

## **Challenges of Re-offenders in Their Re-integration into Their Respective Communities: Ziway Federal Correction Center in Focus**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to explore the challenges that released re-offenders' face while they reintegrate into their respective communities the case of Ziway Federal Correction Center. The researcher used a sequential explanatory design to study and understand the nature of problems. The data were collected from 60 participants using questionnaires and out these participants seven participants were also randomly selected for interview. Questionnaires and semi structure interviews were used. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically and the quantitative were analyzed through descriptive statistics. The study revealed that the formation of former criminals and drug addicts' networks had led re-offender's life styles differently. There were no reintegration programs for serving released prisoners while they reintegrate into their respective communities. Moreover, in their transition process re-offenders faced varies obstacles that originated from ineffective pre-release plan in correctional institutions and as well as a post release intervention in various social agencies that deal with re-offenders' matters. Prisoner when leaving correctional facilities have limited human capital that prevent them from accession to different opportunities available in the society. In addition, problems of accommodations, financial constraints, stigmatization, drug addiction problems, low educational backgrounds, lack of positive social support, establishing gang networks had

hurdled their integration to their respective communities. Based on the findings of the study some recommendations were also forwarded.

**Key words:** Re-integration, Correction center, Challenges, Re-offenders, Stigmatization, Substance Abuse

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

An estimated 10 million people are in prison worldwide and the majority of them lives in low- and middle-income countries. Among this total prison population 450,000 of them are reoffending prisoners (Travis, 2003). The vast majority of incarcerated individuals are eventually released from prison. The reentry process is a transition which is full of emotional significance and practical difficulties for the offender and offenders' family as well as to the larger communities (Langan & Levis, 2002).

In many countries there seems to be an increase in the proportion of offender who fail to complete a period of supervision after an early conditional release from custody. This level of failed re-entry is not necessarily due to an increase in re-offenders among on conditional release, but possibly also to the strict enforcement other release conditions by supervisors (Portland & Oregon, 2007). A significant proportion of the offenders returned to the institutions are indeed returned solely for violations of parole conditions as opposed to having committed a new offence, for example, for missing treatment sessions, breaking a curfew or breaching no-go/ exclusion zones (Stickels, 2007).

The United States is the world leader in incarceration, one in four of the world's prisoners are in an American prison or jail. The United States incarcerates nearly 500,000 more people than the top 36 incarcerating

European countries combined (Mathew, 2015). In the United States, of incarcerated prisoners, only 7% of prisoners are serving death or life sentences and only small fraction of inmates die in prison, these 93% of these individuals will be returning. About 650,000 individuals are released from prison each year on approximately 160 percent per day. Perhaps even more dramatic is the fact that the current average length of prison sentence is only 2.4 years and given that 44% of the state prisoners will be released within a year (Petersilia, 2003). In Michigan, more than 100,000 individuals are released from prison each year, 85% of whom are released under parole supervision (Hughes & Wilson, 2003).

Further exacerbating this situation is the fact that the rate of successful returns of offenders to the community is declining. There are an increasing numbers of individuals sent to prison as a result of parole violations. Parole violators now account for about a third of all prison admission (Travis, 2003). Furthermore; the rate of failure among the released individuals is increasing. Hughes and Wilson (2003) noted that state parole discharges in 2002 is less than half of successful completed their terms of supervision.

In Africa, former offenders almost always return to their communities of origin. For instance, every month in South Africa approximately 6000 sentenced prisoners are released some on parole and some other on expiry of sentence. After serving prison sentence it is society's expectation that they will refrain from committing crime and be productive citizens. They are expected to find employment, rebuild relationships with their families and communities and cease from engaging in certain activities and avoiding the risks that caused them in prison in the first instance. Unfortunately, it is the case that many released prisoners commit further offences and find their way back to prison. Some return in remarkable short period of time while others after several years (Muntigh, 2002).

In Ethiopia, when prisoners are released from federal and state prison, they face an environment that is challenging and actively deter them from becoming productive member of society. For long period of time and still at this time after care of prisoners is not part of correctional system in Ethiopia. They are not certain how their families, relatives and friends and even the community receive them (Andargachew, 2015).

When offenders are released into society, they might have faced numerous obstacles as well as the stigma of having been imprisoned. Offenders are expected to attend a variety of rehabilitation programs while in prison, but upon their release this rehabilitation would to be not sustained. The priority for the offenders inside prison is rehabilitation supervision, whereas outside in the community at large it is survival.

Hence, for the purpose of this study Ziway Correctional Administration was selected in order to explore the challenges released prisoners faces while they reintegrate into their respective communities. By examining the challenges recidivists' prisoners' face while they reintegrate into their respective communities, this research aims to create a better understanding of the challenges that they may face in the transition process.

### **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Different studies have confirmed that, when some offenders leave the prison environment, they generally return to criminal activities, largely as a result of their socio-economic environment (Muntingh, 2002). The offenders repeated involvement in criminal activity is problematic and impacts negatively on their families who have to bear the loss of the offenders' incarceration. This results in correctional centers being over crowded as offenders keep returning due to their criminal behavior and the other challenges that they are confronted with.

According to Ethiopian Bureau of Justice Statistics report (2012), there are well over 15,000 individuals incarcerated in the Ethiopian federal prison administrations. Only small numbers of prisoners are serving death penalty or life sentences and only small fraction of inmates die in prison. Thus, the large number of these prisoners will be returning home. About 8000 individuals are released from prison each year or approximately 22 prisoners per day. Perhaps even more dramatic is the fact the current average length of prison sentence is only 3.2 years and given that, large number of federal prisoners will be released within a year.

In Ziway Federal Prison Administration, there are 2250 prison populations. In this prison administration, more than 1200 prisoner are released from prison each year. There are an increasing number of individuals sent to Ziway federal prison as a result of parole violations. As data obtained from Ziway federal prison administration indicates, parole violators now account for about three percent of all prison admission. Furthermore, the rate of failure among the released individual seems to be increasing. The researchers decided to conduct study in this area because to the best knowledge of the researchers, there have been little or no research/ other studies in the area about the challenges of reoffenders in their reintegration.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

- What are the challenges that re-offenders face up on the release that contribute to reoffending at Ziway federal prison administration center?
- What are the possible causes for the challenges that re-offenders from federal prison administration face in the process of reintegration?

#### **1.4. Objectives of the Study**

##### **1.4.1. The General Objective of the Study**

The main objective of the study was to explore the challenges Re-offending prisoner faces while they re-integrate into their respective communities. To achieve this general objective, the following specific objectives were addressed. These were to;

##### **1.4.2. The Specific Objectives of this Study are to:**

- To explore the challenges that reoffenders face in the process of reintegration to their respective communities.
- To determine the causes of challenges that released prisoner from Ziway Federal Prison Administration face.

#### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study will contribute to the community in which the released prisoners reintegrate, to the government and other concerned bodies and other researchers as follows:

The findings of this proposed study will produce a more comprehensive understanding of the reentry process which may enable correctional agencies to better assist offenders in their adjustment to life outside of prison.

- This study will initiate prison administrators to introduce skill-based training to come up basic entrepreneurship knowledge and skill.
- The findings of this study will help the government in the process of policy formulation in order to address the needs of released prisoners.

#### **1.6. Delimitation of the Study**

This study attempted to explore the challenges recidivists' faces while they reintegrate in their respective communities, in Ethiopia, with particular emphasis on the inmates who are serving time in Ziway Correctional Administration.

The scope of this study is limited in terms of study population and the issues it addresses. It is limited to the challenges re-offenders face and these challenges might be the direct causes of their recidivism. In terms of the coverage, this study was limited to offenders who have been serving time in Ziway Correctional Administration. The findings of the study were not generalized to other offenders rather it is reflection of those offenders who committed crime two or more than two times.

### **1.7. Conceptual Definition of Terms**

**Recidivism:** prisoners who had been committed criminal act for more than two times not necessarily similar criminal offences.

**Reintegration:** Is a process of transition into the community after serving prison sentences.

**Prisoner:** Those are individuals who commit crime or perform an act which is prohibited by the criminal law of the country, Ethiopia.

**Correctional centers:** are institutions established for the purpose of rehabilitating those who make social or legal crime.

## **2. Research Methodology**

### **2.1. Description of the Study Area**

The study was conducted in Batu town, which is located in East Shoa Zone of Oromia Regional State, in central rift valley of Ethiopia which is located at 163 km away from Addis Ababa, capital city of Ethiopia. In Batu town there are two prison centers. These prison centers are District and Federal. As such those released prisoner from those prisons would reintegrate with Batu town communities with their prison experiences. This leads the town as town that has the highest proportion of criminal reports. Therefore, the town should be awarded so as to take proactive measures to criminal activities.

### **2.2. Research Method**

In this study, sequential explanatory design, through collecting quantitative data followed by qualitative data was employed. More specifically, explanatory mixed methods study was used to obtain statistical, quantitative results from a sample and then follow-up with a few individuals to probe or explore those results in more depth.

Quantitative data were collected from reoffenders. These data include demographic information, criminal history, employment status, educational backgrounds and substance use histories. These data provided contextual information on the sample and help to understand the challenges that offenders faced up on release from prison. Besides, interview was used to obtain sensitive and socially dynamic information about the feelings and perception of people.

### **2.3. Sampling Technique and Sampling Size**

Based on the research problem that the study intends to address, 80 participants who are serving their criminal sentence in Ziway Federal Correctional Center were selected for this study. Sixty reoffending prisoners



were randomly selected for this study based on the formula of Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The selection of participants was accomplished with the help of administrative officials in the correctional administration, who know the criminal profiling of offenders.

Inclusion criteria were all age groups, only males and all types of crime they commit. Accordingly, the data were collected from 60 participants using closed-ended questionnaires and out these participants seven participants were also randomly considered for interview.

#### **2.4. Data Sources**

This study employed both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were collected from offenders serving time in Ziway federal correctional centers through questionnaire and semi-structure interview with key informants.

Though the main and first hand sources of data were primary, it was supplemented by information gathered from secondary sources of data. Secondary data collection involved the review of records of police and jail authorities, documents of the government.

#### **2.5. Methods of Data Collection and Instruments**

To collect the data, semi-structured interview and closed-ended questionnaires were developed. The questionnaire has been piloted and modified before the execution of the data collection. During the pilot test of the questionnaires, 10 reoffenders were randomly selected from recidivist prisoners and they were also excluded from the main study. An interview guide was also prepared in English and then translated to Amharic/Afan Oromo (local languages) before data collection it was also judged by experts in the area for its face validity.

## **2.6. Data Analysis procedures for Quantitative and Qualitative Data**

In quantitative data, descriptive statistics tools were used to analyze the data obtained from respondents. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentage were employed. Thematic analysis was also used to analyze the qualitative data.

## **2.7. Ethical Consideration**

The researchers took an official letter seeking cooperation for research data from Arsi University and submitted the same to Ziway federal correctional centers for access to data collection. Then, in return, the researchers received confirmation letter for access from the center. and the researchers' informed consent were collected before carrying out any interviews and focused group discussion.

### **(a) Informed Consent**

Letters of informed consent were circulated to all respondents prior to interviews or questionnaire administration. All participants were informed the objectives of the study and as participation were also voluntary and had the right to decline from participation at any time.

### **(b) Confidentiality, Privacy and Anonymity**

The researcher will maintain secrecy to information produced by respondents, including storage of information. Either for the purpose of anonymity for respondents, their names were not used instead they were labeled 'Respondent 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07. It is vital important to do so because exposure of respondent's information might breach a good image which they are trying to build in the society, since not all people know that they are criminals.

### **3. RESULTS**

#### **3.1. DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

In this part of the study, respondent's characteristics, the challenges reoffenders face in relation to the community environment, social networks, employment conditions, gang networks, substance abuse and treatment conditions, their relationships with family members, educational backgrounds, rehabilitation paths and residential condition of recidivist prisoners were discussed.

#### **3.2. General Characteristics of Re-Offenders**

The participants in the study area were recidivist prisoner in Ziway Federal Prison Administration and had released from prison centers and re-offended. The study comprised of sixty male recidivist offenders who had been incarcerated on more than one cases. The ages of interviewed participants ranged from 20-50 years old. The marital status of the participants shows that 47 respondents out of sixty respondents were single or unmarried, 6 respondents out of sixty respondents were married and 7 respondents out of sixty respondents were found to be divorced. From this fact, people who are unmarried might be committing crime. From sociological points of views, the main reasons could be that married people have many social roles and responsibilities within their families and communities than the unmarried. The unmarried are less likely to have social roles and responsibilities, since they are concerned less matured by the society. Consequently, the unmarried are relatively free from many roles, and when situations are conducive there are many chance of committing crime.

Regarding the nature of living 28 respondents out of 60 respondents were stayed with their parents before their current sentence, 16 respondents out of 60 respondents were stayed with their close relatives before their current

sentence, 6 respondents out of 60 respondents stayed with street children, 6 respondents out of 60 respondents were stayed with their wife's, 4 respondents out of 60 respondents were stayed lonely. In terms of their criminal histories most of the participants arrested and convicted for committing crimes for two or more times. In relation to the type of crime they had convicted most of them are arrested due to property crimes. 48 of recidivist were committed property crimes or stealing out of 60 respondents, 4 respondents out of 60 respondents committed crime of illegal drugs, 3 respondents were committed robbery, 3 respondents out of 60 respondents commit crime of murder, 2 research participants out of 60 research participants were committed crime of fraud.

In this study, the highest proportion of the respondents was unemployed. Out of 60 respondents 42 of them were unemployed. Only the remaining 18 of the respondents were engaged in income generating activities. Source of income for unemployed were family members and close relatives.

In relation to their educational background the majority of the research participants were not completed their secondary educational levels. The problems of drugs and alcohol are common among the participants. Forty seven research participants out of 60 participants were had a history of substance and alcohol use histories.

### **3.3. Findings of the study**

Offenders were asked questions that aimed to develop a comprehensive understanding of the challenges that recidivist prisoner faced in the process of reintegrate into their respective communities. Their responses were analyzed and the findings were discussed in the following sub-sections.

### 3.3.1. Challenges to Recidivist due to their Community Environment

Respondents were asked to describe their community environment, to state if they were unsafe while they reintegrate to their respective communities and the reason for it. The respondents were described the community environment as being with drugs and alcohol abuse very much in evidence, unemployment and poverty were at the highest stage. 43 participants out of 60 respondents responded that they had felt unsafe within their respective communities' environment. The reason given was that other gang members would come to their respective communities while they reintegrate so as to welcome them since the majority of recidivist prisoners were a member of gang groups before their current incarceration.

As participant code 1, stated that

*He was enforced to join other gang members who had been resided in the community. While he reintegrated with the community, as he was member of that gang group so far. He had added that there were no other options to him as he had no any support materially rather than joining to the gang groups to sustain his life by depending on the gang members.*

From this, it is common to point out that, while the recidivist was released to their respective communities, they had been maintained their criminal networks which had been formed before their current sentence. This situation hampered the recidivist prisoner to live a crime free life style as they reintegrate into their respective communities, thus, such criminal networks should be worked on.

The quality of schooling the participants had received was poor; the reasons given for dropping out of school were the following: 27 out of sixty participants had been obliged to go and work to sustain their life since the community is not in position to provide assistance for them, 17 out of sixty

participants had dropped out because of having drug addicts, 10 out of sixty participants had failed and never went back to school, 6 had dropped out because of having been expelled from due to misbehaving in school.

Table1. Reason for School dropout of recidivist prisoner

R/no	Reasons for dropout	Number	Percentage
1.	Work to sustain life	27	45%
2.	Drug addictions	17	28%
3.	Failed and never went back to school	10	17%
4.	Expelled from school	6	10%\

Table 1 revealed that most participants were dropped out from their school due to the challenges that emanated from their community environment. This means as indicated in the Table 1 the highest proportions of the participants were dropped out to work and obtain a life sustaining coin. This indicates that the community environment is not supportive to continue their education.

### 3.3.2. The Social Networks and Supports

Here under this section, the researcher present findings about the existence of social networks or informal supports or institutionalized supports to released prisoners transition process once they accomplished their punishments in prisons.

In regard to informal social network, peer networks and support systems; had been of important to inmates and released prisoners in their transition process. 38 participants out of 60 receive assistance from the informal social supports while they released. The assistance which the families offered them includes accommodation, and psychological support through advice giving,

encouragement as well as intimacy relationships. Participants had expressed the importance of families and relatives to visit them in prisons as it increases the sense of belongingness.

Participant code 6 stated that *“how his girl friends had supported and gave him encouragement while he was in prison and life out of prison.”*

Taylor (2003) articulated that social supports effectively reduced psychological stress. He maintained that social support can be provided by partners, family members, friends or family members. So, as it is indicated above, the majority of the respondents had received assistance from their parents, close relatives and friends.

Table 2. Source of support for recidivist prisoners

R/no	Source support	Number of offenders	Percentage
1.	Family members	28	46%
2.	Friends	3	5%
3.	Community	0	0
4.	Reentry programs	0	0
5.	Faith based institutions	0	0
6.	Not received support	17	28%
7	Close relatives	12	20%

Table 2 depicts that the most common sources of support for recidivist prisoner before their current sentence while they were in the community were family members of the participants. 28 participants out of 60 participants responded that they received support from their family members.

The second cited source of support was from intimate partners, with approximately 12 participants out of 60 respondents. Smaller proportion of the participants cited friends as source of support (3 out of 60 participants). Part of the reason was that incarceration was tended to cause participants to reevaluate and distance themselves from peer networks.

The respondents were asked the type of support that they had received and responded that they had received financial and emotional supports. As per the description of respondents, although both emotional and material supports are equally important, they believed that material supports surpassed the emotional support.

Participant code 2 and 4 described as

*We were in need of emotional support than material support because due to in prison life experiences we were lacked our confidence. So, if we obtained psychological support we might adjust ourselves to the situation that encountered us. But we have attained only material support.*

By and large, from the above social networks and support system the participants were not received formal social support and most of them received informal social supports from their family members. It was also depicted in the literature part of this paper as Pro-social and supportive families can provide various types of both material and emotional support which is critical to successful reintegration, especially at the point of release (Stephen, 2005; Visher, 2005).



### 3.3.4. Employment Condition

Offenders were asked a number of questions about their economic situations. To determine as employment was a factor influencing the behaviors of individual offenders. The sample shows that 42 participants out of 60 of participants were unemployed, 18 participants out of 60 participants were employed or engage in different income generating activities while they were in parole. At the interview, most of the unemployed were seeking to obtain employment opportunities. But due to stigma attached with their previous crime and poor education most of the participants were not employed after their release. They indicated that, so as to obtain employment the individual should had social networks which were difficult for recidivist prisoner because of the in-prison subculture culture that prohibit them to establish robust network.

Participant code 7 stated, *“even though social network was perceived as available options to gain employment, due to government policies which means individuals should be free from criminal records, prohibits me from being employed.”*

Table 3. Recidivists’ employment status:

R/no	Employment status	Number of participant	Percentage
1.	Unemployed	42	70%
2.	Employed	18	30%

From the Table 3 it was depicted that the majority (42 participants out 60) of the respondents were unemployed before their current criminal offences. This indicates that the employment opportunities for released prisoner were low.

As participant code 5 stated,

*..... I was without job for about three years but I was sought to have jobs. I was stigmatized due to my previous experiences of committing crime .... my criminal backgrounds paved the way as I was being stigmatized.*

Furthermore, they responded that the department of correctional centers should assess the needs of released prisoners before the releasing date and link the released prisoners to other business owners and establish networks with micro small-scale enterprises to involve released prisoner with priority. They also stated that we should not be perceived by our criminal backgrounds and even while the government announces job vacancies it should be inclusive.

Generally, this research finding indicates that employment plays a vital role for released prisoners to stay out of prison once they are released from prison. Employment has potential to affect the rate and timing of recidivism, increase perception of self-worth (La Vigne, 2008). Individual factors such as stigma, poor education, and few acquired skills reduce employment prospects (Harding, 2003). So, this study is supported by the findings of other studies which were depicted in the literature part of this study.

### **3.3. 5. Substance Use and Treatment conditions**

In this research, participants displayed a wide spread of substance use histories. Forty five participants out of 60 them claimed substance use history and the remaining had stated as they had not such history. Most of the participants stated that they were under the influence of substances when

they committed crimes. The drugs and alcohols used were cigarette, chat, shisha, ganja, hashish, and alcohols were local drinks such as *tela* and *arekie*.

Table 4. Variety of Drugs and Alcohols Used by the Participants

R/no	Drugs and alcohol used	Number of participants used	Percentage
1.	Chat	8	13%
2.	Cigarette	7	11%
3.	Shisha	4	6%
4.	Hashish	4	6%
6.	Alcohol	7	11%
7	Chat, cigarette, and alcohol	16	26%
8	Have no substance and alcohol use histories	15	25%

From the Table 4 it is revealed that most participants (45 out of 60 participants) were drug and substance users before their current criminal offences. The most prevalent drug reported in the substance abuse histories was chat, cigarette and alcohol with 16 participants out of participants self-reporting use of drug in their life. The second most common drug reported was chat with 8 respondents out of 45 respondents. Alcohol, cigarette, shisha and hashish were drugs that had been used by the recidivist before their current incarceration.

Participant code stated 3 stated, *“as there were so many substances and alcohols were available in my community, I started to use them even if I had stopped while I was in correctional centers”*.

As participant code 2 stated, *“in my previous sentence I did not use any substance, but once I released from the prison I started using as I integrated into the community, because drugs and alcohols were abundantly and easily available in the community.”*

It is apparent to believe that if substances and alcohols were easily available in the community; released prisoners are easily attracted and enforced to use which may end-up with committed crime of different types and intensity. It was also evident that there were no drug abuse treatment and initiative programs for individuals who had been addicted of substances. Previous researches on populations leaving prison and transitioning to society have been documented that extensive substance abuse issues associated with negative post release outcomes (Morani, 2011). This study also in lined with the finding of previous studies which states the use of substances affect the recidivism rates.

### **3.3.6. Criminal Behavior of Offenders**

Offenders were asked about their criminal histories and type of crimes they had committed. All the participants stated that, prior to their current sentence; they had been imprisoned on the charges of theft, robbery, fraud, rape and murder. 42 of the participants had incarcerated two times and the rest 18 of the sample were incarcerated three times. The current length of their sentence varies from five years to ten years.

**Table 7.** Types of Crime

R/no	Type of crime	Number of respondents	Percentage
1.	Theft	43	71%
2.	Robbery	7	11%
3.	Fraud	5	8%
4.	Rape	3	5%
5.	Murder	2	3%

From Table 7 it is observed that, most of the participants (43 out of 60 participants) had committed theft, and the second were robbery (7 out of 60 participants) and followed by fraud 5 participants out of 60 participants, rape 3 participants out of 60 participants and murder 2 participants out of 60 participants. From this table it is revealed that even though there are four types of crime (crime of violence, crime against property, crime against the state and victimless crime) the most criminal type that were committed by the recidivist were crime against property.

The interview result indicated that in the previous offence they had not attended proper rehabilitation programs that helped to life out of prison and while they compared the availability of basic needs outside it was not as in prison. Some participants had indicated that they had learnt other criminal skills through association with other criminal.

Participant code 1 stated, *“Previously I was in prison, and I learnt other crime skills which is different from my previous one.”*

The finding of this study indicated that most participants came back to the prison compound as a result of their second or their criminal offences but not simply violation of parole conditions. This study findings correlates with findings of previous studies which stated that significant proportions of the offenders returned to the institutions are indeed returned solely for violations of parole conditions as opposed to having committed a new offence, for example, for missing treatment sessions, breaking a curfew or breaching no-go/ exclusion zones (Stickels, 2007).

### **3.3.7. Offenders Relationships with Their Family Members and Gang Groups**

Participants were asked about their relationships with their family members to understand if there were challenges in relation to their family members and the way family contributes to recidivism. The participants mentioned that they had grown up in family member characterized by poverty and full of quarrels.

The participants were asked if they have close friends. The result indicated that most of the participants 46 participants out of 60 participants had regarded their gang members as friends and the reason given for was that because they had done things together.

Participants were interviewed about what factors were provoked them to commit their offence once they reintegrated with their family members. Most participants indicated that the family members were not ready to accept released prisoner.

Participant code 7 stated that, *“I did not have a mom or dad. I was raised by my aunt. I was not received what my cousin received. For that reason, I decided to go away from my aunt’s house and then commit my second offence.”*

Similarly, it was indicated that 36 participants out of 60 participants belong to a gang member and the reason given for belonging gang was different. These were, for the purpose of money to afford basic necessities, addiction to substances to feed the drug habits and related with family problems and others.

Participants were also asked whether membership in gang was a factor for their return to prison or not. In that, 60% of the participants responded that being membership in gang was a factor for their re-incarceration. Those participants agreed that it was difficult for offenders who belong to gang to reintegrate to their respective communities. The reason given was that; the gang groups were doing their criminal act in the community and were known by the community.

### **3.3.8. The Rehabilitation Paths of Re-Offenders**

The participants were also asked to state whether they are attended any programs within their previous sentences and why the programs had not assisted them to remain outside. The result showed that 41 participants out of 60 participants did not attend programs during their previous sentences. The reasons were that there were no programs that provide rehabilitation programs; and prison officers were reluctant to provide social work dimension of the prison centers rather the prison officers are engaged to correctional supervisions. 19 participants out of participants 60 attended the programs. They were also asked about the programs they attended address the needs of the offenders. The result indicated that almost all of the respondents felt the program attended did not address their needs. They indicated that they did not apply the programs they had attended. The majority of the respondents felt that the rehabilitation programs would address the need of participants if and only if they applied it out side.

## **4. Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **4.1. Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the challenges that offenders face while they reintegrate into their respective communities. It was evident from the study that the barriers to successful rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders are unemployed, substance abuse, joining to gang network, being stigmatized as a result of past criminal experiences by the community members.

From the study it is clear that society is reluctant to receive perpetrators back into the community. Society as a whole contributes to the offender's delinquent behavior and their lack of acceptance as a result of perceptions influences the reoffenders' behavior. Socio-economic service survival was challenge for re-offenders in the study, and the financial need they experienced as a result of unemployment proved to be direct causes of their criminal behaviors. The criminal record of the ex-offenders makes it difficult to secure employment as employers are reluctant to employ such a person because it is known that he has spent time behind bars. Thus, the socio-economic hardships experienced by reoffenders have a link with their criminal behavior.

The programs presented at the Ziway Federal Correction Center were found to be in effective in addressing the needs of released prisoners. However, in case of released prisoners it was evident that support programs should address the real life issues that they had encountered within the community.

Substance abuse was a familiar phenomenon among the participants, because the majority stated that they were under the influence of substances when they committed crime. Drugs and alcohol were easily obtainable within the community and contribute to the breakdown of the moral fibred of society. The drug dependency of respondents impacted negatively on their behavior.



The researcher in opinion that needs to feed the drug habit was as much motivation for committing economic crimes as were theft and robbery. Discussion with participants revealed that the exposure the young people to drug and alcohol within the community from an early age as result of observing their parents, family and friends use such substances made it acceptable to use substance, but with dire effects such addiction.

The offender lacks positive role models and social support. This makes it abundantly clear that recidivism is multifaceted in its causation; consequently, the effective reintegration of offender after their release from prison is dependent on joint partnership of all stakeholders including the family, the community, business owners, government and non-government agencies and other partners in the criminal justice system.

The educational background of the recidivists was lower and it was due to that they cannot compete for different job opportunities. This in turn made them to become joblessness and the need to have money to feed their drug habits leads them to recommit crime.

In conclusion, problems with community environments, absence of social support for released prisoners, defective rehabilitation path, poor educational background, substance abuse problems, and problems with criminal justice systems, and unemployment were challenges and causes for recidivist's prisoner to re-commit crime and not to stay out- side the bar.

#### **4.2. Recommendations**

The purpose of this of this study was to discover the challenges that released prisoners are faces while they reintegrate into their respective communities and based on this purpose and the research finding the researcher wishes to recommend the following actions to the department of correctional services, for social workers, for government and non-government organizations and for the communities.

- ✓ The department of correctional service should assess the needs of released prisoners before the commencement of releasing.
- ✓ The department of correctional service should liaise with business owners for employment opportunities for released prisoners.
- ✓ The department of correctional service should introduce after care programs by establishing satellite offices in community to evaluate and monitor the real life of parolees.
- ✓ The department of correctional service should establish reintegration programs.
- ✓ Government and other concerned stake holders should create awareness the community members should welcome the released prisoners rather than stigmatizing them based on their criminal histories.
- ✓ Government and non-government organizations must give due emphasis on the rehabilitation of released prisoners outside prison centers.
- ✓ Social workers and psychologists must introduce an idea of changing misperception attitudes of reoffenders.

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