

Prisoners' Rehabilitation Training Program in Reducing Recidivism: A case of Mbozi District Prison

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Abstract

The study to assess prisoners' rehabilitation training program in reducing recidivism was conducted at Mbozi District Prison in Mbeya Region. The Region borders Malawi and Zambia and has several religious denominations. The study used a cross-sectional research design. Questionnaire, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were used to collect data from 70 respondents who comprised of pre-trial detainees, prisoners and ex-prisoners. Information was further collected from key informants who included religious leaders, correctional officers and other officials of the prison. The study found that poverty, unemployment and failure to cope with life outside prison were the main reasons for prisoners' recidivism. It was further found that prisoners are not given training that increases their skills for self-employment. Instead they mainly do farming and gardening activities and sometimes with poor tools. Lack of funds was singled out by the officials and correctional officers as the main reason for not providing them with training geared towards increasing their skills. The study concludes that although farming and gardening activities can make them sustain their lives while outside the prison, unreliable rainfall and lack of irrigation system discourage them from relying on it for their livelihood. It is recommended that ex-prisoners be made part of the society by encouraging

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them to participate in development activities that are carried out in the community. Local Government Authorities should utilize them in various activities that require labour for payment.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Rehabilitation means to restore to useful life through therapy and education or restore to good condition, operation, or capacity (Doyle, 2010). Cotterman (2007) define rehabilitation as improving the offenders' character so that they are less often inclined to commit offences again even when they can do so without fear of the penalty. Vacca (2004) has also defined rehabilitation as a means of helping someone to have a normal life again after he/she has been in prison or hospital for a long time. The term recidivism is derived from the Latin word 'recidivism' meaning falling back. That means a recidivist is a person who relapses into criminal behaviour after receiving sanctions or undergoing intervention for a previous crime. Or is a person who commits crimes repeatedly and is unable to stop even after being punished (Gordon and Weldon, 2003). A maximum security prison is a reception center for remanded prisoners in a district and caters for convicted prisoners serving sentences of up to ten years (URT, 2006). A prisoner is any person whether convicted or not convicted, in the custody of any prison (URT, 2006). It means any place, including any camp, which the Minister, under Section 23 of the Prison Act declared to be a prison by notice in the Official Gazette (URT, 2006).

A social evil is an action or consequence that is not in the public interest or which is ant-social and works against the development of a society. Social evils cause damage to the society or its citizens in physical, emotional or cultural form. Terrorism would be an example of social evil as would be prostitution, organized crime, alcoholism, pollution, or corruption (Mowlan and Creegan,

2008). There are several causes of social evils in societies. One of it is disintegration of local communities where people are increasingly isolated from their neighbours at considerable cost to well-being and happiness (Muncie, 2004). People don't care for others, people don't come into contact with each other, and they are isolated by their cars and their televisions (Kachuk, 2000). Family breakdown and poor parenting causes many other social problems and leave young people particularly vulnerable. Family breakdown is a major social evil, is probably the biggest cross-cutting issue society faces because it impacts on so many other things. Irresponsible, uninformed, ill-educated, unprincipled parenting leads inescapably and directly to many of the problems seen, heard, felt and experienced in almost every city, town and many villages (Mowlan and Creegan, 2008). Excessive use of drugs and alcohol are problematic when used to excess. There is a strong link between drugs and alcohol with other social evils such; as sexual abuse, family chaos and family breakdown, murder, car accidents and other related evils in the society (Cotterman, 2007).

Local residents lose out to immigrants in competition for scarce resources such as; jobs, housing, medical services and other social services. This situation creates enmity between them and may result into fighting in the streets, properties damage, arson and even killing of immigrants (Schurman-Kauflin, 2006). Poverty is a constraining force that limits aspirations and opportunities. The haves and have-not create a gap in a society. The gap between the rich and poor is increasing day by day. Poverty is described as trap, a constraining force that prevents people from achieving their aspirations. Poverty is closely intertwined with other social evils, for example, prostitutions, theft, obtaining money by false pretence, forgeries, drug abuse and other related crimes (Wilson, 2009). Tanzania Prison Service (TPS) was officially established as a fully fledged Government Department on 25th August 1931. Prior to that date, the service was administered under the police

force. Prisoners were given hard labour and there was also racial segregation during the German colonial rule in Tanganyika. Under British colonial rule, the situation was more or less the same although slight changes were made such as increase of buildings and accommodation facilities. But the treatment of prisoners remained the same which was based on racial segregation and hard labour (Nanyaro, 2010).

After independence 1961 to date, various changes pertaining to prisoners' treatment have been made. Some of the changes made include the introduction of new legislation - the prison Act of 1967. This Act embodies the spirit of International Basic Human Rights Instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1957 which states that: "No one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment". The Government also ratified a declaration known as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners of 1975, Standard Minimum Rules for Non-Custodial Measures of 1990 and Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of Their Liberty of 1990. These are the most widely known, accessible and comprehensive international documents regulating prisons and prisoners' treatment around the world. Although not legally binding, the standards provide guidelines for international and domestic law as regard persons held in prisons and other forms of custody (Neudek, 1991 and Nanyaro, 2010).

Tanzania Prison Service is a public service within the Government of Tanzania with the objective of contributing to the public safety. Its role and conduct are clearly defined in the Prison Act 1967 and other instruments regulating the service (URT, 1967). The Parole Boards Act 1994, the Community Service Act 2002 and other regulations are there to facilitate the entire mission and vision of the Prison Service in Tanzania. The overall responsibility of the service lies on rehabilitation of offenders who have already been

convicted and are serving their sentences in prison and to keep under safe custody remanded prisoners who are waiting for trial (Dissel, 2011). The rehabilitation process is so demanding; it needs time, resources, and professionalism. A number of activities and programs are used as interventions so as to change attitudes and behaviours of offenders. Prisoners are involved in various programs inside and outside the prison (IRIN, 2012). Several open farms in rural areas were introduced and designated to be centers of excellence for imparting agricultural skills to inmates and to the surrounding communities. Vocation training centers were established in Mbeya and Morogoro region for skills training to inmates. These were linked to the National Vocational Education and Training Authority so that certification of graduates is universally recognized. Educational programs of different levels were established in prisons including; adult basic education, general academic subjects and primary school education for school drop-outs and young offenders in prisons (Novat, 2009).

There is a need to recognize that the management of prisons is a key public service and that staff who work in prisons need to be professionally competent. It is important that prisons should be well managed. It is also necessary to check constantly what is being done and the changes which are being introduced are within an ethical context (Dowden and Brown, 2002). That is to make sure prisons management operates both within a legal and ethical framework. To discharge these, prison officers need to be held high in their personal integrity. This means first of all those who are to work in prisons need to be carefully chosen so as to make sure that they have the appropriate personal qualities and educational background. They need to be given proper training in the principles that should underlie their work in human and technical skills that are required. Throughout their careers they should be given the opportunity to develop and expand these skills

and keep up to date with the latest development on correctional issues (Byrne and Howells, 2002).

According to Nanyaro (2010), the existing facilities to keep the inmates in Tanzania are overcrowded. According to him, the prison service is responsible for the custody and care of more than 45,000 inmates while its accommodation capacity is 22,669. The challenges that the prison service is facing is how to accommodate the increasing number of inmates which is rising year by year. Nanyaro (2010) contemplates that the solution to this problem needs intersectoral coordination of other departments of government machinery. These departments are the Police Force and the Judiciary. According to him, these departments together with Prison Service they can come up with a proposal which might be a concrete solution for overcrowdings in Tanzania prisons. The rehabilitation training programs undertaken in prisons are expected to have a great effect to the behaviour and attitudes of inmates. The expectation is that after receiving the trainings, the prisoners are going back to their homes as good citizens. But this is not the case in most cases; some of them commits the same or similar offences and go back into prisons' gates again. This is what is called '**prisoners recidivism**'. This trend also contributes to the problem of overcrowdings in prisons whereby they lack facilities that are humane, cost-efficient and appropriately secured.

2.0 Background to the Study

The Tanzania Prison Service has regional officers who provide administrative oversight and it has the head office that provides effective management and administration of all prisons all over the country. The mission, vision and objective of the service is to ensure that the rehabilitation and correctional responsibilities are attained to the highest degree by contributing to public safety and healthier communities and by encouraging and enabling best

correctional practices in prisons and outside communities. The prison service promotes and strengthens cooperation between individuals, institutions, organizations and associations interested in Corrections and Criminal Justice (Nanyaro, 2010).

CHAPTER 1

The rapid growing number of prisoners' population, among other things is caused by prisoners' recidivism. High population in prison lead to overcrowding which invariably results to a multitude of other problems. These problems include decrease of living space which also leads to poor hygiene and poor sanitation. It further leads to insufficient bedding and clothing, while food quality is equally compromised. Medical services are also one of the areas which are affected by the rapid increasing number of inmates in prison. The prisons have clinics which are attended by Prison Medical Officers. Serious cases are referred to District Hospitals. The increasing number of inmates in prison thus leads to increase of government expenditure of keeping the inmates.

The Government of Tanzania has been making several strategies to address the problem of the growing number of inmates in Tanzania prisons. Some of these strategies include: Parole Programme, Community Service Programme, Extra-mural labour Employment, and Presidential Amnesty/ Pardon whenever the country is celebrating special occasions such as Independence Day on 9th December every year and the Union Day on 26th April of every year (IRIN, 2012).

These strategies were made with the assumption that the inmates would ultimately be reformed and become good citizens. Likewise, those who have already completed serving their terms in jail, the society expects them to be back to the society and join their fellows in building the nation as law abiders. A rational person would thus expect that those who were pardoned would act as good examples in the society, and the same applies to those

who have already completed serving their terms in prison. Unfortunately, this is not the case in most cases. Most of them particularly men commit similar or other offences within a short period of time after their release, and find themselves in the gates of prisons again. The reason behind this trend is not well established. Possible reasons could be that life in jail is more conducive to them compared to the lives they live in the society, or the difficulties they face in getting their daily bread forces them to commit other offences that if not caught may make them live a better life in the community. The study therefore, aimed at assessing prisoners' rehabilitation training programs in reducing prisoners' recidivism. Mbozi District prison was taken as a case study.

3.0 Methodology

The study to assess rehabilitation training program in reducing prisoners' recidivism was conducted at Mbozi District Prison. The district which is in Mbeya Region has a total arable land of 9679 square kilometers, which is useful for agriculture of both food and cash crops (URT, 1997). According to the 2002 population and Housing Census, the district had a population of 513,600 people. Males were 243,948 (47.5%) and females were 269,652 (52.5%). Population projection is estimated to be 3.1% per year, whereas in 2012 the population of the District was estimated to be 744,632 people (URT, 2002). Its inhabitants are engaged in production of food crops such as maize, rice, and beans while coffee is produced as a cash crop. Some of them are involved in petty business along the Tanzania-Zambia road. There are a big number of young people conducting petty businesses along the road and along the boarder. Rate of crime in the district is high; there are also some beliefs that people can become rich through witchcraft practices. Through that belief people are ready to do anything provided they can be assured to get money. That has increased the rate of crime such as house breaking, stealing, robbery, sexual offences and

murder. The crimes have led to outbreak of remanded and convicted prisoners which in turn lead to prison overcrowdings. It is for that reason that the study was conducted at Mbozi District Prison.

The study used a cross-sectional research design since variables were not expected to change over time. The population of the study included male prisoners who completed serving their terms at Mbozi Prison from 2009 up to 2012 and prisoners who are still serving their terms. It further included female remandees and one female prisoner who was in the prison at the time of the study. It also included correctional officers and other officials in the prison and the religious leaders who provide spiritual services to prisoners. The study also sought views of the street chairpersons. The sample size was 95 respondents in which 70 were remandees, prisoners and ex-prisoners while key informants who included correctional officers and officials of the prison were 10 and religious leaders were 5. The study also collected views of 10 street leaders in the district. The prison is located in Vwawa which is the headquarters of the town council. The town has 42 streets headed by street chairpersons. Ten streets were randomly picked where their street chairpersons were interviewed to seek their opinion regarding causes for prisoners' recidivism. The study further picked randomly 39 male prisoners among those who were serving their jail term. It also picked one female prisoner and 10 remandees and purposively selected 20 ex-prisoners who served their jail term from 2009 to 2012 who had the record of being jailed more than once. The ex-prisoners were identified through the records availed to the team by prison officers and an assistance by street chairpersons who volunteered to identify places of domicile of ex-prisoners.. At the time of the study there was one female prisoner and 10 female remandees. All ex-prisoners were male, even majority of those who are serving their jail terms.

There were 55 male prisoners and 120 remandees in the prison at the time of the study while there was only one female prisoner and 10 remandees. Correctional officers and other officials of the prison were purposively selected since they are the ones who normally deal with the prisoners. In Mbozi District just like in Mbeya Region there are several religious denominations. The study interviewed 5 Pastors/Bishops who were picked among the denominations existing in the area. Primary data were collected using questionnaire, in-depth interviews to key informants and selected respondents and through focus group discussions. In conducting Focus Group Discussions, two groups were formed; one group consisted of the one female prisoner and 10 female remandees while the other group consisted of 12 male prisoners who were serving their jail terms at the prison. The selection of female group took all remandees and the only female prisoner in the prison. Selection of the male group was made randomly among those who were serving their jail terms. Secondary data was obtained from various sources such as internet where publications on prisoners' rehabilitation and trainings which were carried out in prisons in Tanzania and Mbozi District prison were obtained. Further information was obtained from libraries and reports in Mbozi prison. The collected data were sorted, coded and analysed descriptively.

4.0 Results

4.1 Age

The majority (62%) of respondents interviewed were between ages 25 to 34 years as shown in Table 1. These are youth or young people who are supposed to engage in productive activities, but they instead commit crimes. As poverty levels soar world-wide, so does the number of homeless young people. The numbers of street children have been steadily increasing in many countries, particularly those in developing regions whose cities cannot keep up with urbanization. When children don't or can't go to school;

don't have legitimate jobs, don't have an actual home and suffer from the illnesses and disaffection that go with their situation, they are more than likely going to turn to illegal activities to support themselves (UN-HABITAT, 2004). For most offenders, versatility, rather than specialisation, is the norm. That is, most offenders commit a wide range of offences rather than concentrating on one particular type of crime. This is not the same thing as saying that someone who commits a theft is just as likely to commit a murder. Rather, those who are arrested for a specific offence or asked whether they have committed it have generally also been arrested for or readily admit to committing a wide range of other offences. This means that factors influencing onset of involvement in a particular form of crime often have considerable relevance to the onset of involvement in other forms of crime (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990).

Table 1: Age of Respondents

Age group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
15-19	2	3
20-24	5	7
25-29	6	10
30-34	37	52
35-39	5	7
40-44	4	6
45-49	2	3
50-54	5	7
55-59	3	4
60+	1	1
Total	70	100

Source: Study Findings, 2012

4.2 Sex

Studies have shown that males are more likely to commit crime than females, at least where serious crime is concerned. Crime, however, is pre-eminently a preoccupation of the young, whether male or female (Blumstein et al, 2011). According to the International Centre for Prison Studies (2004) women are convicted of crime less often than men and the proportion of women in the world's prisons is small. Almost all the countries of the world have a proportion of women prisoners lower than 12%, with the norm about 6%. Majority of the respondents (84.3%) in the study carried out at Mbozi Prison were males as shown in Table 2. The proportion of female respondents was 15.7%.

Table 2: Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	59	84.3
Female	11	15.7
Total	70	100.0

Source: Study Findings, 2012

Information gathered through key informants indicated that women commit less crime than men in the area. Those who were in prison at the time of study were being accused of thefts and murder due to love affairs while male prisoners were jailed following burglary and other crimes including theft.

4.3 Marital status

In a study done by Forrest (2011), marijuana users who went on to marry were less likely to have continued using the drug than those who remained single. According to Forrest (2011), marriage may help reduce crime because married people feel they have more to lose. Men and women also tend to think about how their wives and

husbands might react when deciding how to act. They are also more likely to avoid situations that might lead to crime or to spend time in the company of friends who encourage them to misbehave. Waite and Gallagher (2000) further argue that married men have lower rates of alcoholism than their unmarried counterparts. Researchers believe that wives offer encouragement, support, and protection from daily problems that could otherwise lead men to using alcohol. When married men do become alcoholics, they show higher recovery rates than unmarried men (Duncan et al, 2003). Married men and women have lower suicide rates than unmarried men and women, probably because married people have a larger social network of friends and relatives. Meaningful relationships give people a sense of personal value and a feeling of responsibility to others, both of which lessen the likelihood they will commit suicide (Waite and Gallagher, 2000).

The study was thus interested to establish the marital status of the respondents in order to determine whether it had any influence on committing crimes. In their response to the question on marital status, most respondents (60%) were found to be married while the rest (40%) were single as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Married	42	60
Single	28	40
Total	70	100

Source: Study Findings, 2012

Although these findings seem to contradict the studies which have shown that married people commit fewer crimes than unmarried ones, International Centre for Prison Studies (2004) has noted that in Pakistan, majority of prisoners were married. At Mbozi prison

there is also a possibility that some of them indicated to be married while in fact they are not with a hope that lesser punishment may be meted on them. There is a general belief that the public including the magistrates sympathise with families left behind which depend on them.

4.4 Education

Education provides people with knowledge and skills that can lead them to a better quality of life. According to Youth Justice Board (2005) unemployment levels among released offenders are higher than among other members of society, due to inadequate education and job skills. According to the Board, the five-year follow-up study revealed that recidivist offenders were likely to be unemployed or under-educated. Most importantly, the study showed formal education is an important element for re-entry into society, impacting on both post-release employment and recidivism. Education is thus taken as a factor that can minimize or deter youth from committing crimes. The level of education of respondents was thus asked in order to establish whether it had any influence on committing crimes and in recidivism. In their response, majority (72.9%) were found to be having primary education. Few of them (14.2%) had secondary education while the rest (12.9%) had no education as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Level of Education of the Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No Education	9	12.9
Primary	51	72.9
Secondary	10	14.2
Total	70	100.0

Source: Study Findings, 2012

These findings suggest that majority of the pre-trial detainees and the sentenced prisoners or ex-prisoners have either no education or have only primary education and thus have no job skills which can make them to be employed or employ themselves.

4.5 Factors Contributing to the Existence of Recidivism

The study sought opinion of the respondents and key informants regarding factors contributing to the existence of recidivism in Mbozi District. In their response, they mentioned seven factors. These include: poverty, unemployment, peer groups, depression, failure to cope with life outside prison, lack of education and insufficient training program while in prisons. Table 5 presents the opinion mentioned by prisoners, pre-trial detainees and ex-prisoners who were interviewed during the study.

Table 5: Factors for Recidivism mentioned by Respondents

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Poverty	22	31.4
Unemployment	21	30.0
Failure to cope with life outside prison	13	18.6
Insufficient training programme while in prison	8	11.4
Peer groups	3	4.3
Depression	3	4.3
Total	70	100.0

Source: Study Findings, 2012.

Key informants mentioned more or less the same factors. Religious leaders added that lack of parental care and unemployment are the major factors. According to them, youth are given maximum freedom by their guardians to the extent that

they do not want to engage in agriculture despite the favourable climate in the area. Youth also lack skills for self employment and view the life in jail as normal despite the fact that when in jail they work hard under hardship conditions while at home though there are no harsh conditions they are not ready to work hard. Majority (61.4%) of the respondents interviewed mentioned poverty, unemployment as the main factors that causes recidivism. Those who mentioned failure to cope with the life outside prison were slightly less than one-fifth (18.6%) as indicated in Table 5. Other reasons mentioned by the prisoners, ex-prisoners and pre-trial detainees who were interviewed was insufficient training programmes while in prison, depression and peer groups. These findings are in line with the observation made by Petersilia (2006) when she pointed out that when prisoners are released they are not prepared to deal with the outside world. A typical offender leaves prison without any savings, no entitlement to unemployment benefits, and very few employment opportunities. Prisoners are often released with only a bus ticket and a small amount of cash. It is up to them to choose a place to live, to buy basic goods and services, and to find a job. They are isolated and live alone. Most prisoners do not have transitional case managers, so they must strive for success with few resources (Petersilia, 2006). Without the tools to build a successful life and with the stress of trying to “make ends meet,” many prisoners resort to crime (Maruna and Russ, 2004). In addition, longer prison sentences only make adjustment to society more problematic upon release. It becomes increasingly more difficult to obtain employment and offenders become alienated from their families and the community (David, 2005). Abuses in prisons make inmates more hostile and bitter towards society, which arguably increases the rate of recidivism. The prison atmosphere is survival-of-the-fittest, where one cannot show vulnerability. Some inmates even learn more about crime (Howells, 2000).

4.6 Activities Conducted by Prisoners while in Prison

The study further wanted to establish the type of activities that are conducted by prisoners while in prison with a view of judging whether it aimed at equipping them with the necessary skills that can enable them to survive after their jail terms. In their reply to this question, majority of respondents (60%) mentioned farming and gardening as the main activity that they do while in prison. Less than half (38.6%) mentioned carpentry and masonry as the activities that they do while in prison. One female respondent (1.4%) mentioned that she does tailoring at the prison as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Activities done by Prisoners

Activities	Frequency	Percentages
Farming and gardening	42	60.0
Carpentry	15	21.4
Masonry	12	17.2
Tailoring	1	1.4
Total	70	100.0

Source: Study Findings, 2012.

These findings indicate that most prisoners are engaged in farming and gardening while about two-fifth (38.6%) do carpentry and masonry. During focus group discussions, one male respondent had this to say:

Box 1

“The society is viewing them as criminals and they are not given any responsibility. They don’t believe that they are normal human beings who committed crimes without knowing the consequences they would face for their action. They also don’t realize that after serving their sentences, they are reformed. Since they can not manage to get basic needs due to that stigma by the society, they find no other option of survival apart from committing other crimes like theft and burglary. Poverty and unemployment due to lack of skills are the main factors making us to commit crimes. Even few of us who have some skills are not given any work by the society for fear that once we know their premises, we might engineer burglary or other theft in their locations. We lack capital that can enable us to start our own small businesses. Moreover, while in prison, we are not trained to become an expert in masonry, carpentry or in repair of vehicles. Instead, we are being harassed and given hard work including working on farms or other private activities of the officials of the prison”. Comment from male respondent.

From the above comment, the society where the ex-prisoners live and the bad situation in prison together with lack of proper training programmes in prisons seem to be the main contributing factors for recidivisms. According to Swahel (2012) various programmes or projects on rehabilitation of prisoners have been initiated in several countries in the world. However, most of them are often under-funded and are narrow in their scope for whom they wish to help. Also, many of these programs only exist within the walls of the prison and as a result, once the prisoners are released they find that they are once again without help. This is

not to imply that the prisoners are completely alone in their struggle. When someone is released from prison, the system should help to integrate them back into society so that they can be a productive member of the work force instead of a drain on the economy.

A comment that was made by one correctional officer at Mbozi Prison was more or less similar to the above observation when asked about the efforts that the prison is doing to help prisoners reform from their bad behaviours and to become active members of the society who can contribute to the economic development of the country. The correctional officer had this to say:

Box 2

“At the prison, various efforts are made which are geared towards reforming the prisoners. We understand that most prisoners are uneducated and they do not have skills that can enable them to employ themselves after their jail term. Unfortunately, we do not have funds to train them acquire various skills. Their big number is also making the little available equipment such as machines to cut and process timber, building equipment and space in the garage not suitable for their training. Upon release, some of them commit the same or similar mistakes due to lack of support from the society where they live. In prison, most of them do the farming and garden activities which seem not to help them when they are released due to unreliable rainfall and lack of farms and water for gardening”. Comment from Correctional Officer.

O'Brien (2002) asserted that upon release, most individuals who have criminal records (known as ex-offenders) have difficulty finding employment and are therefore unable to stabilize economic resources and become reintegrated into society. A number of researchers (Nugent et al, 2004; O'Brien, 2002) have

documented that the inability to gain employment upon release is related to increased rates of recidivism. Others (Petersilia, 2001) have argued that the transition from incarceration to society is a crucial time for ex-offenders that may be significantly affected by whether they secure stable employment. Additionally, Petersilia, (2001) demonstrated that providing individualized training for specific vocations equip individuals with skills that help them secure employment upon release. Results from intervention studies with juvenile offenders by Wiederanders (2001) demonstrated that the best predictor of success during the reentry process is teaching the juveniles to get along with coworkers, use support networks, understand the job promotion process, and seek out training opportunities for advancement.

4.7 Approaches Expected to Reduce the Incidence of Recidivism

The study wanted to get the views of the respondents regarding the best approach or mechanism that could make them refrain from committing the same or similar crimes after their jail terms. Their suggestion was sought so that if implemented it could make them good citizens. In their reply to this question, majority of them (78.6%) mentioned training that increases their skills, entrepreneurial education, access to loans and support by the community as shown in Table 7. Those who mentioned only training that is geared towards increasing their skills were 10%. During focus group discussions, one male prisoner noted that the government especially at the village level should prepare conducive environment for entrepreneurship activities that would enable the prisoners to engage in and this would reduce the incidence of recidivism. According to Brazzell (2009) and Erisman (2010) intensive training to prisoners, also known as inmate education and correctional education, is a broad term that encompasses a number of educational activities occurring inside a prison. These educational activities include both vocational

training and academic education. The goal of such activities is to prepare the prisoners to have successful life outside prison and to enhance the rehabilitative aspects of the prison. Vocational training, on the other hand, offers more opportunities in the prison setting. Much of what is offered will depend upon the local prison's programming and a number of other vocations via "live work" employments e.g. plumbing, electricity, masonry, farming etc. All of these are free to the prisoner-participants (Brazzell, 2009). Prison education has been shown to successfully reduce the [recidivism](#) rate for released prisoners (Garmon, 2002).

Table 7: Suggestions by Prisoners and Ex-Prisoners

Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
Training that increase skills	7	10.0
Entrepreneurship education	3	4.3
Support by the community	2	2.8
Access to loans	3	4.3
All the above	55	78.6
Total	70	100.0

Source: Study Findings, 2012

Some respondents mentioned that due to their bad records, they are not allowed to join SACCOS or to access any loan from individuals or financial institutions. This situation makes them unable to earn an acceptable living and thus forces them to commit similar or other crimes that can make them survive. Correctional officers and other officials of the prison together with religious leaders when asked as key informants regarding what should be done to solve or minimize the problem of recidivism had the same view as that suggested by detainees, prisoners and

ex-prisoners. The correctional officers and officials of the prison, however, pointed out that financial constraints facing the prisons hinders the implementation of imparting the prisoners with skills necessary for getting employment or of employing themselves. Religious leaders insisted that the society can easily accept them if they demonstrate their change of behaviour by attending worship places more frequently. Erisman and Contardo (2010) argue that people are not permanently criminals and that it is possible to restore a criminal to useful life, a life which contributes to a betterment of him or herself and a society as whole. The goal of the prisoners' rehabilitation training programs is to reform prisoners from committing crimes and assisting them in starting normal lives without thinking on returning back to criminal activities. Change is possible for every one; even people in prison can change for better and become good persons and productive citizens.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

It is concluded that prisoners' recidivism is caused by poverty, unemployment and failure to cope with life outside prison. Other factors causing recidivism are insufficient training provided to them while in prison, peer groups and depression. The study further concludes that while in prison most of them are engaged in doing farming and gardening activities. They do those activities under constant supervision. Although farming and gardening activities can make them sustain their lives while outside the prison, unreliable rainfall and lack of irrigation system discourage them from relying on it for their livelihood. Lack of funds was singled out by correctional officers and other officials of the prison as the main stumbling block for not training them in skills such as masonry, plumbing and vehicle repairs that could make them get jobs while outside the prison. Moreover, it is concluded that lack of support from the community by not accepting them as

people who have been reformed and instead trying to eliminate them from their company for fear of being robbed or harmed make the ex-prisoners fail to get means of survival and hence resort to committing crimes. Failure of the society and religious leaders to encourage the ex-prisoners to attend worship places encourage them to commit evils which in most cases result into recidivism.

5.2 Recommendations

These findings call for specific strategies to address the problem of recidivism. Some of the key issues to address should include:

- i) Making ex-prisoners part of the society by encouraging them to participate in development activities that are carried out in the community. Local Government Authorities should utilize them in various activities that require labour for payment.
- ii) The government should set aside funds for training prisoners while serving their jail terms. Such training should be geared towards make them acquire certain skills that can make them to be self-reliant.
- iii) Correctional Officers should be given an opportunity for further training so as to equip them with better skills of reforming the prisoners. Currently, prisons are seen as a torture place where some of their rights are abused.
- iv) Religious leaders should be encouraged to visit prisons and preach to them the word of God. Through that process, once they have finished their jail terms and if the community will provide them with moral support they will be likely to be good citizens.

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