can participate in recreational sports available in the community such as joining soccer teams, futsal teams, etc (Baharuddin, 2022). Apart from providing fun, this recreational activity can also keep the body healthy and create a positive lifestyle. The effect is that people who are paroled feel the enjoyment of this life and will maintain a positive lifestyle (Kamal & Omar, 2020).

In other related studies in the literature moreover, in the literature, MacKenzie (2016) stated that as a result of the implementation of the parole system, it helped the United States government solve the problem of overcrowding in prisons throughout the country. Prisoners placed in the parole system are prisoners who are not categorized as dangerous criminals. By placing the prisoners in the parole system, the space in the prison is expanded to accommodate prisoners who are categorized as dangerous criminals. This benefits the safety and well-being of the community as a whole (MacKenzie, 2016).

According to Hyatt & Ostermann (2019) stated that in terms of cost in supporting the daily lives of prisoners in prisons across the United States. By placing certain prisoners in the parole system, it can save money that has to be spent on incarceration in prisons that cost 68 million dollars a year. Through the implementation of the parole system, the United States

government can save about 23 million dollars a year. By saving that much money, the United States government can channel the money to other needs (Smith & Hattery, 2018).

Suitably the implementation of the parole system entails that after the parolee has completed the parole system well, he will be released from prison (Kamal & Omar, 2020). However, it should be noted that the paroled person must meet all the conditions while on parole, such as attending meetings that have been set, undergoing periodic drug tests, complying with all laws and still working (Azmi & Hassan, 2020). If all the conditions can be followed properly then the paroled person will be released and his criminal record will be disposed of (Baharuddin & Lim, 2022). According to statistics released by the United States Parole Commission in 2005, the implementation of the parole system for prisoners throughout the United States has successfully reduced the recidivism rate by almost 30 percent (Hyatt & Ostermann, 2019). The success of reducing the recidivism rate is very important because it can ultimately reduce the overall crime rate and improve the safety and well-being of the community.

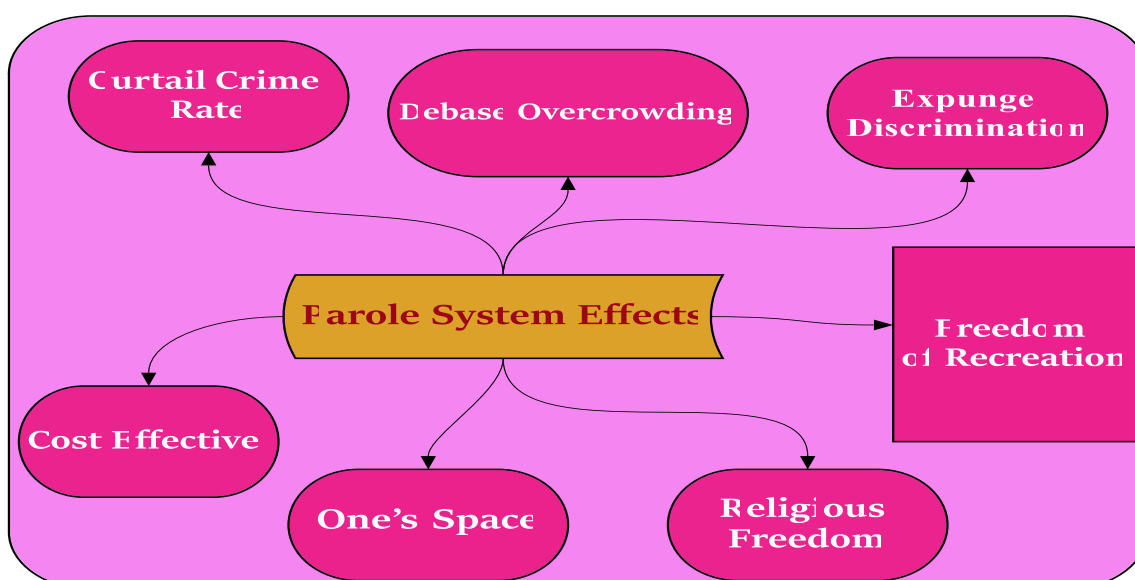


Figure 1. Parole System Effects

Resource: Adapted from by Anglin, (2016), MacKenzie (2016), Cromwell et. al, (2017), Hyatt and Ostermann (2019) and Ahmad (2021).

Methodology

Research methodology adopted for this study was qualitative research. According to Othman (2009), qualitative research is important to obtain more in-depth information about other elements that cannot be measured using a number scale. This research opt for this method as more appropriate to obtain the data needed to answer the research question. According to Robson (2002), in qualitative research in the form of 'grounded theory', researchers need to go into the field with an open mind without adhering to any theory but having knowledge of relevant previous studies.

In order to carry out this study, selected respondents who are residents of PUSPEN, Bachok, Kelantan were purposely sampled. Samples were chosen selected taken from PUSPEN, Bachok, Kelantan because the centre is notable as a drug rehabilitation centre that consists

of female residents only and this makes the journey of this research yielding. The permission and cooperation given by PUSPEN, Bachok, Kelantan in the process of interviewing the sample was also a factor in the selection of the location of this study. For this study, 19 female residents were successfully interviewed from the centre.

The residents of PUSPEN who have been selected as a sample are aged between 20 and 30 years. The number of residents who have been successfully interviewed up to the last session is a total of 19 people. The research conducted is qualitative in nature and does not require a large number of samples like quantitative research methods. The method or method in this qualitative research is not for the purpose of generalization, but instead aims to deepen the drug abuse among women by using a wealth of data through in-depth interview methods. Therefore, the number of 19 respondents is sufficient to study the research themes and facilitate the process of gathering information and interviews.

Because this research is qualitative, the tools used are in-depth interviews. This method is used to obtain more and deeper information from respondents related to the phenomenon of drug abuse among women. Through in-depth interviews, researchers will get more in-depth information about drug abuse among women through descriptions given based on questions asked to them about drug abuse from their own experiences.

The interview was conducted individually and face-to-face between the first author and the respondent. In order to encourage and give freedom to respondents to tell their experiences in more depth, the interview has used more open-ended questions. This arrangement is important as a guideline for research when conducting interview sessions so that the data collection process runs smoothly, does not go astray and focuses more on the research question to be studied.

The data that has been collected has been analyzed manually every time after the interview session is done for each respondent. The analysis process has looked at the themes or concepts that emerged from each respondent. At this time there will be a constant comparative method where the information obtained will be filtered until it finds a specific theme presented by one respondent and the researchers will differentiate it with a specific theme presented by other respondents. After that, each of the data categories was analyzed cross-sectionally to identify themes that have similarities and were grouped as a single theme. When the emerging themes were obtained, they were analyzed according to the research questions and objectives.

Result and Discussion

In the present study, research results show that there are four (4) main elements to the effectiveness of the implementation of the Parole System in dealing with the phenomenon of recidivism among parolee, namely, the implementation of regular urine tests, monitoring, moral support from parole officers and drug prevention education programs. According to all 19 respondents who have been interviewed, the most important activity that prevents them from returning to taking drugs again while following the parole system is the urine test. As a result of the interview conducted with all the respondents, the study found that the implication or effect of the implementation of urine tests performed every week on all parolees is that all parolees regardless of whether they live with their families or those who

live in mediation homes do not return to taking drugs despite having being outside the prison where it is easy for parolee to obtain drug supplies.

"In this parole, every Wednesday I have to come to the parole office for a 'urine test'. Every week I have to do the 'urine test'. If I get caught in the 'urine test' just once, his punishment, I have to go back to prison and will have to go to court again for a new drug offence. It means that I will have to add a new prison sentence. In terms of the 'urine test', it really helped me from taking back drugs. When you're sitting in this luaq, it's really easy if you want to take back the drugs. Add to that sitting at home, it's easier to take back drugs if I know where the 'ports' are where people smoke drugs and where they can buy drugs. But because of the 'urine test' every week, I was afraid to take the drug back. I don't want to go to jail anymore." (Respondent 1)

"I think the activity that helped me from getting fit until today is the 'urine test'. In this parole, every Wednesday I have to come to this office for a 'urine test'. This 'urine test' is to see if I have fit back my time on parole. If I fail the 'urine test', it means that I have taken back fit or other drugs. And if that's the case, I'll have to go back to prison. And got a new prison sentence... The urine test was really effective on me. Pasai, I don't want to go to jail anymore. I can't stand being locked up for 24 hours like I used to. Life is not like humans. I want to live free. I want to live with my family. So that's why I haven't taken fit or other drugs while on parole. If I take fit or other drugs while on parole and fail a 'urine test', I will have to go back to prison and face a new punishment. Add more time for me to go to jail..." (Respondent 3)

A cursory look at the answers given by all the respondents regarding the effect of the implementation of the urine test, all the respondents stated that they are afraid to take drugs again because they do not want to be imprisoned again if they are found positive for drugs while following the parole system. According to the findings of the study, the implementation of the urine test is really effective in preventing parolees from returning to taking drugs while following the parole system.

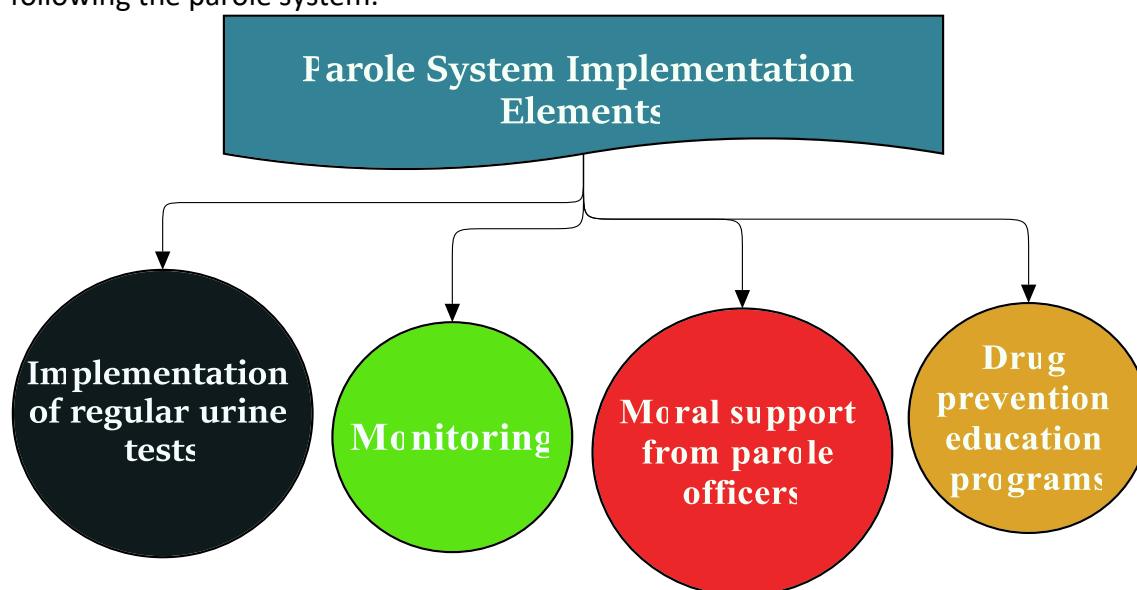


Figure 2. Parole System Implementation Elements

Resource: Figure 2 was created by the authors.

Next, the second element that is an element of the effectiveness of the parole system is that the parolee is constantly observed and monitored by the parole department while at home and also at work. According to twelve respondents, apart from the urine test, the monitoring carried out by the parole department on the respondent also helped a lot from returning to taking drugs during the parole system. According to the respondent, the parole department sent one of the parole officers to the respondent's workplace to see and monitor the respondent's condition while at work. 3 to 4 times a week. For respondents who live alone, while at home after 7.00 pm, the parole department will call the respondent to ensure that the respondent has been at home after 7.00 pm.

Sometimes, after calling the respondent, a parole officer comes to the house to make sure the respondent is actually at home. For the respondents who live in the mediation house, the parole department has installed closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras to monitor the movements of all parolees who live in the mediation house at all times. In addition to installing CCTV cameras, the parole department has also placed a parole officer to stay with the parolee in the mediation house 24 hours a day. The study found that the effect of the strict monitoring carried out by the parole department on parolee resulted in all parolee not falling back into taking drugs while following the parole system.

"The activity that I feel has helped me from getting fit or other drugs to this day is the 'urine test' and the monitoring that the parole department does. Those 2 activities made me not fall back and get fit while on parole. If there wasn't a 'urine test' and that monitoring, I think I might have gotten fit again when I docked at Luaq. It's very easy to get fit again. You can get fit at any time." (Respondent 4).

"Another activity that helped me become free without drugs was the monitoring that you and the teachers do on me every day...Urine test' with the monitoring that the parole department does is really effective on me. As I said earlier, I have been free from drugs from the day I entered parole until today, all because of the 'urine test' and the monitoring that you and the teachers did. These two things are really effective when I'm free without drugs. Because of these two things I am afraid to take back the drugs. I'm afraid that if I take back the drugs and take a 'urine test' or cholera will find out that I took the drugs back, the parole board will arrest me and send me back to prison. A new punishment must be added. I don't want to go to jail anymore" (Respondent 7).

"I think that in all the programs that I have participated in this parole, the 'urine test' and the supervision that the parole department did is what helped me from falling back into taking drugs. Those 2 things really helped me from falling back to taking drugs. Other activities are also good. The only thing that really helped me from taking drugs back was the 'urine test' and supervision... Those two programs really had an effect on me. He made me afraid to take drugs back. If I fall back into taking drugs while on parole, and I fail the 'urine test', the parole board will send me back to prison. I have to spend my parole period in prison and get a new sentence for taking drugs while on parole. I don't want to go to jail anymore. It's enough that I've been in jail before. I want to live freely" (Respondent 12).

According to the answers obtained from the interviews, the results of the monitoring have created fear in all the respondents from taking drugs again while in the parole system. The

respondent stated that they were afraid to go back to taking drugs again because they were afraid that the parole authorities would find out and the respondent would be imprisoned again. The result of the findings revealed that monitoring actions carried out by the parole department have a great effect in ensuring that each parolee remains free from the influence of drugs while following the parole system.

The third element is moral support from parole officers. The parole officers give parolee a lot of advice and support to stop taking drugs again. According to nine respondents, the attitude of the parole officers who never get tired of giving advice and support to the respondents has made the respondents aware of the bad effects of drugs on the respondents. The advice and support given to some extent helped the respondent to become strong to fight the desire for drugs.

"And most of the teachers, the gentlemen here have a lot of support and advice. He is a person who never gets tired of advising me. He is the person who always advises me not to take the drugs back when he is drunk. The advice that my teachers and masters always gave me made me feel that drugs only damage and harm me and my future. It's true that it's a shock when you smoke drugs, but the shock is temporary. After the shock was over, this drug ruined me" (Respondent 2)

"And one more thing, the teachers and you always advise me not to get fit when I'm free later... The advice that the teachers and you give me also has an effect on me. With the advice you have given me, I am aware of my responsibilities to my parents. And I'm determined to be a good child when I'm free..." (Respondent 5)

"And one more thing, the teachers and you always advise me not to take back the fit when you are free later. That's what made me not get back 'fit' until this day... The advice that the teachers and the doc gave me also had an effect on me. With the advice you have given me, I am more aware of my responsibilities to my family" (Respondent 9).

The findings also revealed that the attitude of the parole officers who often give advice and support to parolee to some extent gives awareness and also strength to each parolee to continue freeing himself from the influence of drugs. The full support of the parole officers is very much needed by all parolees to strengthen their resistance against the desire and memory of drug addiction. The support and advice that has been given to these parolees is seen to play an important role in ensuring that all parolees do not return to taking drugs during their time in the parole system.

And lastly, an element of the effectiveness of the implementation of the parole system is the drug prevention education program. The drug prevention education program that is implemented every week also gives a lot of awareness to parolee to stop taking drugs again. According to eight respondents, the lecture program related to the evils of drugs that is organized every week also played a role in helping the respondents to avoid taking drugs again while in the parole system. According to the respondent, the effect of attending all the drug prevention education programs, the respondent's knowledge about the evils of drugs is increasing and has indirectly created awareness in the respondent not to take drugs again.

"The talk program that I listen to every Wednesday at the parole office is also a lot for awareness and understanding of the evils of drugs" (Respondent 8)

"The AADK lectures and activities that I attended gave me a lot of knowledge and awareness about the bad effects of this drug on me and my family..." (Respondent 11).

The findings also unfold the distribution of information related to the adverse implications that will befall the parolee, parolee family members, the community and the country from the symptoms of drug abuse as well as other information that is very useful for the parolee to become a supply after release is very coincidental and needed by the parolee. The result of the increase in information that is channelled directly creates awareness within each parolee to maintain themselves free from the influence of drugs forever. Therefore, the parole department's action of channelling important information through lecture activities is very accurate and plays a role in ensuring that all parolees do not return to taking drugs, especially while in the parole system.

Conclusion

The results of the interviews that have been conducted and the findings analysis revealed the activities carried out in the parole system, especially the activities that have been stated as above, it is clear that these activities really have a positive effect in preventing parolee from taking drugs again during follow the parole system. The proof is, according to the words of the chief parole officer for the Kuala Terengganu District Parole Office and the Hulu Terengganu District Parole Office, since the parole program was implemented in the two districts, no parolee has been found involved in taking drugs again while participating in the parole system. And according to all the respondents themselves, even though they have been out of prison where it is easy for them to get drug supplies, they do not dare to take drugs for fear of being detected by the parole department and imprisoned again.

Research Contribution

The research that has been carried out has provided important contributions in various aspects including contributions to policy, impact on the community, academic research and improvements to the implementation of the parole system itself. In terms of policy, this research provides guidance to the authorities, especially the Malaysian Prisons Department, to improve and re-evaluate the effectiveness of the parole system to deal with the phenomenon of recidivism among prisoners in general and parolees in particular. This research also helps the Malaysian Government enact a more inclusive and effective policy in strengthening the program of rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-convicts into society.

Next, in terms of impact on the community, this research promotes social acceptance of parolees by suggesting measures to improve cooperation between the community and government agencies. It also helps reduce stigma against parolees through exposure to the effectiveness of the parole system in changing the behavior of parolees. In terms of academics, this research adds to knowledge in the fields of criminology, sociology, social work and the study of the criminal justice system in Malaysia. In addition, it is also a reference for future research activities in the issue of recidivism and the parole system in Malaysia. Finally, through this research, it can identify weaknesses in the implementation of the existing parole

system and suggest improvements such as increased training of parole officers, a more comprehensive monitoring system and the use of appropriate technology.

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