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The Effectiveness of Rehabilitative Activities in Social Reintegration of Ex-Parolees Into Guyanese Society

La-Toya Lucrisha Arthur-Tucker
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Walden University

College of Psychology and Community Services

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La-Toya Arthur-Tucker

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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
2026

Abstract

The Effectiveness of Rehabilitative Activities in Social Reintegration of Ex-Parolees Into

Guyanese Society

by

La-Toya Arthur-Tucker

MSc, Northern Caribbean University, 2014

BSc, Northern Caribbean University, 2011

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Forensic Psychology

Walden University

February 2026

Abstract

Many parolees struggle with successful reintegration into society. Further research was needed to assess the benefits of parole for both parolees and former parolees in Guyana, the only English-speaking country in South America. The insights of ex-parolees may make the country's parole process more meaningful to offenders' rehabilitative experience and overall social reintegration. The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the effectiveness of rehabilitative activities in the social reintegration of ex-parolees into Guyanese society. The risk–need–responsivity model, general strain theory, and social support theories provided a framework for the investigation. The focus was on ex-parolees who had been detained by the Guyana Prison Service. The two research questions addressed ex-parolees' perceptions of the effectiveness of social reintegration in Guyana and their experiences with barriers to successful social reintegration. Ten in-depth interviews were conducted to gather data. The collected data were analyzed to identify themes. Data saturation was achieved when specific themes had been thoroughly explored and fully expressed. The results may be influential in the decision-making process for relevant authorities within Guyana, guiding policy adjustments for criminal offenders. The study may promote positive social change by enabling formerly incarcerated individuals to become better-functioning members of Guyanese society.

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Dedication

I wish to make a special dedication to my supportive husband, Junior Tucker; our amazing children, Jenae and Jediel Tucker; and my consistently prayerful mom, Ranlene West. Additionally, I dedicate this work to my motivating brother, Delroy; his beautiful wife, Carlisa; and my adorable nephew, Cardel West.

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The Being who has made everything possible, my heavenly Father, God. Without Him, nothing that I do would have been possible. I thank Him for life and intellectual ability to make it this far. I thank Him for guiding me to the right academic staff for support and instruction. In everything I give thanks, I say thank you, Jesus, for everything!

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The number of incarcerated people continues to rise annually. Globally, more than 11,000,000 individuals are in prisons, serving a sentence within physical confinement settings (Fair & Walmsley, 2021). Traditionally, the primary role of correctional institutions has been to prepare offenders for re-entry into society and provide rehabilitation (Abad, 2026). This shift has occurred across countries as modernization has diversified institutional dynamics. The guidelines and laws of a country guide the parole system. Denying parole sentencing is a punitive strategy considered an effort to rehabilitate offenders (Dagan, 2023). Before considering parole sentencing, continuity is crucial for maximum success. Several individuals encounter re-entry barriers during social reintegration (Brehmer et al., 2024).

The topic of this study was the effectiveness of rehabilitative activities in social reintegration of ex-parolees into Guyanese society. This topic describes the changes associated with the offender's encounters through a transitional experience. As such, emphasis was placed on the final stage of the prison experience and the stage after the completion of the prison sentence: parole and being an ex-parolee, respectively. For some individuals, parole sentencing may not be a viable option; in cases where it is an option, it has decreased the likelihood of several social ills (Nur et al., 2023). Benefits can be experienced from the parole system. Srinivasan et al. (2026) noted that some offenders benefit wholistically with greater emphasis on spiritual benefits. However, for this study, the participants were male ex-parolees between 45 and 65. The research questions (RQs) of this study were (a) What perceptions of ex-parolees affect the effectiveness of social reintegration within

Guyana? and (b) What barriers experienced by ex-parolees hinder successful social reintegration?

The results of this study aimed to inform and guide further research on the welfare, rehabilitation, social reintegration, and behavior change of ex-parolees. Social change can be a derivative of the rehabilitative experience when the influence of ex-parolees decreases recidivism. Emotional and instrumental support play vital roles in the reintegration process and can influence a decrease in recidivism (Girsang & Purnomo, 2026). This chapter provides a background to the study, including its purpose, theoretical and conceptual framework, description of the study's nature, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance.

Background

Several processes were utilized before implementing the 'parole system.' The name 'parole' was refined as time progressed (Witmer, 1927). There was a ticket-of-leave system (White, 1976). The ticket-of-leave system originated in Australia. Before the parole system was fully functional and organized, prisoners were transported to foreign countries, particularly England, Australia, America, and the Caribbean, to remove the undesirables from society (McNally, 2019). Parole development was an outcome of several measures. According to Moran (1945), parole is the conditional release of an individual from a penal or correctional institution after they have served part of the sentence imposed on them.

The word "parole" was not used until it was introduced in the United States (Witmer, 1927, p. 24). Guiney (2023) postulated that the decision to release someone on parole is a part of the carceral experience. The carceral experience describes a process in which the necessary function of a dynamic penal system and a highly

contested form of symbolic communication, mixed with the anxieties and contradictions of contemporary punishment, converge within a kaleidoscopic flow (Annison, 2020). The birth of the parole system faced much criticism and skepticism as the structure was not fully trusted (Bottomley, 1984). Further research is needed on forensic psychology in Guyana to assess the benefits of parole for parolees and former parolees. Individuals participate in the parole process, and there is a need for a thorough understanding of areas for improvement at the administrative level to enhance the process. This study aimed to identify benefits and share insights based on responses from ex-parolees, with the goal of making the parole process more meaningful to the offender's rehabilitative experience and overall social reintegration. The names given to parole, such as after-care, may influence process outcomes (Minor, 1979). Therefore, the success or failure of the parole process is attributable to the guidelines and principles that govern what happens (Bottomley, 1984). This study aimed to contribute to the success of the parole process in the future, as the insights gained can inform decision-making processes from an administrative and governmental perspective.

According to Kratcoski (2023), the overarching principle of the parole process is evident when the criminal desists from engaging in crimes, resulting in a reduction or possible elimination of recidivism. The principles may vary across countries, and so do the expected outcomes. This study's aim aligned with the expected outcomes and principles of other countries, as stated by Kratcoski (2023). Similarly, offenders must seek to live lives that demonstrate thorough rehabilitation and significantly lower recidivism rates. The study is necessary as an evaluation of the parole system is

needed. Getting responses about improvement areas from the program's beneficiaries is an excellent way to receive accurate, relevant, and appropriate suggestions.

Problem Statement

According to Wilson-Nunn (2022), many parolees struggle with successful reintegration into society. The problem of experiencing failure to transition from offender to parolee or ex-parolee can be attributed to poor preparation, little or no research or evaluation of the parole process, and continued discrimination and stigmatization of offenders. Srinivasan et al. (2026) stated that improvements in prison settings utilizing artificial intelligence can enhance preparation for social reintegration. Thorough preparation and information are necessary to fully explore the benefits of social reintegration for ex-parolees in Guyana. Remorse among offenders can guide the rehabilitative structure.

An attitude of remorse can influence the decision-making process facilitated by parole boards (Proeve, 2023). Some people re-offend and return to prison, where they are comfortable, and others have serious difficulty living healthy lives and resisting recidivism. Mental illness sometimes can be the determining element of whether there is remorse, employment, or recidivism (Magaña, 2027). Employment after release from prison has been shown to lead to a considerable reduction in criminal activity. The primary focus of this study was to assess the impact of rehabilitation strategies on the transition and actual life experiences of parolees and ex-parolees.

According to the risk-need-responsivity model, gainful employment and career-focused rehabilitative interventions improve more than basic prison-based rehabilitative programs (McNeeley, 2023). When offenders are taught skills without

being taught how to apply those skills to earn a living, it becomes difficult to measure true reintegration success. For this reason, parole authorities should thoroughly explore all options and possibilities before agreeing to have an individual serve a parole sentence (Rieger & Serin, 2024). Applying the theory of earning and the practicalities of earning in business can be problematic for the offender. The discrimination, rejection, and stigmatization, individually and collectively, impact offenders.

Therefore, this study aimed to bridge the gap between offenders who recidivate and reconnect with their prison experience, thereby maintaining their comfort and adhering to the principles associated with successful parole completion. This study is necessary in Guyana primarily because of the existing need to update and improve the principles of the penal system. Researching the effectiveness of rehabilitative activities in social reintegration will strengthen the principles and practices used in the training of offenders in preparation for their reintegration. The information gathered through this study aimed to support the revision and potential development of principles and policies for Guyana's offending population. These revisions will strengthen the judicial system for Guyanese offenders, empowering them to decrease recidivism and return to their everyday lives through healthy social reintegration. Re-offending to return to prison is not only a problem for the criminal, but it is also a problem for families, communities, the wider society, and, eventually, the government (McLuhan et al., 2023).

Rehabilitation is often viewed as especially important for young people, as it aligns well with their exploratory nature, which often requires redemption (Aliprandini & Walter, 2023). Guyana offers programs to help parolees reduce the

likelihood of recidivism. Many parolees stated poor preparation for their social reintegration, and this influenced them to return to prison. Preparation within this context encompasses benefits for all aspects of an offender's life and personal development, including emotional support, spiritual guidance, psychological well-being, financial stability and continuity, physical health maintenance, overall personal support, and empowerment. Similarly, rehabilitation for adults is necessary. There are other individuals who impact and influence the specific needs of adult parolees, such as all prison service employees, who indirectly contribute positively or negatively to the rehabilitative process of the adult offender; they are meaningful to the parole process (Dewey et al., 2024). This research aimed to understand the social reintegration process of parolees and ex-parolees.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the effectiveness of rehabilitative activities in facilitating the successful reintegration of ex-parolees into Guyanese society. This research was guided by an interpretive research paradigm. Understanding the various rehabilitative strategies and efforts employed by the Guyana Prison Service is crucial for accurately assessing the impact of rehabilitation on social reintegration. A key area of focus was to gain an understanding of the factors that contribute to both the successful and unsuccessful reintegration of ex-parolees within Guyanese society. Additionally, an analysis was conducted to ascertain the impact of holistic rehabilitation, including full participation, on social reintegration. This research study aimed to gather data to provide an accurate analysis, contributing meaningfully to the research literature repertoire from a Guyanese perspective.

Research Questions

RQ1: What are the contributing factors that affect the effectiveness of social reintegration for the offenders within Guyana?

RQ2: What are the barriers experienced by the offenders that hinder successful integration?

Theoretical Framework for the Study

Training community supervisors to assist with the social reintegration of offenders is an effective approach to the rehabilitative process (Bonta, 2023). The social reintegration of offenders requires consistent and collective efforts. Understanding the association between criminal behavior and rehabilitation, the risk-need-responsivity model was suitable for this research study. Bonta (2023) posited that an assessment of offenders' needs and the provision of programs to address those needs can meaningfully contribute to the rehabilitation process.

The risk-need-responsivity model was applied to this study. This model was developed by James Bonta, Don Andrews, and Paul Gendreau. The model was initiated through observations made by the authors. It was used as a measuring tool for predicting risk and classifying the risks of offenders in alignment with treatment. The authors believed that criminal behaviour can be predicted; therefore, the predicted risk should be assessed and mitigated through appropriate treatment approaches to achieve the desired outcome of eventual desistance or decrease in the incidence of criminal engagement. Emphasis was explicitly focused on the risks associated with the offenders as they prepared to transition into society, and consideration was given to their specific needs to support healthy behavioral responses for their social integration. Therefore, an assessment of the risks associated with releasing the

offender on parole and facilitating social reintegration within society becomes necessary, as the needs are considered and addressed to influence a positive response. The model comprises three principles: the risk principle, the need principle, and the response principle (Viglione, 2019). The risk principle is further subdivided, with a focus on risk assessment to predict potential criminal behavior and appropriately match the level of service to cater to the identified risk needs (Borseth, 2021).

The need principle of the model highlighted the need for proper rehabilitative strategies. The identification process was conducted by demonstrating its impact on overall behavior change among offenders (Gul et al., 2021). The demonstrations, specifically, have helped to guide a deeper understanding of the influence of rehabilitation on parolees and ex-parolees as they strive to regain total functionality within society. When the elements of the model are carefully understood, this understanding can provide a greater scope for appreciating the model and its applicability to the social reintegration of the offender. The need principle suggests emphasizing the criminogenic needs of the offender transitioning to parole sentencing (Andrews et al., 1990). Identifying needs can provide opportunities for intervention programs to reduce recidivism. Duwe and Johnson (2023) explained that finding what works best for the parolees can add meaning to the social reintegration process. Confino et al. (2022) postulated that when offenders have a choice in the consequence associated with their act of criminal engagement, the outcome can vary significantly.

The responsivity principle guides the treatment approaches for the intervention. There is general and specific responsivity (Andrews et al., 1990). General responsivity refers to the overall abilities of the offender, including understanding the learning styles and attributes that can be synchronized with

treatment outcomes (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). The general responsivity principle explains that cognitive-behavioral and social learning approaches effectively contribute to behavior change. The specific responsivity principle suggests providing interventions that cater to the offender's biological, social, and psychological characteristics (Andrews et al., 1990). The malleability of the offender's mindset determines the choice made. According to the risk-need-responsivity model, rehabilitation has a positive influence on behavior change and improvement in offenders. Behavioral change can ultimately impact the lives of parolees and ex-parolees, contributing either positively or negatively to their social reintegration process (Confino et al., 2022). The risk-need-responsivity model was considered the primary priority, as it enhances offenders' abilities to become functional and law-abiding citizens (Vose et al., 2020).

The general strain theory (GST) is known for its application to recidivism. Robert Merton, the developer of the theory, explained that people commit crimes due to social strains, such as a lack of income or other related social needs (Agnew, 1992). It was applied to this study to understand the importance of the parolees demonstrating efforts to desist from criminal activities. While there is no secure space to conduct the analysis for the parolee, social integration can be considered a secure environment. Therefore, Shaw (2020) explained, the social strain theory does not imply that a secure base is a strong predictor of restraint from criminal behavior. However, this suggested the social strain theory was applicable and relevant to understanding factors that influenced the successful social reintegration of the offender.

I used the GST to examine the benefits and influences of rehabilitative practices on behavior. An overview of the theory's outcome regarding the social integration of parolees and ex-parolees was gleaned (Oliphant, 2023). It further explained the contributory factors to participants' behavior, understanding that it can either positively or negatively influence the outcome of the social integration experience. GST emphasizes the importance of understanding the individual needs of offenders, even as plans are developed for their rehabilitative growth and development.

The social support theory of desistance was relevant and applicable to this study. However, the most pertinent applications lie in the fact that strengthening the thought processes and mindsets of parolees and ex-parolees significantly contributed to their experiences while on parole. According to Cecilia et al. (2020), socially supportive interventions yield greater results than interventions that lack the social support component.

The social support theory of desistance empowers offenders to strive towards refraining from criminal involvement through access to the right support. The social support theory of desistance can foster developmental growth in parolees or ex-parolees (Cecilia et al., 2020). This theory was suitable for this study, as it provided insights into gaining a better understanding of alternative ways to minimize recidivism. According to Holper et al. (2023), understanding how to help offenders manage the behavior that led to the initial offense can lead to more effective outcomes. Therefore, it can increase the scope for parole access and possibility.

Nature of the Study

To address the RQs in this qualitative study, a specific research design was employed, utilizing a generic qualitative approach. Generic qualitative studies have been employed across various disciplines and can be applied specifically to studies in counselling and the social sciences (Ellis & Hart, 2023). When choosing to do a qualitative research study, there are some topics that are unsuitable or inappropriate for traditional qualitative research designs, given the nature of the study. In situations like these, the generic qualitative design is recommended (Percy et al., 2015). Generic qualitative studies are a qualitative research design that investigates people's subjective perceptions and experiences in the outer world (Percy et al., 2015).

According to the country's policies and regulations, there is no control over which penitentiary the offender is sent to. Therefore, all offenders spend time in one of the four major penitentiaries across the country. The administrators shift offenders for various reasons, apart from policies and principles. The study participants were ex-parolees who had accessed rehabilitative interventions from all four adult penitentiaries within the country. Qualitative research design provides an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in focus (Aurini et al., 2021).

This research design was selected based on its suitability. The intention of the participant selection was to gather qualitative information through semi-structured interviews with approximately 10-15 participants. Saturation is associated with the grounded theory approach to research (Tight, 2023). Data saturation refers to the point at which no new information is discovered from further interviews with participants. According to Fusch and Ness (2015), failure to achieve data saturation can weaken content validity. Hennink and Kaiser (2022), in agreement, further explained that

when gathering data through interviews, a sample size of 9-17 is sufficient to achieve saturation, and 4-8 focus groups can also provide saturation. Saturation quota, as stated by Creswell, was corroborated by Morse (1994), who noted that interviews can provide an in-depth exploration of concepts. Therefore, it is essential to conduct qualitative research with a clear understanding of when saturation is achieved, as it is a key construct that enhances the verifiable rigor and validity of the study (Daher, 2023).

Participants were interviewed until data saturation was reached. The interview responses were coded, after which themes that influenced categorization were developed. This was followed by a thematic analysis that guided the data analysis of the gathered data. Data were entered into the NVivo software, after which further analyses were conducted. Participants' experiences guided the analysis of the study. After the data were gathered from the sample, they were coded. From the codes, themes were selected and analyzed based on the discoveries. When several expressions and responses from participants were analyzed, data saturation was reached when specific themes had been optimally explored and expressed. The themes and information received guided the process of answering the RQs. The themes were organized in a sequence of logistical reasoning to provide further details specific to the research topic, aims, and objectives. When analyzing qualitative data, it is crucial to capture the genuine essence of the participants' thoughts and feelings (Sykes et al., 2022). The themes enabled the researcher to be positioned to answer the RQs and align the information gathered in objective terms, while the subjective elements remained firm and undiluted.

Definitions

Social reintegration: According to Lokenga et al. (2023), social reintegration refers to the transition of an offender from a prison setting to a community or setting where they can access resources and facilities like those they had before becoming incarcerated. These accesses include family support, the opportunity to be employed freely without bias and discrimination, and access to all other opportunities and resources that can bolster their experience and development as law-abiding citizens.

Recidivism: When a person commits one or more crimes after he or she has been finally convicted for a previous crime, the act of committing more than one crime in succession to each other is known as recidivism (Taro & Qadir, 2023). Recidivism can be defined as the return to an action or behavior that has been previously encountered (Heimke et al., 2023). Recidivism can be categorized and associated with other social challenges. For this study, recidivism refers specifically to criminal engagement and is directly associated with repeated engagement in criminal offences.

Social rehabilitation: According to Coppola and Martufi (2024), social rehabilitation is an action that seeks to restore positive relationships between offenders and the general society. It aims at enabling actual processes of social reintegration. Social rehabilitation cannot be achieved solely by the offender; the efforts of the community and a concerted approach are necessary to attain the desired outcome.

Desistance: The intentional effort utilized by an offender to refrain from engaging in criminal activities (Orlando & Farrington, 2023). Desistance, when done in isolation, may prove challenging or, for some individuals, may be considered

impossible. As explained, several theories propose reasons for describing how criminal propensity changes over time and how individuals come to adopt a crime-free life (Ganapathy & Too, 2023). The interest and willingness to choose a path or an option other than one of criminality is known as desistance.

Offender: According to Siponen et al. (2023), an offender is anyone over the age of consent within the range of legal age of accountability. Persons who are under the age of legal accountability are referred to as juvenile offenders. Therefore, within the context of this study, an offender is anyone who is over the physical age of 18 in Guyana. Offenders are further categorized; when being referenced across research studies, they are either referred to as youth offenders, which includes individuals between the ages of 18 and 35, or persons over 35 are referred to as older offenders (Abid & Amir, 2023).

Parole: This is a process whereby the conditional release of an offender is granted, depending on specific requirements and principles that guide the operation of the penal institutions in a specified geographic location. Parole can be further defined as a situation in which a prisoner is released under supervision before the completion of their respective period of imprisonment. Before this is done, several things need to be completed. Additionally, an application must be made; it is not automatically done. Parole is a system in which a prisoner is released to serve the remainder of their sentence outside the bars, but under proper and constant supervision (Parole Database, *n.d.*).

Parole Officer: A parole officer is directly responsible for the parolee after their release from prison, throughout the serving of the parole sentence. This individual is influential in the professional life of the parolee. This person can have a

positive or negative impact on the parolee's life. Decisions can be made on behalf of the parolee that determine the timing of the parolee's release and can impact how things are done for the parolee after his or her release into society (Ricciardelli et al., 2023).

Parolee: Having received a prison sentence, the criminal offender can become eligible for parole. When that process commences after permission is granted, the offender is referred to as a parolee (Golovastova & Pashkova, 2023). The parolee's responsibilities and eligibility may vary across different geographic territories. Irrespective of the differences, the government is responsible for parolees across territories.

Ex-Parolee: An ex-parolee is an individual who has completed the parole sentence and has been reintegrated into society (Golovastova & Pashkova, 2023). The ex-parolee differs from an ex-offender, as not every offender is entitled to or could experience parole.

Assumptions

For this study, I assumed that parolees face significant challenges in their efforts to reintegrate socially. According to Oliphant (2023), the GST explains the enormous difficulty offenders may encounter throughout their journey in life, and this can become exacerbated when stigma and discrimination are added to the equation of navigating life's challenges. Additionally, I assumed that the criminogenic needs of individuals when kept unmet add a stronger level of difficulty that compounds the issue of social readjustment. I assumed that ex-parolees would be willing to participate and share truthful information for the study. I also assumed that the study's results inferred the decision-making process among administrators and policymakers

in the beautiful country of Guyana, suggesting that the prison sentence can be improved and that offenders can be better rehabilitated. It was also assumed that the study participants would benefit, and provisions would be made to enhance their quality of life and living through healthy connections and interactions because of their participation and engagement in the study.

Scope and Delimitations

For this study, the social reintegration process of parolees and ex-parolees in Guyana was the focus. Many studies have focused on the experiences of parolees and ex-parolees, but there has been a significant paucity of information coming from the local shores of Guyana. As such, the focus was limited to individuals born in Guyana who had experienced the penal system from the perspective of being a parolee or an ex-parolee. Adult males between the ages of 45 and 65, both numbers inclusive, comprised the sample for this study. Irrespective of the years spent in prison, community, religious affiliation, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, height, or weight, someone was only eligible for selection if they were on parole, male, and chronologically within the specified age range. Persons who have been incarcerated and were offered parole but were not Guyanese were not eligible for this study. Females of all ages on parole or ex-parolee and males below 45 or above 65 on parole or ex-parolee were not eligible.

Limitations

Possible challenges and barriers included racism, racial discrimination, prejudice, and socioeconomic classism. These were all common and could have posed unnecessary threats to the research study. Individuals may have been deterred from participating in the research study due to my ethnicity as the researcher. Potential

participants may have been threatened with consequences for not responding. They could also have been coerced into providing dishonest responses to stymie the growth and progress of the research study. The challenge of gaining the willingness of parolees to participate and contribute honestly to the study was another foreseen challenge. Parolees and ex-parolees could have attempted to share information to gain the favor of the interviewer or researcher. Despite the potential challenges and hurdles, efforts were made to minimize biases and work objectively towards resolving the issues.

Furthermore, participants provided consent, and the keywords used in the interviews were analyzed according to the identified themes. This sought to maintain a neutral position. Additionally, participants were allowed to journal their thoughts and feelings regarding the RQ. These were collectively used to boost the objectivity of the research process. According to Janusheva et al. (2022), the sample selection's accuracy can support the research's objectivity. Information gathered from the interviews was honestly used for the sole purpose of this research study. Each participant was allowed the same time frame for their interview unless their responses influenced time differences or there was an extenuating circumstance. Honesty was utilized and adhered to when reporting the findings; the study was thoroughly planned, and all activities followed the plans to respect and treat participants with the highest integrity and professionalism. The researcher has previously conducted research with this population for employment purposes. Additionally, guidance from a mentor informed the research activities, utilizing objectivity to support accuracy and maintain the highest research integrity.

Significance

Every research study needs to contribute meaningfully to the existing literature gaps. The Reintegration Academy recognized the need to collaboratively plan rehabilitation activities that benefit prisoners on an ongoing basis (Reese, 2021). According to Reece and Link (2023), several factors influence the experiences of parolees, with housing being the most salient factor. This study aimed to understand the experiences of parolees and ex-parolees as they attempted to reintegrate successfully into society. According to Braithwaite (2017), the Guyana Prison Service Review Board has stringent principles that parolees must adhere to. There is a need for consistent review as prisoners are continuing to seek approval for parole. This request was made as they sought to transition from offender to parolee. This study fostered more relevant transitions to support the reintegration of parolees within Guyana. Understanding the personal experiences of these individuals can help the government develop more effective programs to support parolees as they are released from prison.

This research sought to provide findings that can guide the decision-making process, specifically geared at improving the curriculum for rehabilitation within the Guyana Prison system. This research aimed to help parolees actively engage while in prison, facilitating their reintegration. Understanding the personal experiences of the parolee can aid in creating programs that work and have an impact on reducing recidivism without the culture weighing most heavily on the overall outcome of recidivism and other poor behavioral outputs. This can positively influence the energies, attitudes, and behaviors of parolees and ex-parolees. It can stimulate a desire for behavior change in parolees and ex-parolees intrinsically. Social change can be

realized when the influence of parolees and ex-parolees to recidivate decreases. Social change can also impact first-time prisoner experiences and overall involvement in criminal activities by promoting effective change to engage in positive activities and behaviors. This study guided and informed further research on the welfare, rehabilitation, social reintegration, and behavior change of ex-parolees.

Summary

This chapter introduced the study, sharing the background of the study and its nature and significance. The study's assumptions, scope, delimitations, and limitations were included. The theoretical framework was explained to provide an understanding of the theories that highlighted key concepts of the study, and concepts related to specific topics were elucidated. In Chapter 2, I will provide further details regarding the literature of the study, informing readers of the gaps, similarities, and differences when compared with other research studies.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

There has been a paucity of information on the successful implementation of strategies among parolees and ex-parolees in Guyana, South America. This section of the research involved a thorough exploration of the concepts related to the research topic and a comprehensive analysis of the literature across various countries. The theoretical and conceptual framework, specific variables, and a discussion of potential literature gaps were among the main themes explored herein. Randolph (2009) explained that a strong literature review adds value to the overall project. This section was organized according to themes, with subheadings that aimed to add clarity and facilitate smooth transitions from section to section, as the information researched was presented.

Understanding that the prison setting comprises various groups of persons referred to as a special population, there have been many limitations. According to Talbot et al. (2017), many studies on prison populations did not review or indicate the outcomes of the rehabilitative efforts. For the reintegration experiences of offenders to be successful, several systems and mechanisms must be in place to support this goal. According to Peled-Laskov et al. (2023), developing a structure for success can influence productive outcomes. Providing support tailored to the needs of offenders is crucial to meeting their needs. Rehabilitation and reintegration efforts should focus on strengthening employability skills and their long-term sustainability.

Importantly, there has been a strong need for the completion and publication of research on the Guyanese prison population. This has influenced the deficit of methodical structures that foster rehabilitative continuity for parolees and ex-parolees

as they have been reintegrated into society. Poor rehabilitative strategies can hinder continuity of behavior change (De Souza De Assis & Ribeiro, 2023). The limitations associated with prisons and the offender population have led to limited research in some countries. This has been the case to some extent within Guyana. Limited research contributed to significant deficits in achieving expected outcomes. Empirical data seeks to provide greater scope for improvement and advancement (Davies et al., 2023). It enhances parolees' success. Both males and females should be exposed to proper rehabilitation strategies. Females, like males, are recidivists when exposed to limited rehabilitative programs and activities (Cale et al., 2019). The comparison with other studies sought to substantiate the certainty with which the existing gaps were shared. Adult education, in its current form, may serve the population of learners in rehabilitation.

In this chapter, the research elucidated the concepts associated with the effectiveness of rehabilitative activities in social reintegration of ex-parolees into Guyanese society. A complete analysis of the literature across countries was included. An explanation of the theoretical and conceptual framework was provided, emphasizing the various aspects of the theories and their applicability to this study. There were descriptions of specific variables and an inclusion of a discussion of the literature gaps. The main themes were incorporated into the literature search strategy, as well as the description and definition of concepts relevant to the study.

Literature Search Strategy

This qualitative research study benefited from several scholarly searches. The literature search was detailed and included various search engines. Through Walden University's online academic library, an extensive and comprehensive review of

relevant literature was conducted in the following online databases: Education Source, Google Scholar, EBSCO, ERIC, Elsevier, SAGE Journals, Criminal Justice, Walden Library (specifically dissertations and theses), and ProQuest Central. For this literature review, the key terms included: *inmate, recidivism, corrections, educational training, reintegration, social reintegration, incarceration, education, prisons, jails, public safety, offender, reform, realignment, parole, parolee, ex-parolee, probation, governance, criminogenic, risk-needs assessment, risk-needs-responsivity model, sentence, social reintegration, sustainable reentry, and rehabilitation.*

The literature search primarily focused on peer-reviewed journal articles published within the last 5 years, with the exception of a few. Initial preference was given to articles 1 year old; when that proved difficult or futile, the age increased, but at no time did it exceed 5 years, except for theoretical development literature or supporting literature in that regard. The literature search was conducted in subdivided sections, with each section completed in a separate dedicated session. This was a demonstration of sizeable chunks of information (Watson, 2020). Further guidelines were employed, and the literature search began with a broad heading: experiences of parolees and ex-parolees with social reintegration. This was further narrowed as the search intensified (Galvan & Galvan, 2017). The basic search was the first option, and it was then enhanced to a more advanced level, where the advanced search became more appropriate and relevant.

The guidelines were firstly, identification of key terms for the literature search; secondly, an extensive review of scholarly databases including but not limited to Walden University's academic library and the internet; thirdly, development of a literature outline that provided a visual representation of specific topics that came

under the respective headings and sub heading for the literature; and fourthly, a written literature review that presented the summarized research by highlighting relevant themes, discussing key concepts, and explaining how this study contributed to already existing body of research, with a special focus on minimizing the literature gap.

Theoretical Framework

General Strain Theory

According to Hoover (2023), Robert Agnew conceptualized the GST in 1992. This was developed and influenced as an extension and revision of several classical strain theories. There are three general strains described in the conceptualization of the GST. These include, firstly, the actual or anticipated failure to achieve positively valued stimuli. Secondly, strain refers to the actual or anticipated removal of positively valued stimuli, and thirdly, it refers to the actual or anticipated presentation of negatively valued stimuli (Agnew, 1992).

The GST is known for its lucid explanation and application to crime and delinquency (Brezina, 2017). The GST was another theoretical framework used in this study. It is known for its application to recidivism and its transformative benefits, placing an emphasis on the negative treatment by others, specifically related to delinquency. The GST provides a clear explanation of crime and delinquency. Considerable effort has been devoted to understanding the impact of negative emotions on the etiology of offending (Brezina, 2017). This theory incorporates elements that aim to understand unhealthy behaviors through a lens informed by healthy actions and intentions.

History of the General Strain Theory

The GST is an extension of the strain theory developed by Robert Merton in 1938. The GST, however, was developed by Robert Agnew in 1992. It is a theory of criminology that seeks to explain how some emotions can influence and impact negative expressions. These can be the result of criminal involvement or deviations from healthy behavior (Agnew & Brezina, 2019). Its development was initiated by the need to critique strain theory and identify its limitations, with the goal of filling the gaps and addressing its deficits.

The social strain is believed to have varying impacts and implications for the offender, depending on prior experiences and other factors. The developer of the theory explained that people commit crimes due to social strains, such as a lack of income or other related social needs (Brezina, 2017). These strains, the author believed, become relevant to the offender when the positive stimuli become weakened or absent. Positive stimuli may have a stronger influence on offenders due to their early life experiences and exposure to trauma. The varied strains addressed through this theory aim to facilitate a deeper understanding of the multifaceted challenges associated with the limitations of offenders.

Applicability of the General Strain Theory to the Study

This theory was applied to this study to understand the importance of ex-parolees demonstrating efforts to desist from criminal activity. While there was no secure space to make the analysis for the ex-parolee, social integration was considered secure. Therefore, Shaw (2020) explained that the social strain theory does not imply that a secure base is a strong predictor of restraint from criminal behavior. This, therefore, suggests that the social strain theory helps foster an understanding of the

limitations and varied weaknesses associated with the mistakes and relapses of offenders.

This theory has been applied in similar research studies, and the results have been successful when the elements of the theory have been applied to the study's variables. The author of the theory posited that criminal coping is most likely for individuals who possess multiple individual and environmental risk factors that, together, create a strong propensity for offending (Kushner & Fagan, 2023). Results from this research study have demonstrated that the treatment approaches provided to offenders either help or hinder their success. This lends credence to the use of the theory, as it aligns with the study's aims and objectives. Therefore, the outcome of the parole and social reintegration processes was predicted through the rehabilitative experiences and overall outcome. The GST has been used in several research studies, highlighting the fact that recidivism and initial criminal involvement may be attributed to a strain experienced by the perpetrator. Lily (2023) explained that a group of indigenous females has experienced discrimination, along with other social-related discomforts, and the application of the theory has helped researchers understand the impact of the strain of discrimination on the women.

According to Rocheleau et al. (2023), the tenets of social strain theory suggest that individuals may recidivate depending on the influence of the strains they experience. Supporting this argument, it was further expressed that the GST can be used across studies specific to crime and criminality to explain various details. They further postulated that findings showed that the relationship between victimization and recent substance use was mediated by negative emotions. Individuals on parole must make deliberate efforts to refrain from crime and criminal behavior, knowing

that the strains can powerfully influence them to return to old behaviors. Incarceration can exacerbate already existing mental, emotional, physical, or psychological conditions within individuals (Coffman, 2023). Becoming incarcerated changes, the behavioral and overall life of an individual. According to Coffman (2023), these changes can persist and remain with individuals even after they have served their prison sentence or while serving punishment outside the prison environment.

Social Support Theory of Desistance

The social support theory is primarily applied in the context of crime and delinquency. Social support is the perception that someone is being cared for (Vaux, 1988). According to Kort-Butler (2017), this theory realizes the implications associated with the criminal justice process. This is often a result of rehabilitation based on social support offered to the offender. Social support can foster desistance from criminal activities and promote engagement among offenders, as they benefit from rehabilitative efforts. Support provided through familial and close relational interactions is a form of offender rehabilitation (Chouhy, 2020). This level of support contributes to desistance from criminal activities and results in positive reintegration outcomes.

History of the Social Support Theory of Desistance

The social support theory of desistance was formulated between the mid-1970s and the early 1980s. Francis Cullen initiated this theory. This was constructed on the premise that support systems contribute positively to an individual achieving greater potential and healthier outcomes in life. While the study can be applied across disciplines, it has been consistently utilized in research studies that focus on crime, criminology, and offender details. This theory comprises four constructs: nominal,

informational, instrumental, and appraisal support (Peterson & Bredow, 2014).

According to these constructs, when focusing on the offenders, each element must be understood in consideration of what has happened to the offender or is currently happening during the theoretical application to the rehabilitative experience.

The emotional element of the theory focuses on the affections, empathy, and overall emotive aspect of the offender. It has been recognized that early childhood trauma does affect the later stages of an individual's life. The second element of the theory speaks to informational needs. Evaluating what is known and what is unknown is crucial for formulating effective intervention strategies. Informational aspects are directed at providing educational support, offering advice, and sharing information with the offender. The third element, instrumental support, is directly connected to the tangible goods and services provided to the offender. The last of the four elements, appraisal, enforces the need to reassure the offender using compliments and encouragements (Peterson & Bredow, 2014).

Applicability of the Social Support Theory of Desistance to the Study

The social support theory of desistance was relevant and applicable to this study. Several key tenets of this theory were applied to the study. It was centered on the proposition that instrumental, informational, and emotional supports reduce the likelihood of crime (Kort-Butler, 2017). The theory incorporates both macro- and micro-level effects, emphasizing how supportive societies and relationships can reduce crime rates and individual crime. However, the most pertinent applications lie in the fact that strengthening the thought processes and mindset of parolees and ex-parolees significantly contributes to their experience while on parole. According to Celilia et al. (2020), socially supportive interventions yield greater results than

interventions that lack the social support component. This theory also postulated that its tenets promote and sustain cognitive transformation. These are the essential soft skills required to foster successful social integration.

Conceptual Framework

Risk–Need–Responsivity Model

The risk-need-responsivity (RNR) model of offender rehabilitation is a well-established tool used for interventions in criminology, forensic psychology, and related disciplines (Andrews et al., 1990). The RNR model is a well-established model that has been in use for decades. The RNR model is an ideal justice model that serves as the basis for social and therapeutic interventions within the legal court setting (Jackson & Doyle, 2024). This model has been known to yield great success among prison populations, whose primary aims have been directed at reducing recidivism and preventing it. According to Miller et al. (2024), the RNR model is useful when providing community supervision for individuals who constitute special populations. The RNR model served as a guide and major contributor to numerous successful intervention strategies employed worldwide with diverse prison populations and offender rehabilitation (Bonta, 2023).

History of the Risk–Need–Responsivity Model

The RNR model was formulated after much observation and analysis. This model was first developed in the 1980s and was formalized in 1990 (Andrews et al., 1990). It was primarily developed by three Canadian researchers: James Bonta, Donald Andrews, and Paul Gendreau (Ward et al., 2007). These researchers have conducted extensive work to guide the efforts of educators, prison officers, and all other professionals who work directly or indirectly with these specific populations.

Different theories and theoretical guidelines have influenced the RNR model. Three components of the theoretical framework of this model included the primary aims, values, and principles; the etiological and methodological assumptions; and the practice implications (Ward et al., 2007). This model represented a framework for predicting and classifying treatment. The authors have observed that criminal behaviors can be predicted (Bonta & Andrews, 2003). Additionally, the risks of criminal offenders interacting with the level of treatment intensity eventually impact the overall treatment outcome. While the outcome has proven to be varied, recidivism has consistently been identified as one of the leading factors.

The three foci of the model were recognized as impactful on the outcome of the intervention—the risks, needs, and modality of the intervention that influence the responsivity of the offender. The risk principle indicates that offenders at higher risk of recidivating should be exposed to intervention strategies with a more robust focus (Andrews & Dowden, 2006). The needs model explicitly highlights the offender's criminogenic needs regarding the offender's potential to minimize recidivism. From the analysis of the severity of these needs, the third and final principle of the model can be explored (Andrews et al., 2006). The first two principles significantly guide the intervention treatment approach, emphasizing intensity and target strategies.

The third principle, responsivity, states that correctional programs should be tailored to the individual needs of each offender. These include but are not limited to the learning style, intrinsic motivation, and the circumstances surrounding the offenders' life experiences (Gendreau & Andrews, 1990). The diversity of risks and needs combinedly influences the responsive ultimatum to reduce recidivism. According to this theory, rehabilitation has a positive influence on behavior change

and offender improvement. This can ultimately impact the lives of parolees and ex-parolees, contributing either positively or negatively to their social integration process (Gur et al., 2021). It is crucial for the rehabilitative efforts of administrators to be geared towards empowerment and self-industrialization as offenders prepare to reunite with society's legal principles and policies.

Vose et al. (2020) argued that this theory should be considered the first and foremost priority as it seeks to strengthen offenders' abilities to become functional and law-abiding citizens. With this central to intervention strategies, a higher success rate can be achieved, given the strength and use across other populations. The RNR model focuses on specific aspects of the rehabilitative process for the offender.

According to Andrews et al. (1990), this model focused directly on four categories of interest: sensitivity and professional override. These variables have been analyzed individually and collectively within the context of the rehabilitative intervention for offenders. It has sought to strategize the crucial aspects of the process, whereby strengths have been identified and limitations addressed.

Applicability of the Risk–Need–Responsivity Model to the Study

This model was thoughtfully selected based on its components and fundamental influences. Understanding the association of criminal behavior and rehabilitation, the RNR model was suitable for this study. This model was applicable to the offender and fostered a sense of responsibility and intrapersonal desire to motivate behavior change through rehabilitation for community officers and leaders working with offenders (Bonta, 2023). The RNR model's principles sought to identify the individual and collective challenges of criminal offenders. This, therefore, initiated change and overall development and improvement in the lives and behavior

of the offenders. When this happened, it led to a reduction in unhealthy behaviors and actions.

The participants of this study were predominantly criminal offenders, with varied criminal backgrounds and criminogenic needs. The risks associated with the behaviors were specific to the diverse traumas the individuals had been exposed to. While serving different prison sentences, their needs and risks remain relevant and applicable to their current lifestyles. This model reinforced the need for accurate synchronization of risks, needs, and responsivity through the intervention and treatment model. In identifying the needs of offenders and parolees, using the RNR model, mental health needs were identified (Rice et al., 2023). This model has the strength to identify and treat the mental health needs of offenders and parolees.

The propensity to recognize a mental health deficit was remarkable about this model, adding to its potency and reliability. According to Brown et al. (2023), using this equips professionals with an accurate assessment of the needs of offenders. Exposure to criminal settings has not been particularly helpful; the RNR model has enabled efforts to recognize needs and cater to them using appropriate interventions. To navigate the various challenges, it was necessary to support the offender as they navigated their difficulties. As was purported by Brown et al. (2023), there was a sub-population of offenders within the criminal justice system who had been affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). The presence of FASD can exacerbate already existing difficulties as the criminal offender has many odds to fight against. The RNR model is an integrative approach that fosters the strength to withstand social pressures. The model can enable professionals to provide the needed services and interventions for those incarcerated with FASD and other underlying disorders and

conditions. When individual risks were recognized in collaboration with the needs, relevant provisions were guided. This has been the case, as the model has been used in various research studies. According to Herzog-Evans (2023), the needs of the parolees were critical as their exploration and eventual provision enabled the acceptance of the desire for change, and this was the eventual aim of the study to allow criminal reduction, where individuals adjusted to a law-abiding lifestyle and activities. This model surrounded the reality of experiencing change and social reintegration. When this happened, parolees became motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically to strive for and continue to perpetuate behavior change. This model was relevant, applicable, and appropriate for this study's aims and objectives.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts

Impact of Education on Rehabilitation

Gulden (2023) explained that when offenders' learning abilities were accurately assessed, the strategies and methodologies associated with learning work better. According to Galloway (2021), international research indicates that rehabilitation through education has been scarcely explored as a solution. Instead, it has been included as part of the punitive package. It has not been explored to bring solutions to some of the offending and offenders' problems experienced by inmates across the penitentiaries. However, the study found that changes in the educational level of the prison population have transformed group dynamics among inmates in Turkey (Gulden, 2023). It was further noted that continuing education within prisons has contributed to the empowerment of offenders, strengthening their sense of self, self-confidence, and self-awareness. When inmates are offered the opportunity to further or continue their education, they experience a sense of pride. This fostered

intrinsic motivation to make healthier choices, ultimately leading to a change in behavior.

According to LePage et al. (2023), rehabilitative strategies contribute more meaning to social reintegration than punitive strategies. When seeking to transform offenders' behavior, it is essential to recognize the benefits of rehabilitative activities over a punitive approach. Educators must employ approaches that focus on education, rather than punishment (Kakupa & Mulenga, 2021). The research methodologies have yielded realistic results that accurately strengthen the need for rehabilitation over punishment. It was realized that separate roles should be delegated to staff and implemented into an existing prison structure. A different set of individuals should serve only as educators; this was believed to have the propensity to contribute towards different outcomes (Kakupa & Mulenga, 2021). Separating roles can foster differentiation of behavior associated with each role, which should be clearly outlined, adhered to, and understood.

In addition to separating roles, Kakupa and Mulenga (2021) further explained that role specification information can be applied across prison populations. Its applicability and relevance confirmed the importance and appropriateness of each offender's respective learning tasks. Correctional education has been shown to significantly reduce crime and recidivism rates. In addition to what Kakrupa and Mulenga (2021) stated, further research has revealed that additional activities and learning opportunities foster greater development and behavioral improvement in the lives of offenders (Allred et al., 2023).

The educators' coercive and sometimes punitive strategies can negatively impact the rehabilitative outcome. When appropriately implemented, rehabilitative

programs add structure and reinforce culture and relevance in the lives of offenders (Allred et al., 2023). Correctional educational opportunities often become misdirected with an economic aim instead of maintaining the goal of contributing meaningfully to the rehabilitative outcomes. Luigi et al. (2022) stated that the college experience in prison affects the learner on four levels: individual, communal, peer-to-peer, and student-instructor. On a personal level, it was discovered that many interlocutors experienced transformational experiences as they sought to gain an education in prison. Offenders described correctional rehabilitation as meaningful and beneficial to their growth and development (Luigi et al., 2022). The commitment to individual learning among prison inmates was bolstered by social support among inmates.

According to Gulden (2023), inmates expressed respect in the classroom. Being able to socialize while incarcerated has a positive impact on the overall well-being of the offender. Offenders periodically engaged in deep thought processes. This can sometimes influence introspection and exacerbate feelings of remorse. When this introspection converges with holistic rehabilitation, learning is experienced and seen through offenders (Gulden, 2023). This ultimately led to a change in behavior.

The solitary confinement, combined with other experiences, influenced relapses (Luigi et al., 2022). As was further explained, the isolation affected the mental health and development of the offenders (Luigi et al., 2022). Interactions with the instructor have proven to help offenders develop and support a sense of belonging. In preparation for social reintegration, it is crucial that rehabilitation and all other learning experiences are fully supported and embraced. It was widely recognized that the change in perspective and approach of inmates, as they received positive and supportive interactions from class facilitators or teachers, influenced their behavior

positively (Kallman, 2020). Proper educational opportunities and rehabilitative practices meaningfully contributed to behavior change.

Impact of Criminogenic Needs on Criminal Involvement

Criminogenic needs can negatively impact the lives of offenders (Scanlon et al., 2023). Impulsivity affects many aspects of society, and criminal engagement has been no exception. Individuals who exhibit behaviors associated with poor judgment may be culpable of making impulsive decisions. There are many instances of inmates identifying with signs and symptoms of mental disorders that are consistently undetected (Timmer & Nowotny, 2021). It was further postulated that mental health challenges among incarcerated individuals are a global problem.

In some of these instances, behavioral deficits persist. According to Martin et al. (2019), psychopathy has been associated with recidivism that has been influenced by impulsivity. The need for better screening and interventions within the prison system continues to be manifested through behavioral deficits. These limitations affect the success of social reintegration (Scanlon et al., 2023). It was believed that proper diagnosis and treatment contributed to the effectiveness of other methods, which in turn reduced recidivism rates.

Youths with neuro-disability needs have a greater need for interventions than youth offenders without such challenges (Baidawi & Ball, 2023). There have been instances where young offenders began their punitive journeys with neuro-disabilities. The presence of such disabilities compounded the need for rehabilitation and exacerbated the social situation. When this occurred, it predisposed them to present with signs and symptoms associated with various developmental, cognitive, intellectual, social, and communication deficits (Nkoana et al., 2020). Research

studies have shown a strong relationship between poor academic achievements, conduct disorder, poor literacy, and psychiatric disorders (Pechorro et al., 2024). Additionally, it was explained that prosocial activities, facilitated through support systems such as visitation privileges, influence healthy behavior (Nur, 2024). Other researchers postulated that criminal involvement and delinquent behaviors can be decreased if youth offenders are gainfully engaged; similarly, it was also suggested that adults can have lower recidivism rates through meaningful programs and activities.

The pandemic has reinforced the need to reconsider the use of solitary confinement as a punitive method among offenders (Batelaan, 2023). It is believed that individuals who were excluded from specific care and facilities are more likely to experience learning difficulties. Therefore, this study supported the need to nurture the cognitive abilities of persons excluded from meaningful activities. It has been demonstrated and highlighted that there is a need for more rehabilitative programs and structures across prisons (Pownall et al., 2017). Many sectors within society seek to ostracize individuals who engage minimally in unhealthy or criminal activities. Within the Guyanese setting, this is no different. These attitudes and behaviors by society influence unhealthy behavior and possible repeat offending among criminals.

According to Ros et al. (2020), after mitigating various cultural barriers and challenges, it was recognized that positive change is possible. It was purported that helping persons who are considered vulnerable become gainfully engaged can significantly improve their choice of activities and ultimately their behavior. Cultural factors can impede or contribute to growth in behavioral outputs of criminal offenders

(Ros et al., 2020). Cultural influences have their strengths and weaknesses depending on how they are utilized in the rehabilitation process of the offender.

Rehabilitation Through Education

Learning while being incarcerated adds value to the experiences gained for offenders (Gulden, 2023). Another study aimed to explore the role of adult learners who have been exposed to vulnerable situations in their lives. The study sought to assess the impact of adult education on the participants. The results yielded were specific to efforts to bridge the current disconnect in terms of engaging offenders or individuals who encounter crime in meaningful activities, encouraging more prosocial behavior. The authors explained that involvement in educational activities can contribute to meaningful outcomes for youths and the general offender population. For individuals who have committed criminal offenses, education can make a significant difference in their lives, particularly through rehabilitation (Lerman & Sadin, 2023).

Offenders undergo various changes before their problematic behavior can be altered (Redondo et al., 2023). While recidivism reduction is often the immediate desired outcome, other behavioral outcomes can positively affect offenders. In many instances, these factors contribute incrementally, partially, and wholistically to the offender's overall behavior change and developmental growth (Arce et al., 2023). It was further stated that inconsistency in the intervention and rehabilitative strategies influenced an increase in recidivism records. Identity shift was another behavioral outcome that can affect the offender's social reintegration as they transition to parole. Names given to individuals within the carceral context influence healing or exacerbate hurt. Therefore, it became necessary to ensure that offenders were exposed

to educational activities and experiences that fostered healthy transition and rehabilitation (Lerman & Sadin, 2023). According to Cacho et al. (2020), juvenile offenders were influenced mainly by behavioral differences and personality traits to recidivate, as was revealed from a population in Spain. Understanding the influencers of criminal offending and the reasons for their impact on behavioral outcomes for professionals was crucial, as interventions were considered. This eventually enabled the behavior changes that the offender and the requisite professionals desired.

Crime as a Social Problem

Crime is a major social problem and has contributed to significant economic decline in several countries. According to Du and Ding (2023), there has been a recognition of a lack of research on predictors of criminal recidivism of offender patients who were diagnosed with schizophrenia. While there is considerable research on crime predictors and criminal recidivism, knowing information specific to mental illness has shown some deficits. Victor et al. (2021) have explained that this has been a research focus area. Several predictor variables were explored, and the results indicated that each predictor variable had a substantial weight on the high incidence of criminal recidivism among the offender population. Most of the study sample consisted of single males; 80.8% of the participants were single, and 90.3% of the participants were male. The average male of the study was in his thirties. The results of the study concurred with those of other studies. Participants exposed to more predictor variables were more likely to engage in repeated offenses (Victor et al., 2021). Especially understanding that more recidivists were exposed to mental health challenges, such as schizophrenia, among other disorders. This indicated a recognizable limitation. It is therefore essential for follow-up services to be provided

and additional psychiatric support to foster better mental health practices among this vulnerable population.

Although several programs serve offenders' rehabilitative needs through education, a crucial element is still missing. According to Abdel-Salam and Kilmer (2022), despite administrators' and leaders' efforts to make the prison experience beneficial for prisoners, a gap remained. From the offender's perspective, the programs and activities intended to uplift them and promote positive behavioral change lacked therapeutic and motivational elements. The convergence of punitive and beneficial did not sit well with the offenders (Engstrom & Ginneken, 2023).

It was further posited that the educational element is often replaced with punitive, coercive, and aggressive behaviors, which ultimately impact the learning outcomes of offenders (Abdel-Salam & Kilmer, 2023). Development of a specific classroom that can contribute to a physical experience that is different from the prison cell, the utilization of educators who have a devoted interest in contributing towards the meaningful improvement of the lives of offenders, are among the main factors that can foster rehabilitative success among offenders (McAleese & Kilty, 2020). When offenders experience significant success through rehabilitation, this success can be extended to the parole process, should it be granted and assessed. The rehabilitative growth and development processes are believed to either help or hinder subsequent experiences.

For many people, prison education is the light at the end of the tunnel. However, Brooks (2023) demonstrated that education while in prison can be punitive and restorative. Behavioral change and transformation can be experienced using restorative justice practices, where the benefits outweigh the punitive elements.

Nonetheless, this can be short-lived when the education administrators are not entirely who they were employed to be. Reverting to punitive and coercive treatments threatens a successful outcome (Yu et al., 2022). Based on the information shared through this research study, there can be great success within the prisons. The rehabilitation process has a substantial impact on the overall incarceration process for many individuals. Therefore, having a structured and consistent program becomes not only necessary but also crucial to the overall successful outcome of the criminal offender.

According to Zgoba et al. (2020), individuals who engage in activities that stimulate recidivism can be categorized based on their use of substances, mental disorders, and overall behavioral outputs. Inmates continue to engage in activities that can contribute to their returning to prison and being included in recidivism numbers. Research studies have recognized that some penal institutions have stronger rehabilitative principles and mechanisms than others. There have been systems in place to cater to the needs of the inmates as they prepare for transition into the respective communities. Restrictive principles applied to offenders can negatively impact their growth and development, hindering their progress toward behavioral change. While some professionals and administrative personnel have recognized this, their limitations continue to supersede their efforts for desired change.

Impact of Punitive Strategies on Rehabilitation

The impact of punitive approaches as a rehabilitative strategy, which has been positively explored in several studies as contributing to reduced recidivism among offenders (Luigi et al., 2022), has been examined. However, it has not been researched within Guyana to ascertain the holistic impact of rehabilitation on

parolees' and ex-parolees' reintegration and the likelihood of engaging in recidivism after being released from prison. This has identified a literature gap, and this study aimed to contribute towards reducing that gap. Various research studies have been conducted in other countries to assess the level of support and acceptance criminal offenders receive as they serve their parole sentences, and the responses have varied (Corăbian et al., 2023). Within Guyana, the support provided to parolees mainly comes from the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security and the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Stable housing is crucial to the successful reintegration of parolees (Rydberg et al., 2023). It is a key requirement for the offender before they can be released on parole in Guyana. There have been discussions and partial exploration of ways to improve the rehabilitative nature of the prison experience for offenders within Guyana. These have not been as forthcoming and successful at the reintegration stage, as parolees and ex-parolees still experience dire employment challenges. The employment challenges eventually influence the housing accommodation and access. However, there is a need for meaningful research to show the connection, benefits, and limitations associated with housing accessibility, rehabilitation as an individual, and rehabilitation geared at making the offender marketable for social reintegration. Depending on the crime initially committed, the level of discrimination may vary. The discrimination was not limited to employment but encompassed accommodation, relational interaction, and social inclusion (Rydberg et al., 2023).

It was further postulated that the sexual offence offender is more likely to face discrimination in housing accommodation, and this displacement contributes significantly to recidivism, within Michigan state in the United States (Rydberg et al.,

2023). According to O'Hanlon and Broome (2022), similar results were yielded among individuals from New York City. Housing instability remains a significant concern for individuals reintegrating into society. The need for safe and consistent housing has taken precedence over other criminogenic and psychological needs. These studies' results corroborate and converge on an area of commonality regarding the need for safe housing for the parolees.

Relationship Between Rehabilitation and Reintegration

According to Luigi et al. (2022), it has been emphasized that a missing component exists in research to demonstrate the actual connection between rehabilitation and reintegration in the Caribbean, particularly in Guyana. Understanding what constitutes proper rehabilitation and assessing the impact of rehabilitative activities can become blurred across different cultures. However, within certain jurisdictions, proper rehabilitation can facilitate successful integration and reduce recidivism (Barquin et al., 2019). Therefore, there is a possible literature gap that exists, as there is a research paucity of information to substantiate claims about any symbiotic benefits of rehabilitation and social reintegration in Guyana and, by extension, the Caribbean region.

Offenders' locus of control can inhibit or positively influence the progress of rehabilitation and social reintegration (Ben & Hoch, 2023). It was understood that the offender's locus of control is a crucial determinant of their social reintegration outcome. Ben and Hoch (2023) explained that a spiritual element is often overlooked when considering the various aspects of parolees' social reintegration. Usually associated with or serving as the parolee's locus of control, this can contribute meaningful information to the holistic process of social reintegration.

Impact of Cultural Diversity on the Parole Experience

According to Peled-Laskov et al. (2023), cultural diversity has a significant impact on the offender's growth, development, and improvement. In addition to the gaps previously mentioned, the paucity of empirical data can be further extended to include the lack of research on Guyanese offenders and parolees. This hinders accurate analysis of the functional systems and their impact on the reintegration process, experiences, and overall success or failure rates. Cultural diversity can impact an individual's motivation level. An offender's locus of control is crucial to effective rehabilitation and reintegration.

Cultural diversity can have substantial benefits or negative implications for parolees based on several contributing factors (Shoham et al., 2022). The locus of control of the parolee can be impacted by or impact the social reintegration process and experience. There are instances where cultural diversity can serve as a hindrance instead of a benefit to the social integration experience of parolees. A research study done in Israel yielded significant results from a rehabilitation strategy geared at making the social reintegration process better for parolees. The program appeared to have made a positive contribution to participants' locus of control, particularly among Jewish parolees (Peled-Laskov et al., 2023).

Key Study Variables

This section explained and provided contextually defined definitions of the study's variables, along with supporting research details.

Rehabilitation

The word "rehabilitation" was derived from the word "rehabilitate." The etymology of "rehabilitation" dates to medieval Latin influences. Originating from

"rehabilitatus," the past participle of the Medieval word coined with a late Latin origin, which is the source of the word "rehabilitate." It is a verb that means to restore to a former capacity (Merriman-Webster Dictionary, 2024). The word can also be further explained by its meaning of repute, re-establishing a name formerly held in high regard, and making good use of something previously deplorable. Rehabilitation can have varied meanings based on its context or conceptualization. For this study, the definition should be construed as accurate, reformation, change, improvement, and overall restoration. This change initiative is an effort to desist from previous negative behaviors.

According to Arbour et al. (2024), rehabilitation is engagement in activities with a determination to desist from criminal involvement. Letlape and Dube (2023) argued that parole experience is influenced by rehabilitation, which prepares the offender to function within the community and larger society. Rehabilitation involves the offender's participation in activities and programs that can promote behavioral change. The belief of the offender and those supporting them can either motivate success or negatively impact the overall success of the rehabilitative process.

Criminal Rehabilitation

This was specific to the re-establishment of a criminal offender, someone who encountered the law in the form of a breach. This type of rehabilitation refers to helping offenders, criminal inmates, and individuals who have violated the law to grow and change. It enables these individuals to distinguish themselves from environmental factors that negatively influence their engagement in criminal activities (Trieu, 2021). The concept of rehabilitation is based on the idea of ensuring that everyone is treated equally and that the desired change is achieved with the highest

level of consistency. Rehabilitation should always aim to help the individual appreciate the changes from a life of crime to one that deviates from criminal engagement and behavior.

Rehabilitation Within the Guyana Prison System. Rehabilitation is employed by many correctional institutions and services to prevent offenders from reoffending (Nduli & Mthembu, 2022). Within Guyana, rehabilitation is fostered while the offender is incarcerated, and to some extent, it continues while the individual completes their prison sentence on parole. Rehabilitation is enabled through skills development, access to academic experiences at varied levels, certification, the Caribbean Examination Council, and tertiary-level education. Offenders are exposed to experiential learning as they earn while learning in the classroom. Offenders are exposed to different levels of training, based on mental propensity and stability, behavioral outcomes, and cognitive scope.

Parole Processes

Parole across the globe looks different for every territory. The parole process is a form of rehabilitation primarily within Guyana. This was supported by Letlape and Dube (2023), who explained that parole is a rehabilitative exercise, not restricted to South Africa, and is used globally. The parole process is granted to the offender upon reaching the requirements for the parole experience. This is granted after the eligibility criteria have been screened and the offender meets the requirements of the Parole Board.

The Parole Board is an advisory body to the Minister of Home Affairs. Advice is presented to the government minister to provide insights that can determine whether an offender is eligible to be released on license (Parole) and under what conditions the

release should be made. It is a system designed to allow rehabilitated offenders a chance to serve part of their sentence in the community. In this regard, they are allowed an opportunity to be reintegrated into society. The Parole Board seeks to reintroduce offenders into the community, on specific conditions, to adapt to a crime-free life (Guyana Prison Service, 2023). The parole board consists of a team of individuals comprising a chairperson, a medical practitioner, a psychiatrist to be specific, an adult appointed by the minister with attributes and responsibility to supervise and provide aftercare to the parolee, the prison director, and a member of the Guyana Police Force above the rank of the Assistant Commissioner of Police. The chairman is a qualified Puisne Judge of the High Court and is usually appointed by the current government minister. The minister appoints two other persons, one of whom is a medical practitioner registered under Guyana's laws. It is an asset for the medical practitioner to have specialization in psychiatry. The Commissioner of Police usually recommends a police officer.

Guidelines for Parole Within Guyana. In Guyana, the Parole Act clearly outlines and thoroughly explains the requirements for the parolee while serving the parole prison sentence. A person is eligible for parole based on the directives given by the Director of Public Prosecutions. This privilege can be accessed by fulfilling several guidelines and principles. The parolee is supervised by the probation department at the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, a police officer, a prison officer, or the Guyana Prison Service, which provides support.

Impact of Parole on the Individual

Several factors contribute to the successful or unsuccessful completion of the parole sentence. While these factors may vary in the extent of their influence on the

parolee, collectively, they impact the parolee. According to Syamsulang and Huzaini (2023), the five most impactful factors on the parolee were: individuals, families, communities, private institutions, and government policies. When explored individually, these factors fostered a better appreciation for the difficulties parolees experience.

Factors Affecting Parolees' Experiences

Each parolee brings their personal differences, personalities, values, and beliefs to the parolee experience. Parolees face a multiplicity of issues that can either hinder or support their reintegration experiences into society (Boyas et al., 2023). Housing, employment, and general social opportunities continue to evade the parolee, as some persons contribute to the criminal offense, shadowing the offender's life. A board usually makes the parole decision of leaders. Recognizing that individuals on a parole board have varying personal characteristics, heuristics can influence the overall decision-making process (Lawrence & Yelderman, 2023). Additionally, emotional well-being can alter the accuracy associated with objectivity and honesty. Research studies have shown that individuals' personal preferences and biases can influence the decision-making process based on a person's experiences (Gosling et al., 2020).

Quite often, when a decision must be made, individuals tend to be proactive in certain leadership positions where the outcome of the decision can be anticipated (Lawrence & Yelderman, 2023). When this happens, the personal biases become more strongly correlated with subjective influences, as fear of an impending outcome can take precedence. When a decision is made for parole sentencing despite underlying biases, the parole experience is affected, and support may not be as forthcoming as the parolee desires. According to Ireland and Prause (2012), when

biases favor the parolee, there can be greater success in completing the parole sentence, and overall success can be recognized in the offender's life. However, biases demonstrated against the parolee had an impact on their mental health and well-being.

Boyas et al. (2023) stated that parolees need support; therefore, the lack thereof can have negative implications for their experiences. The outcome of various factors on parolees can influence their experiences in different directions. The magnitude and categorical description of the crime contribute to how individuals perceive rehabilitation. When offenders acknowledge their actions, the result of rehabilitation can yield greater success (Capinha et al., 2023). A stronger support system effectuates a more positive response and overall outcome.

When an offender interacts with other criminal offenders, they share experiences. Learning takes place throughout the sharing of experiences, and peer interactional benefits are garnered. This can contribute to the degeneration of effort and aims to reduce recidivism. Escobar et al. (2023) explained that the influence is stronger considering the number of hours spent together. Therefore, it is believed that prisons can foster crime instead of preventing it. This exposure can negatively impact the parolee's experiences, and in some instances has been known to contribute to instead of prevent recidivism.

Transition From Rehabilitation to Social Reintegration

Many challenges are associated with the offender's attempt to lead a different life. According to Bowman and Ely (2020), one of the long-standing challenges of inmates is the inability to function outside of the prison setting. Institutionalization has a positive impact on the offender while they are within the confines of the building. However, when the individual is released, external functionality becomes

challenged. These influences contribute to repeat offending and recidivism, exacerbating the challenge of offending that necessitates rehabilitation. Some people commit criminal activities through deliberate actions, mainly to return to their comforting environment.

It was necessary to ensure that support was provided for offenders in preparation for the social reintegration transition (Liu, 2023). Several systems were implemented to accompany the plans for an offender's parole sentence or social rehabilitation in preparation for the transitional process. It was understood that persons who were in preparation for the transition could be predisposed to mental health deficits (Liu, 2023). Understanding the theoretical framework and its purposes in guiding an intervention became necessary for the professionals tasked with reinforcement and teaching concepts. According to Bonta (2023), training prison staff and community service professionals directly involved in the transitional process resulted in better behavioral outcomes. The responsivity aspect of the risk-need-responsivity model has been neglected in some instances, particularly in certain studies.

Liu et al. (2023) explained that simultaneous support from family, parole officers, social services professionals, and community members enhanced the transition from prison into society. It was crucial to understand that, apart from the needs and the possible risks associated with the social reintegration experience of the offenders, responsivity played an even more critical role in the entire process. It was noted that there were many contributors to the risks and origins of the needs of the offenders, notwithstanding the possibility and fact that the risk-initiated need, the responsivity weighs heavily on the overall process (Duwe & Johnson, 2023).

According to Liu and Miller (2023), research results corroborated with information shared in another study revealed that when offenders were reintegrated into society, reclaiming respective social, spiritual, or other roles formerly held may not be the simplest thing to do (Duwe & Johnson, 2023). However, it was believed that reintegration, including the reclaiming of previous roles, contributed to successful integration. Liu and Miller (2023) explained that reclaiming roles can reduce recidivism and foster a sense of responsibility among individuals. There was nonetheless a need to explore the impact of reclaiming roles on the prevention strategies of offenders to minimize harmful exposure to persons within their care.

In this regard, Duwe and Johnson (2023) explained that religiosity has been identified as a positively correlated variable with responsivity. It was noted that the correlation was strongly positive, and therefore, it can be predicted as a stronger indicator of better behavior among the prison population. This correlation also suggested a significant reduction in recidivism among offenders. With this correlation, it was further understood that the transitional period was more successful when the model or its theoretical framework was explored as an included aspect of the social reintegration process and intervention.

While some governmental systems have utilized different approaches, Zenz (2023) demonstrated the innovative approach of coercive social reintegration and its benefits. From a research study conducted, it was realized that social reintegration by coercion encompassed re-education and forced labor. It was recognized that this approach yielded greater benefits. Previously, volitional efforts influenced inconsistency and indecisiveness. However, with coercion, it was revealed that consistency became mandatory, and this eventually fostered economic stability.

Social Reintegration

After the offender has been rehabilitated, the applicability of the theory and practice is one of the best ways of demonstrating the outcome of the collaborative treatment intervention. Social reintegration refers to the support provided to offenders during their re-entry into society following imprisonment. In this research study, emphasis was placed on the offender who has been matriculated for parole. Social reintegration was a natural part of the rehabilitation process, once all precautionary measures were taken to prevent recidivism. However, it was not an issue that could be resolved solely by legislation and institutions. The families of offenders, their immediate circle of friends, and the community had a fundamental role in assisting the offenders' return to society and supporting parolees in rebuilding their lives. Niaz et al. (2024) listed religiosity, family integration, and social capital as predictor variables for the successful social reintegration of parolees. Of the three variables, family integration had the most substantial effect ($r = 0.568$) on post-incarceration reintegration. Further research has indicated that strong familial support was one of the most important contributing factors to successful rehabilitation (Ajmal & Arshad, 2024), especially when combined with gaining steady employment.

It is crucial to have a structured system in place to support successful social reintegration. When deficits exist within the system, they hinder continuity regarding parolees' success, and these ultimately lead to additional challenges for the country's laws and social security systems (de Souza de Assis & Victor, 2023). When there is a breakdown between the prison system, family support, and the parolee, social reintegration can be disrupted. The implications of the disruption resulted in recidivism or continued success as the integration was aimed at within society.

Recidivism

Imprisonment has affected the lives of many offenders both positively and negatively. Recidivism refers to the commission of a new offence on an already existing criminal record (Li et al., 2023). There were several contributors to recidivism, as well as factors that can contribute to its decrease. According to Cunha et al. (2023), prison sentences can have a criminogenic effect on the recidivism rate and overall social reintegration of offenders. Recidivism has plagued the lives of many offenders. It has prevented others from having the opportunity of being on parole.

In Guyana, specific guidelines must be followed before parole can be granted to an offender. As explained by Cunha et al. (2023), the impact of imprisonment on individuals' mental health and social reintegration has shown some startling details. Crime increases, recidivism, and violence prevalence were attributed to poor mental health among offenders. Employment, chronological age, social support, education, and family structure have been recognized as contributory factors to recidivism rates. According to Redondo et al. (2023), recidivism can be heavily influenced by the offender's desire for change. When intrinsic motivation is low or is the sole determinant of an individual's behavior change, recidivism can be a viable outcome. The result of recidivism varied according to the magnitude of influence exerted by ex-offenders.

Recidivism continued to be a bothersome area for many law enforcement officers. Some believed this problem was strongly influenced by poor rehabilitative activities or a highly rigid program. The possibility of recidivism predisposed offenders to possible rejection and poor social reintegration. When this happened, the

overall social reintegration experience became a concern for the offender, and the threat of return was seen, felt, and heard. According to Ambroziak et al. (2023), several key factors must be considered and understood in relation to recidivism. The offender's age, the type of crime, the length of the sentence, and the mindset and thought patterns of the person collectively contributed to the offender's behavior.

Participating in rehabilitative activities has been shown to significantly reduce the likelihood of recidivism. According to Nur and Nguyen (2023), employment played a significant role in the offenders' efforts to desist from recidivism. It was further postulated that employment weighed more heavily on the lives of criminal offenders who were 27 years old and above. Its importance was less appreciated among persons under 26 years old. Juveniles were said to be less impacted by repeating an offence; their aim was more to protect their image in terms of attaining points for wrong actions than earning points for refraining from evil actions.

The propensity to recidivate was recognized from the offender's behavioral analysis. An intervention system was implemented to enhance protection against repeat offending when this vulnerability was identified. According to Barnes-Lee and Petkus (2023), identifying the strengths of offenders was necessary. Instead of identifying only the possible risks and weaknesses, knowing the strengths is sought to support stronger rehabilitative plans that can benefit the offender more.

The parole process should be treated with the same level of respect and seriousness as serving a prison sentence, as it was with communal engagement and involvement (Lgodi & Dube, 2023). It was further posited that the reintegration process was either successful or unsuccessful, depending on the available resources. Overcrowding within penal institutions has proven to negatively impact the

rehabilitative experiences of offenders. This has impacted the reintegration process, especially where the efficiency of the programs has become diluted.

Sapp (2023) asserted that the social reintegration of offenders should consist of integrating various therapeutic modalities. These should include, but are not limited to, vocational training, educational programs, and social support systems to address the diverse needs of parolees. The development of a plan for life after rehabilitation, specifically focusing on social reintegration, contributed to the parolee's success. The lack of a plan can be detrimental (Thornton, 2023). Social determinants disadvantaged parolees and ex-parolees as they sought to experience life outside of prison (Gantt-Howrey et al., 2023). Community support and engagement are needed (Muriuki et al., 2023). Therefore, human service professionals, especially those specializing in supporting emotional and psychological well-being, are required. This corroborates with Sapp (2023) as a collaborative effort was needed to complete the parole sentence successfully.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter looked at further details specific to the study literature. Focus was placed on the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. The literature search strategies utilized were described, and concepts related to the study were explained and defined. In Chapter 3, I explore the methodology of the study. Further details were provided regarding the sample, research design, and participant selection logic, among other methodological aspects of the study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

This generic qualitative study aimed to understand the major contributors to the successful reintegration of parolees into Guyanese society. During the literature search for this study, it became apparent that there is a paucity of information specific to social reintegration, prisons, and the parole system. This reinforced the point that information was needed to contribute meaningfully to policy making, adjustment, and upgrade, as efforts were made to improve the livelihood and well-being of criminal offenders as they sought to complete their prison sentences. Several research studies have suggested the need for comprehensive rehabilitation to facilitate successful social reintegration.

According to Pradana et al. (2024), inconsistencies in rehabilitation and the ambiguity of a country's laws can jointly contribute to confusion. When this is done, the desired successful outcome becomes threatened. Coppola and Martufi (2024) explained that when rehabilitation is conducted through punitive approaches and coercion, offenders are affected in several aspects of their lives, which threatens successful social reintegration. Therefore, the benefits became multifaceted when offenders were allowed to experience rehabilitation in its purest sense. This study provided relevant, needed, and appropriate information for improvement within the prison system. Information identified through exploring literature gaps highlighted the need for a policy upgrade. Once the required upgrades are completed, the rehabilitation experience will foster greater success in social reintegration.

This chapter discussed the research design, followed by a rationale for the design choice. The role of the researcher will be shared and explained. The study's

methodology was explained, and the sample, population, and sampling methods were described and explored. Issues of trustworthiness will be discussed, followed by an examination of the ethical considerations for participants in the study and the Research Design.

Research Design and Rationale

This generic qualitative study aimed to develop an understanding of the factors contributing to the successful reintegration of parolees into Guyanese society. For this study, the focus was on Guyana, situated on the South American continent. The Guyana Prison Service was the institution in focus, and contributing participants were used as the unit of analysis. The participants were male ex-parolees aged 45 to 65. The researcher hoped the data would provide better plans and systems that could be implemented to actualize successful social reintegration for every criminal offender who is afforded the privilege of being socially reintegrated into society. Understanding that several factors contributed to the different challenges parolees and ex-parolees faced after exposure to a prison sentence within the penal institution, the RQs for this study were

RQ1: What are the contributing factors that affect the effectiveness of social reintegration of the parolees within Guyana?

RQ2: What are the barriers experienced by the parolees and ex-parolees that hinder successful integration?

According to Hiver et al. (2024), a research design is a plan for collecting and analyzing evidence from participants to synthesize data. The design was crucial for this study, as every aspect of the research design guided and impacted the activities. A qualitative approach was selected for this study, given the intended nature. Kahlke

(2014) explained that a generic qualitative approach is a standalone mythological approach. Understanding that participants were expected to share their responses and provide details from an experiential approach, the qualitative design was more suitable and offered a broader scope for personal expressions of thoughts, ideas, and feelings. The selection of research design should be thoroughly explored to ensure the results yielded are accurate (Lilly, 1997). Generic qualitative studies have their importance. This type of qualitative study was not guided by an explicit or established set of philosophical assumptions, unlike the three primary qualitative studies (Caelli et al., 2003). Studies employing a generic qualitative approach drew on the strengths of one or more qualitative approaches (Bellamy et al., 2016). The generic qualitative approach aimed to understand the specific perspectives and descriptions of the participants' experiences (Selland, 2024).

Merriman (2002) explained that generic studies sought to understand how people interpret, construct, develop, or make meanings from their world and experiences. When using this approach, there is no bounded system; no theory is generated from the results, and the researcher can develop themes from the data gathered. This type of research design was suitable primarily due to its practicality and flexibility. As a systematic methodology, the study was amenable to scientific study (Percy et al., 2015). Given the nature of this research study, the sensitivity associated with the different entities and individuals intended to participate, the generic qualitative approach was most suitable (Cooper & Endacott, 2007).

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher for this study, I conducted face-to-face in-person interviews with ex-parolees to gather data. I developed the interview questions (IQs) and asked

them. After asking the questions, I took written notes. With permission, a recorder was used to record the response. I organized the reactions by theme. Codes were used to categorize the responses in themes, facilitating a smooth analysis of the gathered data. The data were analyzed for themes, patterns, similarities, and differences. Saturation was monitored during the thematization and coding of the gathered data (Rahimi, 2024). The researcher explained everything done during this study to empower other researchers to follow the procedures utilized for this study and support research replication.

I carefully developed and scrutinized the open-ended questions used for this study. The dissertation chair and the second committee member contributed comments about the questions. My role was to merge the corrections received from the two individual sectors and ensure that a sanitized and consistently clear set of questions was listed to ask the participants. The interviews were professionally conducted.

It was also my role to ensure that the questions were objectively asked, and all forms of subjectivity and personal biases were minimized and avoided in my interactions with the participants when compiling the research. The researcher made efforts to ensure that this research study was conducted in accordance with the highest professional principles to maintain the integrity of the researcher and the institutions being represented. Consent forms were developed and provided for the study. Each participant was treated equally. Having worked with this category of individuals before, personal biases have been minimized; as such, minimal personal preferences hindered the professional and objective execution of roles and responsibilities for this

study. However, the researcher continued to journal between interviews to ensure information from one participant did not carry over to another.

In summary, the researcher had no direct contact or connection with anyone who served as a possible participant. This remained this way to ensure that objectivity was increased throughout the research. The researcher sought to adhere to all the rules, principles, and regulations that guide Walden University, the Ministry of Human Services in Guyana, and the Guyana Prison Service. This was upheld to protect the rights of all participants involved. The researcher sought to protect the participants and their responses. Confidentiality was supported and enforced in every aspect of the research.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

The process of selecting participants for a qualitative study is critical to the overall success of the study. According to Negrin et al. (2022), recruiting participants for qualitative research is an essential methodological component of a study. It was further postulated that a robust participant recruitment process enhances trustworthiness and the overall success of the study. Research with ex-parolees requires intentional strategies and selection to ensure the process aligns with the research design.

Participants were selected through the Ministry of Human Services, Guyana. The individual's specifics were corroborated with information from the Guyana Prison Service. The list of participants was collected from the Ministry of Human Services, as this Ministry has direct responsibilities for the parolees of Guyana. The sample consisted of only male ex-parolees between the ages of 45 and 65, both

inclusive. The list of individuals was corroborated between two government ministries in Guyana: The Ministry of Human Services and the Ministry of Home Affairs and Public Security, which is directly responsible for the country's prison operations and services.

To select the sample for this study, I used the purposive technique. Purposive sampling is a non-probability technique used to study a particular cultural group or area (Tongco, 2007). The use of this sampling technique was relevant to the type of research study; the inherent biases of the sampling technique contribute to its efficiency. This sampling method was deliberately selected, given the nature of the research and the sensitivity surrounding the participants. Male ex-parolees were chosen based on their willingness to participate in the sample.

I sought a sample size of 10 to 15 participants, consisting mainly of ex-parolees. This aligned with information explained by Hennink and Kaiser (2022); data saturation can be reached when conducting interviews with nine to 17 participants. Participants were interviewed until data saturation was achieved. Understanding that time guidelines were a principal feature of the research, the interview procedures were guided accordingly, and this research feature was appropriately monitored to ensure data saturation. The concept of data saturation is indispensable to conducting robust, rigorous, and relevant qualitative research that contributes evidence-based data to the existing body of literature (Rahimi, 2024). Data saturation was identified by the repetition of information from different participants, which served as the leading indicator that the saturation point had been reached (Rahimi, 2024).

Ex-parolees were the primary target for participation in the study. Only male ex-parolees born in Guyana, aged 45 to 65, were eligible for consideration. Once the

eligibility criteria were met, individuals were considered and included, regardless of the crime committed, the length of the prison sentence, height, weight, or ethnicity. The eligibility criteria included being an ex-parolee, a male aged 45-65, and a Guyanese national. Ex-parolees can give relevant and appropriate information for the data-gathering process. However, saturation can be categorized into four categories: codes and themes, data saturation, theoretical saturation, and meaning saturation (Rahimi, 2024). Ex-parolees were used to gather data for adequate analysis on three levels: codes and themes, meaning, and data. Ex-parolees were included in the participant list to ensure that all protocols were observed according to research principles and guidelines set by the institutional review boards (IRB) of Walden University.

Instrumentation

For this study, I developed semistructured IQs (see Appendix A) to gather data. The questions were asked of the ex-parolees within the age limit of 45 to 65 years. According to McCall (2024), semi-structured interviews can be helpful when working with people who have been incarcerated. The IQs for this study will primarily focus on gathering ideas and responses that can contribute to improving the overall social reintegration process for the parolee. Research studies, covering rehabilitation, will guide the questions, as well as social reintegration, and these ideas were all converged on a platform of cultural interests, preferences, and influence. To answer the RQs, the ex-parolees were guided through prompts only when necessary.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Participants were from Guyana. They had to experience the parole system as a requirement for participation. The Ministry of Human Services granted the

researcher's request for the list of ex-parolees. The researcher contacted the prospective participants to share the invitation to participate in the research, and those interested indicated their willingness to the researcher. The researcher then physically met with the participants at a location that was suitable for their comfort and protection.

There was no need for a permission letter from the Ministry of Human Services or the Guyana Prison Service for the participation of the ex-parolees. Ex-parolees received direct requests for all protocols and permission. The contact details were the same connection used for the ex-parolees. Recruitment processes were similar for each ex-parolee's participation and willingness to contribute.

I solicited participation through invitations sent to ex-parolees, which were distributed via a printed letter from the researcher. I printed copies of the letter and provided them to participants. This letter outlined the aims and objectives of the study, the participants' expectations, the intended duration of the interview, the deadline for the interview, the location, and all necessary details to ensure a smooth interview process. Participants were informed about the study by issuing a consent form.

The consent form was clear and concise, allowing each participant to easily understand it. An ink pad was made available for participants who were unable to sign due to illiteracy, allowing them to take their thumbprint. However, this was not used as all participants were able to sign. The consent form informed participants that the researcher is a doctoral student at Walden University. The letter included other details and resources that added clarity and helpful information. The researcher manually recorded the information gathered. Having informed the participants, permission was

granted, and voice recordings were collected to ensure that no information was excluded throughout the interviews. The disclosure to collect voice recordings was proposed from the inception of the researcher-participant interaction to maintain clarity and transparency. Using voice recordings avoided time lapses between the interviews and taking notes.

Data Analysis Plan

The organization of data gathered for this study utilized a thematic approach. NVivo 16 was used for this study, unless otherwise noted. The researcher intended to use the most up-to-date version of the software. NVivo is a software program used for qualitative research data analysis (Zamawe, 2015). NVivo is used explicitly for unstructured text, which was used in the interview responses in this study. Lumivero, formerly QSR International, produced it. NVivo is a qualitative data analysis software that works more efficiently and provides objective analysis. It organizes and analyzes texts through qualitative data processing and coding. I used NVivo to analyze the data gathered. It enabled the researcher to conduct deeper analyses from more sources and defend the findings yielded from the research. It imported data from several sources and analyzed it with advanced management, query, and visualization tools. It posed complex questions to the gathered data, allowing the researcher to identify themes and draw clear conclusions. The software supported the researcher in achieving more robust research results in a more time-efficient manner.

This research study used a thematic approach. Each participant's interview was transcribed and input into the software. There was a generation of codes based on the responses to the questions entered into the system, and codes were created based on the questions and the specific reactions. The codes guided the formation of themes

based on commonalities across the participants' responses. These were then organized and represented in groups and visual forms to analyze and explain the information gathered. The researcher was then able to draw objective conclusions.

Issues of Trustworthiness

In keeping with the academic standard of Walden University, the researcher upheld academic honesty to preserve and maintain the institution's integrity. Ravitch and Carl (2021) stated that some qualitative researchers prefer using the term trustworthiness to express thoughts about validity, reliability, and generalizability. Trustworthiness, according to Flick (2022), is strengthened through well-constructed RQs. The research design guides the RQ, methodologies, and impacts the accuracy of the research findings.

Trustworthiness is crucial in every research study, particularly in qualitative research (Murolo, 2026). The generalizability of information researched through qualitative research studies depends heavily on reliability and validity. Arslan (2022) postulated, reliability and validity are often represented through clear and straightforward trustworthiness. Reliability, when supported by validity and transferability, yields trustworthy results. Fouda (2026) explained that trustworthiness enables readers to accept research findings from qualitative research studies, adding layers of robustness and rigor.

Credibility

The data gathered through interviews were measured with previously collected information from the Penal institution to ascertain corroborated accuracy. This strategy supported the credibility of the study. They enhanced the data analysis through triangulation, prolonged contact, member checks, saturation on all levels,

reflexivity, and peer-reviewed journal articles. Triangulation ensured the robustness of the data collected (Flick, 2018). The researcher collected information from the Guyana Prison Service and the Ministry of Human Services and interviewed the participants. The data for the study were grouped into three communication points, and gaps were minimized. When triangulation occurred, the researcher further strengthened the reliability of the data collected.

The participants were able to interact comfortably throughout the interview. Consistent interaction fostered the realization of the prolonged contact, as was stated earlier. This prolonged contact was encouraged through rapport-building to aid the participant's comfort as trust was established. The initiation of conversation significantly contributed to the credibility of the gathered information. Rapport building can be more indirect than instructions; it seeks to influence interviewees specifically, targeting their comfort and willingness to interact with the interviewer (Dianiska et al., 2024). Prolonged contact through rapport-building influenced interest and contributed to the continuity of data gathering.

The researcher facilitated member checks through the corroboration of records between the Guyana Prison Service and the Ministry of Human Services. Participants were coded to protect their identities. The coded register added depth and meaning to the data collection process. The information shared in the results section of this study accurately reflected the data gathered from the participants. There was no alteration of the subjective views of the participants. The researcher objectively communicated accurate information analysis, including the participants' views. The objective information analysis approach helped others understand parolees' true thoughts and

feelings as they were socially reintegrated into society. Therefore, the research study's findings were accurate after thorough analysis.

Transferability

Credibility was measured using varying approaches. Calculations of the external validity for this research study used credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Purposive sampling techniques guided the interactions of the study's participants. While this did not directly include randomization, other aspects of the research process substantiated this deficit. Given the sensitive nature of the topic and the chosen target group, randomization was kept to a minimum. A comparison was made between the results and information from similar studies. It was demonstrated that similar studies had already been conducted, and the comparisons made meaningful contributions to the results of this study. The comparisons enabled these results, and the application of other studies to further explain their external applicability. However, there was no need for a thickness test in this study, as the randomization of participant selection was not the most appropriate. Given the age range of participants, there was scope for variation among participants. Recognizing that the sample consisted of males, given that the Guyana Prison Service has a larger male population, there was limited scope for participant variation.

Dependability

According to Solanki (2024), the consistency of data organization and research practices influenced the accurate demonstration of dependability. The data collection for this study was adequately detailed, and all information shared by participants were organized both physically and electronically, stored safely and securely. The information received was only used for the research study.

Triangulation was utilized with the different sets of data sources. These were records kept regarding the actions taken during an investigation.

Data from the Ministry of Human Services, Guyana Prison Service, and interviews were triangulated. The researcher employed triangulation to verify the information, ensuring its corroboration and maintaining robustness. An audit trail was used with triangulation to enhance the transparency of this qualitative study. "An audit trail is a transparent description of the steps taken from the start of a research project to the development and reporting of findings" (Qualitative Research Guidelines Project, n.d.). With the different approaches, the study's findings were intended to be accurate, dependable, and, by extension, reliable.

Confirmability

Confirmability in any research is necessary. This is the last subsection of the trustworthiness section of a qualitative research study (Moran, 2021). According to Ngulube (2021), confirmability, being specific to qualitative studies, refers to the extent to which other researchers can verify the outcomes of scientific research. This included some objective actions that scrutinized the data to ensure that the results were accurate or closely aligned to a high measure of accuracy. Throne (2019) confirmed what Ngulube (2021) posited, namely that the confirmability of qualitative data can be assured through the data collection and analysis process, where data are checked and rechecked to assess repeatability and serve as one measure of overall trustworthiness. The data gathered for this study were checked and rechecked. Afterward, members of my committee, including my Walden dissertation chairperson and my second committee member, reviewed the analysis. Therefore, cross-checks

and rechecks were conducted to ensure the consistency and reliability of the research findings.

Ethical Procedures

Adherence to ethical principles is critical to the outcome of a study and to ensuring that participants' rights are protected. The principles and policies of Walden University guided the researcher. The IRB at Walden University served as the guiding entity in this regard. An action or practice was utilized by the institution, its governing body, or the profession of psychology. Principles and ethical practices in alignment with the discipline of psychology, with a specific focus on moral principles associated with forensic psychology, were utilized. For this research study, sections four and eight guided all the work done. The researcher took every reasonable action to ensure that confidentiality was maintained and adhered to (Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, n.d.). The appropriate forms were used, as instructed by Walden IRB, and completed. They were placed relevantly within the research paper and properly stored virtually or physically as needed.

Approval was sought from the Walden IRB. No engagement with participants commenced until approval from the Walden IRB was obtained. Following these actions, the participants were initially contacted by phone, as this was the group's primary mode of communication. Upon receiving their willingness to participate, a formal letter was issued to each participant. Afterward, consent forms were provided and completed before any data-gathering activities commenced.

A conducive space was prepared to facilitate all interviews, and the participants were accommodated in a private, confidential, and safe area at the National Library of Guyana, Georgetown branch. A small token was provided to each

participant as a gesture of gratitude. The token was a medium thermostat flask with an encouraging statement: "I am a conqueror; I will succeed amidst adversities." This was presented in a gift bag. Participants were protected, respected, and reassured of the professionalism associated with their participation.

Approvals for the data-gathering process guided the research process. All the forms of approval were included in the research study. Every step of the approval process was documented and shared in accordance with the research. Each participant signed the informed consent form; an ink pad was provided to accommodate the insertion of the thumb for fingerprinting. All participants were able to write their names. The location of selection was made before data gathering. With guidance from the IRB, a public location was selected for the interviews, which was approved and shared with my dissertation chairperson. All interviews were conducted at one location for the physical interviews, remaining constant throughout the research data collection period. The virtual interviews were conducted using two platforms: Zoom and WhatsApp calls. The location selection was conducive and supportive of the participants' comfort.

According to Rubin and Rubin (2011), the location selection, in terms of safety and comfort for participants, influences the feasibility of data collection. If this is not completed correctly, it can compromise the quality of the data gathered, ultimately affecting the outcome of the research study. The participants' privacy was protected. The researcher journaled each participant's experience to contribute to the reduction or reductions that may have been directly or indirectly surfaced through the interview. Efforts were made to manage biases, and when they surfaced, measures were taken to minimize their impact. Information related to this research study was

stored on a personal laptop computer and backed up externally on a personal flash drive to secure the data. After the research study was completed, the information on the flash drive was protected in accordance with the principles of the IRB's procedures for information storage and retrieval.

Summary

This study aimed to understand the effectiveness of rehabilitative activities in facilitating the successful reintegration of ex-parolees into Guyanese society. In this chapter, the methodological aspects of the study were explained. This included the introduction of the chapter, a description of the research design and rationale, and the role of the researcher. The methodology described in this chapter is closely examined in relation to other aspects of the research method. These included the participant selection logic, whereby a detailed description of the selection criteria for participants was shared. Instrumentation, procedures for recruitment, participation, and data gathering followed this. The data analysis plan was shared, followed by an explanation of the ethical principles that guided the research study. Other areas, such as trustworthiness, dependability, and confirmability, were also included. In Chapter 4, I will provide further details about the study's findings.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This qualitative study aimed to understand the effectiveness of rehabilitative activities in facilitating the successful reintegration of ex-parolees into Guyanese society. The aim was to understand the various rehabilitative strategies and efforts employed by the Guyana Prison Service. The need for this understanding was to determine its necessity in accurately assessing the impact of rehabilitation on the social reintegration of ex-parolees. An area of focus was understanding the key factors that contributed to the successful and unsuccessful reintegration of ex-parolees within the Guyanese society. I analyzed the impact of holistic rehabilitation, including full participation, on social reintegration.

Despite the sample size, the information received was sufficient and well-received. An inability to reach data saturation in qualitative studies can be lethal to the research study (Bouncken et al., 2025). According to Ness (2015), the study's data saturation can impact its validity. This research study reached data saturation during the data collection process. Data saturation was reached when the information received began to become repetitive, although different people expressed it in their own words, and it was illustrated differently. De Paoli and Mathis (2025) explained that data saturation is reached when the data collected seems redundant. Christou (2025) explained that the themes and codes highlight similarities when data is saturated. This was acknowledged through the data used in this study. For this reason, the data received provided adequate information to thoroughly answer the RQs, and there was sufficient scope for further information.

Although the information was presented in various ways, the essence of the shared details regarding the exact specifications and information was adequately conveyed to answer the RQs. Data collection had taken place, and the results were utilized to answer the following questions:

RQ1: What are the contributing factors that affect the effectiveness of social Reintegration of the offenders within Guyana?

RQ2: What are the barriers experienced by the offenders that hinder successful integration?

Chapter 4 presented the outcome of the data collection process, including the analysis and interpretation of themes derived from the participant interviews and transcripts. A discussion on trustworthiness supported the highlighted information in this chapter. An exploration of themes relevant to the ex-parolees' experiences was conducted.

Setting

On January 13, 2025, I received IRB approval for this study (no. 01-13-25-1026674). The population of this study consisted of individuals who had completed parole sentences through the Guyana Prison Service, and the sample included male ex-parolees between the ages of 45 and 65, inclusive. I conducted in-person and virtual interviews over a period of 8 to 12 weeks. Interviews were conducted at a time suggested by the researcher and agreed to by each participant. All interviews were recorded using a recording app on a cellular device. In some cases, a computer was also used. Along with the recordings, I made written notes.

Summaries of recruitment and interviews for each participant were as follows:

Participants' one- to three-interview sessions took place at the National Library of Guyana, Georgetown branch. I interviewed the participants in the morning. I contacted the participants by phone, where I stated the research purpose and shared the research guidelines. The participants willingly agreed to participate in the research study.

Interviews with participants five and six were conducted via phone. I contacted this participant by phone, where I stated the research purpose and shared the research guidelines. I facilitated these interviews 1 week after the fifth participant's interview. Participant seven's interview was conducted using Zoom. I contacted this participant by phone, where I stated the research purpose and shared the research guidelines. I shared the Zoom details with the participants and convened the interview using Zoom. The interview took place on the same day as the participant's sixth interview. Participant eight was interviewed via phone. I contacted this participant by phone, where I stated the research purpose and shared the research guidelines. I facilitated this interview 2 days after the seventh participant's interview. Participant nine was interviewed via phone. I contacted this participant by phone, where I stated the research purpose and shared the research guidelines. I facilitated this interview on the same day as the eighth participant. Participant 10 was interviewed via phone. I contacted this participant by phone, where I stated the research purpose and shared the research guidelines. I facilitated this interview 1 week after the ninth participant's interview.

The formal structure of the library at first impacted participants' responses. Explaining the research and engaging in informal conversational greetings helped the participants relax. The explanations and greetings helped participants feel

comfortable, allowing them to respond and share willingly. After becoming relaxed, I asked the IQs, and the participants responded well. I shared my educational affiliations and the purpose of the interview with each participant.

Demographics

The population of this study was male Guyanese offenders who had completed a prison parole sentence. Ten individuals were selected from the offenders who had completed their parole sentencing. The recruitment email (see Appendix B) included the study's eligibility criteria, contact information, and a brief description of the study. Upon contacting each participant, there was clear communication regarding the research study description. All participants had completed their parole sentencing approximately 3 years before this research study. All participants were males. Women generally comprise smaller percentages of the prison population in all countries (Morgan, 2025). In Guyana, it is the same; women comprise a small proportion of the prison population. Morgan (2025) stated that the global rates of female imprisonment have increased, with a reflection of 60% for women compared to 22% for men since the year 2000. Within Guyana, the number of female prisoners continues to be significantly lower than that of their male counterparts, and it has shown a decline (Samuels, 2025). Samuels explained that the male prison population is approximately 34% higher than the female population. The participants were within the age range of 45-65. From the sample, 30% of the males were within the 60-year-old or older group, 50% were 45 years old or younger, and 20% were 50 years old or younger.

Table 1 shows the primary study demographics. There were 10 participants from across the age range specified for inclusion. The study had 100% male participation. From the total number of participants, 30% were employed by an

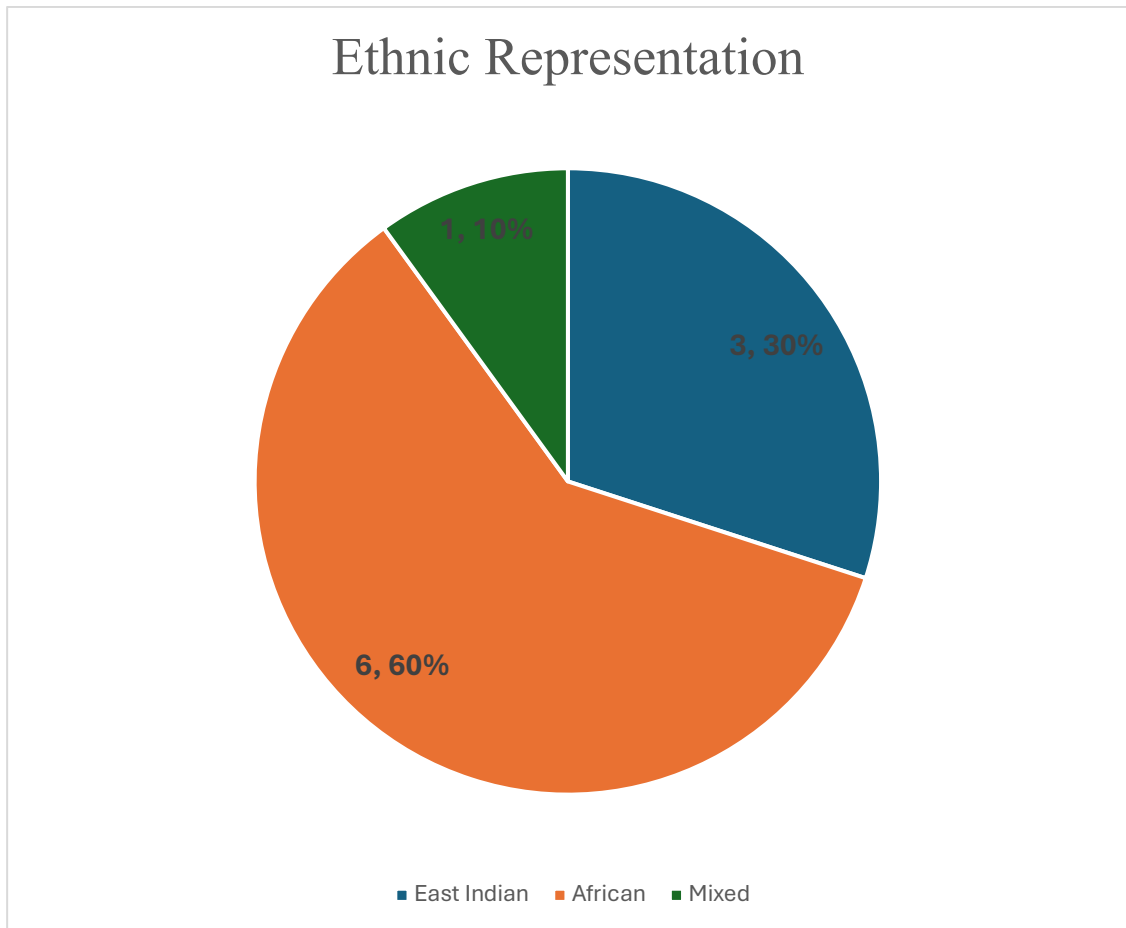
employer, 60% were self-employed, and 10% were unemployed. All the participants of the study were Guyanese citizens. There was a 70% representation of unmarried males, 10% married, and 20% were divorced males.

Table 1

Participants' Age, Sex, Employment Status, and Marital Status

Participant	Age (years)	Sex	Employment status	Marital status
P1	49	Male	Employee	Unmarried
P2	47		Self-employed	Married
P3	48		Self-employed	Divorced
P4	45		Unemployed	Divorced
P5	50		Employee	Unmarried
P6	57		Self-employed	Unmarried
P7	63		Self-employed	Unmarried
P8	65		Self-employed	Unmarried
P9	55		Employed	Unmarried
P10	62		Self-employed	Unmarried

As the researcher, I rescheduled interviews several times as participants did not attend. The interviews and recruitment processes took approximately 4 months to complete. The first four interviews were conducted over a period of 2 months. The recruitment process was complicated, as many ex-parolees changed phone numbers and could not be contacted, while those who were contacted were not all willing to participate. Given the geographical distance and transportation costs, some participants were unable to reach the suggested location due to the interview location in Georgetown. The use of a Zoom conference call became relevant in instances where internet accessibility was available. When internet accessibility was limited or non-existent, phone calls were used to conduct the interviews, utilizing phone credit. Participants represented mainly three groups: East Indian, African, and mixed. Figure 1 shows the ethnic representation of the participants.

Figure 1*Ethnic Representation of Participants*

Data Collection

A total of 10 participants willingly agreed to participate in the research study. Each participant has met the inclusion criteria. The Walden University IRB permitted me to solicit ex-parolees via email to participate in the study. Each interview utilized an interview guide that included one specific question and several supporting prompts. I utilized a semi-structured interview style, and answers to subsequent questions were given from earlier questions. The semi-structured nature of the interview process allowed me to ask follow-up questions to foster clarity and better

understanding in instances where participants did not fully understand specific questions on the interview schedule.

With 70% of the participants being self-employed, time was a significant factor in determining their willingness to participate. I strived to ensure that the interviews did not exceed 60 min. However, several interviews were done in less time than allotted and only lasted approximately 20–35 min. With each participant's permission, the interviews were recorded using a voice recorder. Interviews conducted on Zoom were also recorded using the Zoom platform. I took physical handwritten notes in addition to each recorded interview. The video recordings were used to verify the written content by listening to the tapes, which were then placed into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet in NVivo 15 for data analysis. This analysis generated codes, categories, and themes based on the participants' responses to the IQs.

Data Analysis

To commence data analysis, the interviews were transcribed line by line, word by word. The transcription was verified by taking notes from the interview. I used the interview recordings to verify the accuracy of the notes taken. I used NVivo 15 software to organize the data into codes. The data set was prepared using an Excel spreadsheet and uploaded into NVivo 15 software. I then began coding the data gathered. Coding was completed in several phases and stages, using a common phrase or word to organize the data. Several codes were created from the 10 interviews. The data were analyzed question by question. There were both strong similarities and stark differences in the expressions of the 10 men who participated in the study. Several

rounds of coding were conducted to ensure that all data were captured accurately and completely. Table 2 shows the codes derived from Interview Question 1.

Table 2

Codes Derived From Interview Question 1

Code	Quote example
Rehab-positive impact	"It was rehabilitating. It helped me to be a better person."
Rehab-negative impact	"It was a wasted process; I was a recidivist before deciding to change."
Activity-vocational	"I did baking and cooking."
Quality-inconsistent	"It was inconsistent." (Rating: 3/10)
Frequency-daily	"Every afternoon."

The codes derived from the question and direct participant quotes supported one. These codes were rehab-positive impact, rehab-negative impact, activity vocational, quality-inconsistent, and frequency daily. The codes were drawn from the questions that sought responses about the rehabilitation experience. The codes developed from NVivo 15 grouped the responses into categories. The themes developed were perceptions of rehabilitation effectiveness, and the sub-themes included positive experiences that specifically referred to skill acquisition and personal growth. Adverse experiences were associated with a lack of relevance of the rehabilitative activities and the belief that they were a waste of time. Another sub-theme under the theme of rehabilitative effectiveness was mixed experiences, whereby the variation of activity or individual effort was noted.

The types of rehabilitation activities were another theme, supported by sub-themes such as vocational training, educational programs, physical activities, and work assignments. Other themes included the quality of rehabilitation in Guyana, with sub-themes of institutional limitations, inconsistent quality, and suggestions for

improvement. The duration and frequency of engagement were another theme, with long-term and regular sub-themes. Table 3 shows the specific codes for IQs 1 and 2.

Table 3

Codes for Interview Questions 1 and 2

Parent theme	Child code	Description
Rehabilitation	Effectiveness	Positive/negative/mixed views on rehab impact
Rehabilitation	Activities	Types of activities engaged in
Social reintegration	Transition	Ease/difficulty of postrelease adjustment
Social reintegration	Employment	Discrimination or skill application

Other codes were developed in IQs 3, 4, and 5, and themes and sub-themes were drawn. The code positive factors and rehabilitation utility were drawn for IQ3. Several themes included family support, skills acquisition, program participation, and personal mindset. Support-family: "Having my family support me was important." and "My family is my support system" were the quotes to support the sub-theme support-family. Skill acquisition and skill-life were directly connected to the activities ex-parolees participated in while they were in prison. These sub-themes highlighted the activities as skills; in some cases, they were necessary for their livelihood and existence.

The factors contributing to the effectiveness of the ex-parolee's social reintegration were identified as both positive and negative, and were analyzed after a careful examination of the data, codes, themes, and sub-themes that emerged from the study. Program participation was themed with program wellness as a sub-theme, "*Being part of the wellness and success program,*" a direct quote. Financial hardship, isolation, and emotional toll were some factors that negatively impacted the social reintegration experience of the participants. The usefulness of the skills, family

support, self-discipline, and spiritual connection positively impacted the exceptional reintegration experience. Employment barriers, stigma, discrimination, and familial rejection were among the factors that hindered the social reintegration processes of these individuals. Emergent themes from those codes were employment discrimination, with subthemes stigma-society and stigma-family. These sub-themes had some direct quotes, "*Some persons still see you as a prisoner,*" and "*My family was upset with me for the crime,*" self-employment as a coping mechanism, supported by the quote, which is why I am self-employed.

Other emerging issues included rehabilitation shortcomings, program limitations, and gaps in the support system. These codes accurately reflected the thoughts and expressions of the participants. There were themes and subthemes. Inadequate rehabilitation, support, and unreliable emotional regret. Some direct quotes that agreed with the subthemes included: "*Not learning anything special in prison,*" "*They were reliable but not strong,*" "*It makes me sad; I cry sometimes.*" These quotes were drawn from the data after the sub-themes, themes, and codes emerged. There was one discrepancy where the participant shared responses that contradicted each other and were treated as mixed responses during the analysis. According to the study, the participant shared ambivalent and mixed reactions to the questions.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is an essential element of research. Concerning quantitative research, trustworthiness is measured through the replicability of research findings (Flick et al., 2025). Quantitative research relies on reliability, credibility, and replicability to legitimize the study (Burkholder et al., 2019). However, qualitative

research rigor can be ascertained using other qualities, which are referred to as the qualitative counterpart: dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability (Burkholder et al., 2019). These contribute heavily to measuring or attributing the trustworthiness of a qualitative study.

The researcher sought to support research practice of the highest standards. Ravitch and Carl (2021) stated that trustworthiness extends beyond the use of research methods and practices that are mutually aligned. In addition to the theoretical implementation of truthfulness, participants' responses must be transparently reflected for accuracy. For this study, participants received a reminder of the importance of honesty in responding to the prompts and questions shared during the interview. As the researcher, all results yielded from the study were honestly reported. At no point in the research process was any interference made to adjust the research findings. The researcher objectively applied and respected the research principles when using the software for data analysis, ensuring that the codes and themes were accurate.

Credibility

Qualitative research demonstrates strong credibility when its results are consistent with those of other studies. Ravitch and Carl (2021) shared several details about the credibility of qualitative studies, and the information they provided corroborates findings from various writers and researchers. Credibility is established using various strategies (Gamble, 2025). When conducting a qualitative study, not all strategies need to be used simultaneously. Instead, the researcher should choose a strategy or strategies that work well with the study in focus (Plaatjies, 2025). Some methods used for credibility purposes include prolonged engagement, persistent observation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, progressive subjectivity, member

checking, triangulation, and reflexivity (Burkholder et al., 2019). Interviews were the primary data-gathering source for this study, as documentation and records were inaccessible due to several hindering factors, including poor storage, protocol obstructions, bureaucratic hurdles, and internal barriers. Triangulation for the study was achieved through interviews, considering the varied ethnicities of participants, prison location representations, duration of time spent in prison, age differences, and differences in crimes committed.

Transferability

Research findings should not be limited to the study that yielded the findings. Transferability is a valuable tool for assessing the credibility of research findings. Transferability refers to the applicability of research findings from one study to another or across populations (Drisko, 2025). To ensure the credibility of the findings, the selection criteria for participants were clearly stated, with eligibility criteria outlining exclusion criteria and providing instructions. Drisko (2025) explained that when the sample selection is carefully organized, it enables the transfer of results from one study to another, even across populations.

Dependability

Dependability is akin to reliability in qualitative research. Dependability is necessary for qualitative research. Burkholder et al. (2019) defined dependability as providing evidence consistent with data collection, analysis, and reporting.

Dependability is relevant in every qualitative study (Morelli & Marcelli, 2022). This study was certainly not an exception.

For this study, triangulation was used to establish dependability. Triangulation often infers the use of three, but it refers to multiple (Burkholder et a, 2019).

Triangulation was employed by including participants from diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, ages, offenses committed, and overall parole experiences that impacted their lives as ex-parolees. These differences, responding to one claim, bolstered the dependability. Triangulation is a commonly used method of verifying truth within results and participants.

Confirmability

The researcher must ensure that the research findings are unbiased. Drisko (2025) explained that confirmability refers to the freedom of results and conclusions. Confirmability in qualitative research refers to the level of alignment maintained and managed during the study (Lim, 2025). Confirmability is crucial for maintaining the trustworthiness of qualitative research. Confirmability was achieved using direct quotes from the participants. The tape recordings were verified with the written notes, and the information was repeated and cross-checked to ensure consistency and accuracy.

Results

Q1 was, "How would you describe your rehabilitation experience?" Table 4 shows an analysis of the findings for the question. Several codes were gathered from the participants' responses. This question gave insights into the second RQ, "What are the barriers experienced by the offenders that hinder successful integration?" Table 4 includes the responses to IQ1.

Table 4

Responses to Interview Question 1 (Participants' Rehabilitation Experience)

Response	Initial code
"It was rehabilitating. It helped me to be a better person"	Positive transformation, self-improvement

"It was quite fine, there were some difficulties but overall, it was good"	Mixed experience, generally positive
"It was good, I learned a lot while in prison"	Skill acquisition, positive outcome
"Not very good, I did not learn anything from what they provided"	Ineffective, no growth
"It was rewarding"	Personal fulfillment
"It was good"	Positive evaluation
"It was rough"	Hardship, struggle
"It was a wasted process; I was a recidivist before deciding to change"	Failure of system, self-driven change
"It was sometimes good and sometimes bad"	Ambivalent, variable
"It was helpful"	Utility, support

From the codes developed, themes and sub-themes were organized, and they are as follows: positive rehabilitation outcomes were a theme, followed by sub-themes of personal growth and skill development. Participants who expressed personal growth stated that they "learned a lot" and the experience was "helpful." Those who noted the evidence of skill development explained being a "better person," explained they "learned a lot," and noted the experience was "rewarding." There was a mixed or ambivalent experience theme, supported by subthemes, balanced perspectives: "sometimes good and sometimes bad," "difficulties but overall good," and conditional effectiveness, which depended on individual effort or circumstances. Negative Critiques, with subthemes such as system failure, were supported by direct quotes explaining "wasted process" and "did not learn anything." Another sub-theme was hardship without growth. It was "rough," and there was evidence of "recidivism. Self-directed change was another theme supported by the subtheme of rehabilitation succeeded only when the individual took the initiative, "deciding to change."

Most respondents framed their experience in a positive light, emphasizing learning and self-improvement. Critiques focused on systemic flaws such as

recidivism and lack of tangible benefits. Ambivalence suggests rehabilitation quality may vary by program or individual. Agency matters suggest that the recidivist's comment highlights the potential for personal commitment to outweigh formal programs. Looking at the responses to IQ1, recidivism and the lack of tangible benefits are two consistent factors that impact the social reintegration process of ex-parolees within society. Therefore, these two factors were shared on several occasions to have influenced to some extent what happened as offenders prepared to reconnect with society.

There was a 60% representation of positive experiences. P01, P02, P03, P05, P06, and P10 described their rehabilitation as helpful, rewarding, or good, citing improvements in discipline, skills, and personal growth. P01: "It was rehabilitative. It helped me to be a better person." P03: "It was good; I learned a lot in prison." Conversely, there were negative experiences as well; this was 40%. P04, P07, P08, and P09 reported poor or inconsistent rehabilitation, calling it a "wasted process" (P08) or stating they learned nothing useful (P04, P10). P04: "Not very good; I did not learn anything from what they provided." Participants engaged in different types of rehabilitation activities. Participants engaged in various programs, but orderly duties (cleaning/maintenance) were the most common (P01, P04, P07, P08). Other activities included vocational training, which included baking, cooking (P05), and welding (P06). Educational classes were offered, specifically geared toward improving soft skills and managing anger (P01), as well as general classes (P03). Physical and recreational activities, such as boxing (P02) and general sports (P09), were allowed. Spiritual provisions also allowed some persons to attend church (P03). There were criticisms about the lack of meaningful skills (P04, P10) and the repetitive or

irrelevant tasks, such as orderly work, which dominated the options, limiting actual skill-building opportunities. The duration and frequency of rehabilitation were specific to the participant's sentence. Most participants were engaged in activities throughout their sentences (P01, P02, P03, P08, P10). Some had shorter engagements (P05: 2 years; P06: 3 months; P09: ~1 year). Some participants engaged in rehabilitative activities daily (P03, P04, P05, P06, P08) while other engaged in the activities weekly (P01, P09). Some participants engaged in intensive rehabilitative activities, which were done daily for specific hours. P02 underwent intensive training for 6 days a week, 4 hr a day. P10 expressed that rehabilitative activities were not frequently done, indicating inconsistent access.

IQ2 was, How has rehabilitation during incarceration impacted your social reintegration experience? Participants' responses to this question varied. They recalled that the effectiveness of their social reintegration was heavily weighed on the rehabilitation experience. Rehabilitation helps some (discipline, basic skills) but fails others due to irrelevance or poor quality. Orderly work is overused and needs more vocational and/or educational focus. Some indicated positive outcomes, including improved discipline P01, P02, P08, Skill development P03: baking or block-making; P05: cooking and anger management; and P04. There were also indications of adverse outcomes. These were expressed explicitly by a few participants who stated, "No real benefit" P06, P10 and increased Withdrawal (P10: "It has not helped me. Instead, I am more withdrawn).

There was no perceived benefit. As a result, there was a lack of impact: "It didn't help me," and "I was not impacted." There was personal development, and resilience was strengthened. Emotional and mental strength emerged as another

theme: "It has helped me to be strong and independent." Self-discipline has helped some participants: "It has helped me with my self-discipline." Two participants noted this. Social Withdrawal was expressed, "It has helped me to stay more to myself." Skill acquisition, employment support, and vocational skills were other subthemes; participants stated, "It provided me with skills to get employment or to become self-employed," and "It helped me to have additional skills."

Work ethic and responsibility were supported by stating, "Working has helped me appreciate being responsible and having joy for working and earning honestly." There were physical and recreational benefits. The physical benefits have had a profound impact on the participants' lives, as they stated, "It helped with the formation of a boxing gym for prisoners," and "it has helped me to do physical activities." Table 5 lists the themes and subthemes that I identified.

Table 5

Summary of Themes and Subthemes

Main theme	Subtheme
No perceived benefit	Lack of impact
Personal development	Emotional or mental strength
	Self-discipline
	Social withdrawal
Skill acquisition	Vocational skills
	Work ethic and responsibility
Physical and recreational	Fitness and activity

While some persons expressed not benefiting from the rehabilitative activities during incarceration, others explained receiving personal development, skill acquisition, and experiencing recreational activities. Self-discipline was a consistent expression. Those who shared this sentiment elaborated and reiterated the need for a

personal desire to experience change. Many ex-parolees emphasized the importance of being intrinsically motivated to experience rehabilitation benefits.

RQ1: What are the contributing factors that affect the effectiveness of social reintegration for the parolees within Guyana?

To answer this RQ, two questions provided direct feedback from the participants' responses. These questions were questions two and three. The contributing factors were addressed based on both their positive impact and negative consequences. The participants shared several factors and provided direct quotes to substantiate their responses.

IQ3 was, What contributing factors positively affected your social reintegration process? Table 6 shows the codes developed from the responses to IQ3.

Table 6

Codes for Interview Question 3 (Positive Factors Affecting Social Reintegration Process)

Example quote	Initial code
"Having my family support me, this was important"	Family support, emotional backing
"My ability to box, my boxing skills"	Talent/skill utilization, Personal strength
"Having specific skills"	Marketable abilities, employability
"Being an orderly helped me to be responsible"	Prison role fostering discipline, Responsibility
"Family support"	Relational stability, encouragement
"Being part of the Wellness and Success program"	Structured rehabilitation program, Institutional support
"Using my time in meaningful activities"	Productive engagement, Purposeful routines
"Being willing to work and earn"	Work ethic, financial independence
"It has strengthened my awareness of treating others with respect"	Moral growth, Empathy development
"Family support was helpful"	Reaffirmation of family's role

While participants expressed some positive factors that impacted their social reintegration experience, there were some outstanding factors. These factors addressed RQ1: What are the contributing factors that affect the effectiveness of social reintegration for parolees in Guyana?

A strong social support system was one positive factor. Support for the ex-parolees was experienced through family encouragement. There were instances where the "family supported me" and "family support was helpful." Community or program involvement was another factor derivative of a strong social support system; this became evident through "the wellness and success program." Personal skills and talents were another positive social factor. Having vocational abilities enabled "specific skills" to be realized. There was a specific instance where boxing was used as a source of physical activity, and one person stated their "ability to box" fostered positive social reintegration. They went back into society, learning something new, with championship records from boxing. Some participants felt that Prison-acquired discipline was nurtured as specific roles and jobs provide exposure, and "orderly helped me be responsible."

A proactive mindset and work ethic have positively affected ex-parolees' social reintegration experience. Self-motivation was helpful and being "willing to work and earn" and time management were necessary. Purposeful time use kept the participants engaged in "meaningful activities" even after socially reintegrating into society. The moral and behavioral transformation has helped the participants rebuild and develop attributes useful for their individual development. Empathy development was a key result of behavioral improvement; as one stated, they "treat others with respect." Another person explained that there was a reinforcement of values. Family

support was the most critical factor, highlighting a salient point: family reintegration programs should be prioritized. Skills development, specifically vocational or athletic, helps to build confidence and employability.

IQ4 was, What contributing factors negatively affected your social reintegration process? Table 7 shows the codes developed from responses to a specific question: "What contributing factors negatively affected your social reintegration process?" After being coded, the responses were organized according to themes and subthemes.

Table 7

Codes for Interview Question 4 (Negative Factors Affecting Social Reintegration Process)

Example quote	Initial code
"Some persons still see you as a prisoner even when you have completed your time"	Stigma, persistent criminal label
"Some persons continue to see me by the crime I committed and did not respect me as a changed person"	Judgment based on past, lack of respect
"Not being able to properly apply what was taught and being paid for the work done"	Skills mismatch, underemployment
"My family members were upset with me for the crime I committed"	Family rejection, emotional estrangement
"My past has affected this"	Historical stigma, lingering consequences
"Authorities unwillingness to listen to inmates"	Institutional neglect, lack of advocacy
"The discrimination from society"	Social exclusion, prejudice
"Not having a strong family support because of my past"	Weak family ties, isolation
"The limitations of not having enough programs"	Insufficient rehabilitation services
"Not learning anything special from in prison"	Ineffective prison education

In response to this question, the first RQ was again highlighted. RQ1: What are the contributing factors that affect the effectiveness of social reintegration for the

parolees within Guyana? The factors mentioned in this instance were negatively associated with the social reintegration experience.

The social stigma and discrimination shown to parolees and ex-parolees are concerning. The concern was a shared negative factor that impacted or influenced social reintegration. It is influenced by public perception, as was expressed by participants: the members of society "still see you as a prisoner," there is constant labeling, and you are "seen by the crime you committed," which leads to systemic bias, and it ultimately leads to "discrimination from society."

Social stigma and discrimination weigh heavily on the outcome of the ex-parolees' experience as they transition into society. Being labeled for what you used to do is not a pleasant feeling, and this sometimes influences individuals to resort to what they once did to remain in their comfort zone, as efforts to initiate change don't always work in the favor or preference of the offender.

There is the stigma experienced by many ex-parolees, as this was the most cited barrier. The stigma has highlighted an existing need. There is a need for community sensitization programs. These can be done before the inmates are released, in preparation for their return to society. Family mediation is another theme developed from the code; this can influence the reduction of emotional estrangement. Prison reforms should focus on practical skill-building, not just theory. The low literacy rate negatively impacts the appreciation for rehabilitation that is theory-related or associated. Therefore, probation officers should advocate for fair wages and job placements.

Many inmates depend heavily on their families for support during their sentence or, more importantly, after they have completed their sentence and

transitioned into society. The participants for this study were no different; family rejection and the lack of support impacted the social reintegration experience negatively when it was not received as expected. There was emotional estrangement, "family members were upset," there was abandonment, and they did not have strong family support." These affected how the social reintegration process felt.

Another negative factor that impacted the social reintegration experience was institutional and systemic barriers. The prison programs were inadequate; there were poor prison programs, "not enough programs," and "not learning anything." Another factor shared was authoritarian neglect; it was understood that "authorities were unwilling to listen." Economic and skill-based challenges were associated with underemployment, "not being paid properly for work," and a skills gap where participants were "unable to apply what was taught."

RQ2: What are the barriers experienced by the parolees and ex-parolees that hinder successful integration?

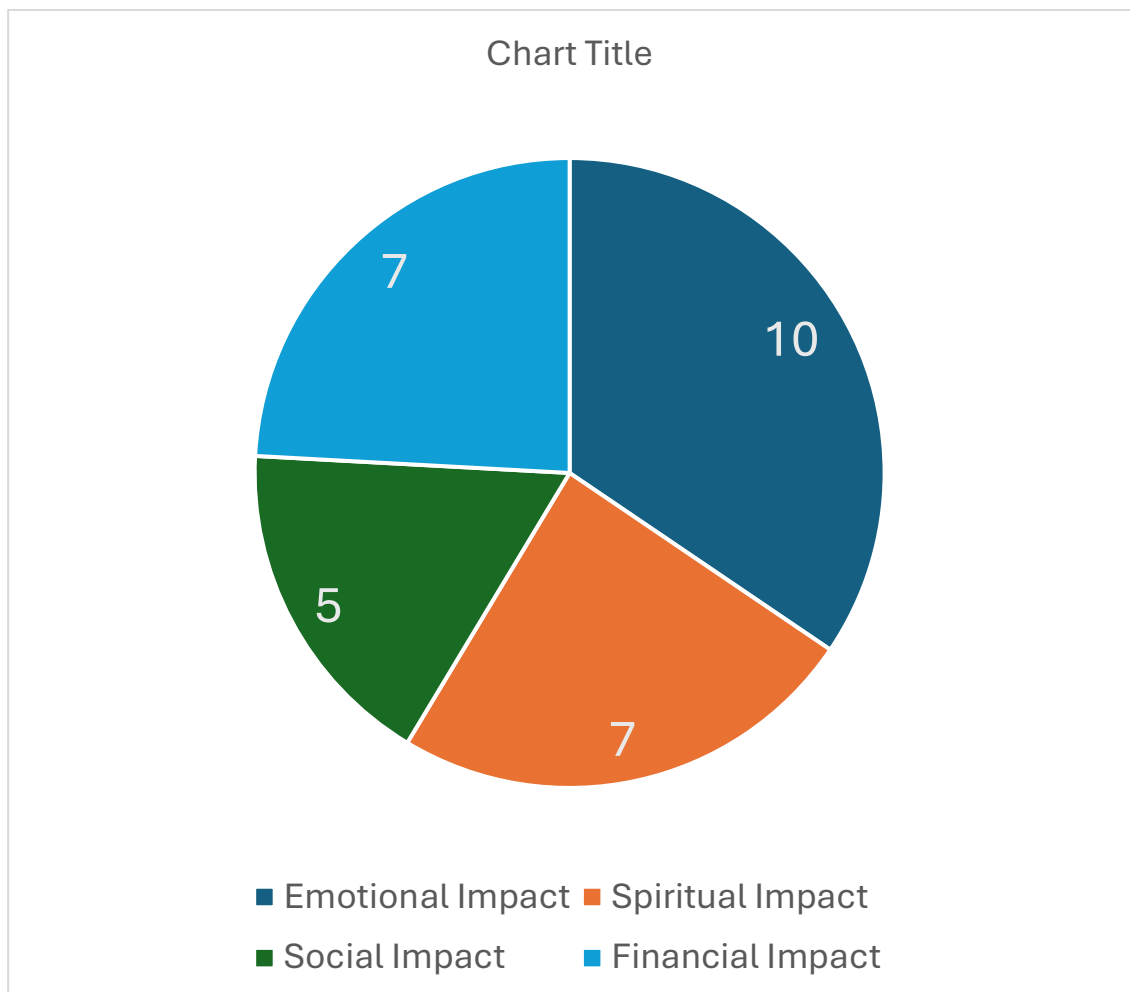
IQ5 was relevant to the second RQ. This IQ seemed deeply connected to the RQ, as the history of incarceration in whatever form has influenced the progress of the ex-parolee. In answering this question, prompts were given to give greater clarity and better understand the responses. Did the story of incarceration bother you?

When asked if the history of incarceration bothered the participants, they were quick to respond, stating yes or no, and in some cases, they did not know how to react. However, the prompts enabled clarity of expression, and the responses were forthcoming, mentioning specific aspects of the participants' lives. Therefore, they shared responses reflecting the impact of incarceration. The responses to this question reflected incarceration's emotional, spiritual, social, and financial impacts on the 10

participants (see Figure 2). All participants expressed being affected emotionally; there was a resounding 100% (10/10). The spiritual impact was 70% (7/10); only seven participants responded affirmatively about being impacted in this aspect of their lives. There was a 50% (5/10) response to the social impact of incarceration on the participants' lives. Financial impact was 70% (7/10). From the responses, emotional impact was the only aspect that received an affirmative for all reactions. Spiritual and financial impacts received the same frequency, while social impact was the only aspect of life with 50%.

Figure 2

Various Impacts of Incarceration on Ex-Parolees' Lives



The emotional impact of the themes highlighted reflected the dominant emotion of sadness, as seven participants mentioned "sad" or "crying." Other themes included scarred emotions; one participant reflected this thought, "My emotions have been scarred." Three participants shared overthinking and rumination. Another participant stated therapy as a coping mechanism. For the spiritual impact, seven participants expressed growth. They reported spiritual strengthening and feeling "closer to God," and explained doing specific actions, such as "meditating more." "It has drawn me closer to God tremendously." Three participants noted their spiritual lives were not impacted or affected. Participants shared how the history of incarceration has bothered them socially: "Prison has made me lose important people in my life." A direct quote from a participant. Among the different responses were five people who expressed that they had lost friendships or identified the presence of distrust in friendships. The other five participants said that not being bothered by a history of incarceration had no negative impact on their social lives. Instead, they gained friendships and connections.

Financial impact resoundingly affected participants, and their ability to earn decreased. A 70% response stated unemployment, lost earnings, or savings. One participant from the 70% expressed, "Those were lost years where I could have earned." The remaining 30% of the participants explained that the history of incarceration had bothered them to influence a positive behavior change, where they have since started saving.

There were cross-thematic insights. There was an emotional-spiritual link whereby those expressing sadness often sought spiritual solace. There was a social-

financial link; lost social ties correlated with financial strain; this was recognized among 40% of the participants.

IQ6 was, How can the Government of Guyana enhance the parolee's social reintegration experience? The central theme for this question was government reforms suggested. Subthemes with direct quotes included financial support, "make a monetary investment," and "help them have money for investment." The participants explained that the need for employment assistance "provides more opportunities for ex-parolees to start businesses" and "employment opportunities should be provided." They also shared areas that can be improved, such as skills and training, "more meaningful skills and training for inmates," and "exposing them to farming materials or supplies."

Psychological support is "Providing important areas of professional counseling" and "access to therapy from professionals." Early intervention programs were shared as another thing the Government of Guyana can do to enhance the social reintegration process of parolees and ex-parolees: "Start meeting with teenagers to give second chances." There was also the suggestion of policy adjustments, supported by two direct quotes: "Grant more parole as people change" and "Offer more remission." Other responses were captured in Figure 3 to support the themes and subthemes.

Figure 3

Things the Government Can Do to Help With Social Reintegration.



IQ7 was, What would you have done differently if you had to serve back your parole sentence? Some participants had difficulty answering this question and refused to answer. However, it was recognized that their difficulty was not with the question, but it weighed heavily on their literacy level. With explanation and the use of the prompts, they were able to respond accordingly. Behavioral change was one of the top responses. Most ex-parolees stated that they would focus on self-discipline and avoiding trouble. Some participants explained they would have done things differently only if they had better support, as there were some critical deficits. These included but were not limited to psychological support lacking; there was 80% of respondents who revealed they received no therapy, and the other 20% stated that they resorted to self-counseling. Another lack was minimal professional guidance; only anger management was mentioned, and most had no access to trained professionals.

Entrepreneurial regrets were another area of interest; some participants wished they had started businesses earlier.

IQ8 was, What guidance should be given to new parolees? The participants' responses to this question varied in their expressions. Speaking from an experiential standpoint, their responses were grouped into four categories: guidance for new parolees, system improvements needed, resource availability and accessibility necessary, and post-release engagement offered. Additional information was received from the participants. As participants shared, guidance was required; this was emphasized through specific areas that needed advice but were not limited to behavioral compliance; the participants explained the need to "behave themselves and stay out of trouble" and "do good things." Economic empowerment was another area, as was "investment startup and business guidance" and "helping them earn money." Personal development was another area, including "avail themselves to learn" and "make better choices."

Table 8 illustrates the economic focus on employment solutions in comparison to the behavioral focus on prison conditions. All participants expressed their desire and what they believe is necessary for the Government of Guyana to provide employment support. However, only 50% of the participants described the prison condition as impacting the guidance given to new parolees, and 85% stated that focusing on rehabilitation was a core part of the guidance given to new parolees.

Table 8

Participant Views on the Need for Behavioral Guidance vs. Economic Guidance to Improve Prison Conditions

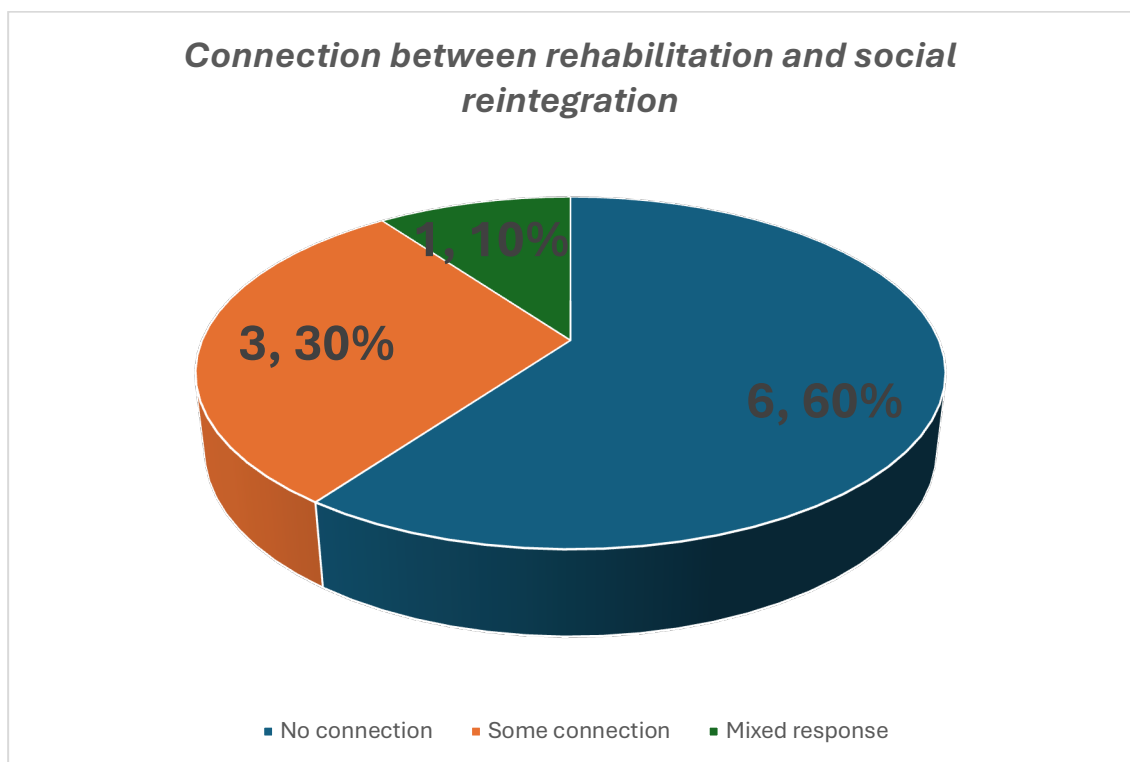
Improvement area	Behavioral guidance (%)	Economic guidance (%)
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Employment support	12	88
Prison conditions	45	5
Rehabilitation	30	25

IQ9 was, Do you see a connection between rehabilitation and life outside incarceration? Figure 4 shows the connection between rehabilitation and social reintegration.

Figure 4

Connection Between Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration

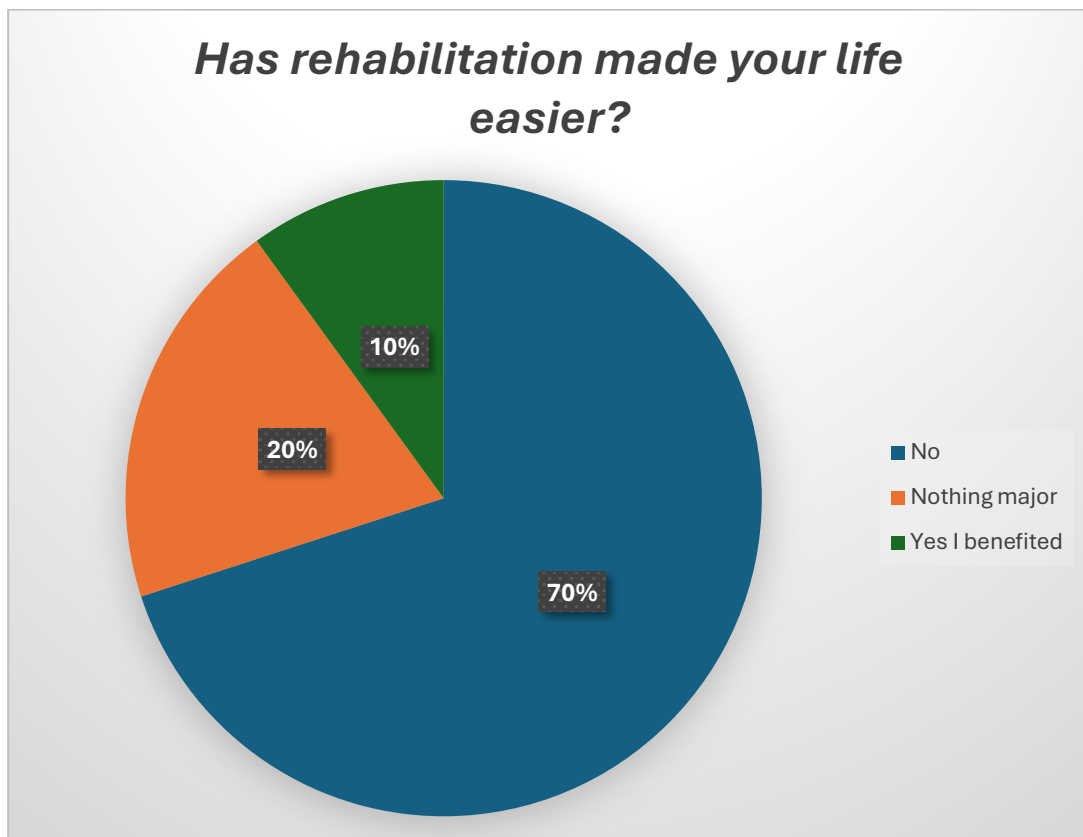


There was a 30% belief among participants who recognized and identified a connection between rehabilitation and social reintegration. The perception of rehabilitation value influenced the connection. The rehabilitation practicality, current system adequacy, and suggested improvements were other areas that showed a connection; one participant alluded to being more disciplined. There was a 60% belief

that there was no connection, as there was no life improvement (see Figure 5); one participant expressed, "I had to fight and make things work myself." There was a 10% uncertainty of whether there was or was not a connection between rehabilitation and social reintegration. While the participants had varying views, they all agreed in two areas: there was a 100% agreement that the value can be improved and more can be done for parolees to strengthen the connection between rehabilitation and social reintegration. This analysis revealed critical disconnects between rehabilitation objectives and outcomes, with clear pathways for systemic improvement. The unanimous call for enhanced programming suggests an urgent need for reform.

Figure 5

Results for Whether Rehabilitation Has Made Life Easier



Rehabilitation programs largely failed to ease post-prison life for most, with a small minority experiencing positive or partial effects. This was supported by 70% of respondents who reported no ease from rehabilitation, emphasizing self-reliance ("I had to fight"). There were 20% who indicated ambivalence, noting minor benefits (e.g., discipline) but no significant life improvement. Only 10% reported that rehabilitation was helpful.

IQ10 was, What policy would you suggest making the social reintegration process suited for greater success? In response to the last question, the participants shared their views based on their needs and experiences. Economic empowerment was shared by 40% of the participants, which was supported by some direct quotes, such as "Business startup funding" being necessary and "Mandatory business training". There was a 30% representation of the belief that a policy on behavioral rehabilitation is required. The participants expressed that "Etiquette and grooming" and "Counseling by professionals" are two areas that would benefit greatly from policy formation. The third area was systemic reform policy, with another 30% response representation. With a policy in this area being developed, participants believed "Better treatment of offenders" and "Practical, needs-based approaches" would be outcomes.

Participants thought government-business partnerships were necessary, with an 80% rate, while 20% believed it should be the government's sole responsibility to initiate policy changes (see Table 9). The participants believed that policy changes are necessary. They further explained that financial support is essential; 50% of the participants believed this was supported by their direct expressions, "Funding for startups" and "Mentorship stipends" would be an excellent area for this to be

actualized. Human capital was another suggested area; 30% of the participants stated that "Trained professionals" and "Mentorship programs" are necessary. Structural support was stated by 20% of the participants, there is need for more "Public-private collaboration" there was a clear consensus whereby the participants expressed that the Government of Guyana should offer support to parolees up to 1 year after completing their parole sentence, 1 year (80%) while another group of participants believed it should be 6–18 months (20%).

Table 9

Participant Views on a Policy Focus Featuring Government–Business Partnerships vs. Government Only

Policy focus	Government–business partnership (%)	Government only (%)
Economic programs	85	15
Behavioral programs	70	30

This analysis provides a clear roadmap for an effective reintegration policy, emphasizing public–private partnerships with structured 1-year support programs that focus on both economic and behavioral outcomes. “Has there been a connection between the activities you did in prison and the activities within communities while on parole?” Most respondents (60%) saw no link between prison and parole activities. However, 30% reported continuity (e.g., landscaping, general skill carryover). There was one ambiguous response suggesting some activities require intentional effort to connect.

Summary

In this chapter, I introduced the setting and demographics of the study. The data collection process was explained, and the received data were analyzed. Almusaed

et al. (2025) postulated that human experiences offer profound insights when focusing on social relationships and institutional systems, underscoring the importance of qualitative research, a fundamental methodological approach. The reliability of the information presented was substantiated through evidence of trustworthiness, which was explained herein. Attributes of reliability were explained, in addition to trustworthiness, with the inclusion of concepts such as credibility, transferability, and confirmability. The results were shared with specificity regarding the themes and codes used for the analysis of the collected data. In Chapter 5, I will provide further details regarding the literature of the study, informing readers of the gaps, similarities, and differences when compared with other research studies.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The problem addressed in this study was to understand the effectiveness of rehabilitative activities on the successful reintegration of ex-parolees into Guyanese society. The purpose of the study was actualized through semi-structured interviews with ex-parolees who were a part of the sample. Studies were conducted with other populations, examining ex-offenders of specific crimes in various populations. However, no study has ever examined the effectiveness of rehabilitation on social reintegration in Guyana. This study specifically examined ex-parolees who had committed various crimes from a Guyanese cultural perspective.

Two RQs guided the study. A thematic approach was employed, where codes, themes, and sub-themes emerged from the gathered data. RQ1: What are the contributing factors that affect the effectiveness of social reintegration for the parolees within Guyana? This was answered through responses that revealed stigma, family rejection, ineffective rehabilitative programs, and spiritual connection were the primary factors impacting the social reintegration of ex-parolees within Guyana. For RQ2: What are the barriers experienced by the parolees and ex-parolees that hinder successful integration? Barriers included but were not limited to employment difficulties, family support, and the personal mindset of offenders served as hindrances or motivating factors of ex-parolees' social reintegration.

Other studies have yielded similar results from different populations. Cardoso et al. (2025) studied the social reintegration process of sex offenders and discovered some barriers that offenders of different crimes within Guyana identified. The parole and rehabilitative systems were not as impactful as intended for successful social

reintegration (Akunesiobike et al., 2025). Within Guyana, the parole system has several gaps and areas for improvement that continue to be reflected in the experiences of parolees and, by extension, ex-parolees. Although recidivism was not the primary focus of this study, it was a significant factor in social reintegration. Similar studies focused on recidivism instead as a social determinant of successful social reintegration (Mourão et al., 2025).

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings from this research study corroborate those of other studies, as presented in Chapter 2. For the emotional impact, specific themes reinforced the impact of confinement on the offenders. As purported, the solitary confinement combined with other experiences can influence relapses (Luigi et al., 2022). Some themes highlighted reflected the dominant emotion of sadness; seven participants mentioned "sad" or "crying." Three participants shared overthinking and rumination; another stated therapy as a coping mechanism. These experiences, which are now consistent and comparable with other studies across various populations, originate from within Guyana.

RQ2 asked, What are the barriers experienced by the parolees and ex-parolees that hinder successful integration? Scanlon et al. (2023) explained that the need for more holistic interventions within the prison system continues to manifest through behavioral deficits. These limitations affect the success of the social reintegration of offenders within society. Leclerc et al. (2025) explained that parole is vital for reintegrating prisoners into society. The need for parole was a common sentiment expressed by participants; however, several barriers hindered this from being a true success. Another theme identified from the data of this study was the suggestion of

'Government reforms' and 'the lack of psychological support'. These were barriers to the successful social reintegration of participants. Leclerc et al. (2025) and Scanlon et al. (2023) stated that a strong governmental system contributes significantly towards the successful completion of parole sentencing and overall successful social reintegration of offenders from a system perspective. Recognizing that other factors contribute to ultimate success, it is necessary to validate the role of government assistance and the system in fostering the pillars of this transitional experience.

According to Gulden (2023), inmates expressed respect in the classroom. Ex-parolees who participated in this study stated positive feelings associated with helpful learning skills during their sentence and expressed an appreciation for the additional knowledge. Jackson et al. (2025) offered a different perspective, explaining that offenders are typically eager to learn and often receive opportunities to do so, even while incarcerated. Within the context of this study's findings, several themes emerged, including perceptions of rehabilitation effectiveness, with sub-themes focusing on positive experiences that specifically referred to skill acquisition and personal growth. Ex-parolees responded positively to encounters that were informative and beneficial to their lives beyond the walls of the prison.

Solitary confinement and other similar experiences can increase the likelihood of relapse (Luigi et al., 2022). As was further explained, isolation can affect the mental health and development of the offenders (Luig et al., 2022). Interactions with the instructor have proven to help offenders develop and support a sense of belonging. In preparation for social reintegration, it is crucial that rehabilitation and all other learning experiences are fully supported and embraced. I recognized that the change in perspective and approach of the inmates, as they received positive and supportive

interactions from class facilitators or teachers, influenced their behavior positively (Kallman, 2020). Proper educational opportunities and rehabilitative practices can meaningfully contribute to behavior change.

The social strain theory explains that individuals are often vulnerable to criminal engagement, resulting from a lack of strength or support to resist social pressures. Shaw (2020) supported the concepts of social strain theory, emphasizing the need for activities to enable offenders to desist from criminal engagement. Results from this study emphasized the same principle: the more ex-parolees are meaningfully engaged, the less likely they are to return to a criminal lifestyle, and the harder it will be for them to recidivate. As they explained, employment opportunities open avenues for deliberate effort to reduce recidivism. Against this background, this study's findings aligned with other studies.

Recidivism influenced the successful or unsuccessful outcome of the social reintegration experience. Padgett and Marks (2025) stated that recidivism is a persistent and ongoing issue in the United States. The reality is that factors associated with the accessibility to counseling and employment affect the mental health of offenders while incarcerated. Themes developed during this study highlighted the dire need for counselling and psychological services provided to offenders while incarcerated and extended to those on parole and those who are ex-parolees. Participants explained being impacted by the absence of adequate psychological support while incarcerated here in Guyana. The findings of another research study provided meaningful insights, explaining that counselling, employment, and educational opportunities offer support for parolees and ex-parolees, empowering them to resist recidivism and transition successfully into society through meaningful

social reintegration (Chloupis & Kontompasi, 2025). Several themes of this study reveal the need for more psychological services and support to offenders, parolees, and ex-parolees.

Other themes of this study revealed the need for better preparation of parolees as they transition to become ex-parolees on their social reintegration journey. Chasciar et al. (2025) purported research results stating, ex-parolees requesting greater family and community support, better skills to match the labor market, this corroborates with the findings of this study as the ex-parolees believe they rehabilitation activities were not suitably fitting their interests, "The limitations of not having enough programs" was explained to mean, the rehabilitation options were determined by the administration, without an expressed interest by the offenders. The themes family support and family support-lack were represented with a direct quote, "Not having a strong family support because of my past". These have all weighed on the overall social reintegration of the ex-parolee.

Limitations of the Study

The challenges encountered in this research largely reflect what was stated in Chapter 1. There was considerable difficulty in contacting participants. After receiving the complete list of possible participants, many of the contact details of the individuals were incorrect, as persons changed their contact information after completing their parole sentence. There were instances where individuals stated the wrong number the moment I stated the reason for calling. However, for some of the people who maintained their contact and honestly identified themselves, information sharing was forthcoming. Given the country's landscape and geographic scope, the

residence location within Guyana poses some difficulty in situations where there are network hindrances.

Gaining the willingness of the ex-parolees to participate and honestly contribute to the study was not as difficult as was previously stated as a foreseen challenge. Ex-parolees did not attempt to share information to gain the interviewer's favor, who was the same person as the researcher. There was no racial discrimination from the participants' standpoint, and everything in that regard was well received. There was some hesitation in sharing information with one participant of a different ethnicity than the researcher; however, this posed some subcultural barriers. Nevertheless, with discussion and further explanation, the data were gathered effectively. There was hesitation with information sharing to an extent, as some persons were cautious and timid in their responses, with much reassurance that the information was for research, responses were more forthcoming, and participants became more relaxed. There were several reschedules and readjustments of time for physical interviews. There were instances where individuals scheduled to participate but never showed up, and the study had to proceed with only those who were willing, kept their word, and attended.

Recommendations

An excellent area for future research would be an examination of the rehabilitation policy's impact on social reintegration in Guyana. This study looked specifically at the impact of rehabilitation on the social reintegration experiences of ex-parolees. Recognizing the various barriers and factors that influence the social reintegration process, it would be beneficial to explore the benefits of implementing ideas drawn from the study results. Jeffries et al. (2025) noted the importance of

family support in realizing successful reintegration. This study highlighted the lack of family support as a significant contributor to social reintegration difficulties. Future research is needed to ascertain the impact that family support has on the social reintegration of parolees as they transition into society.

Ensuring that systems are in place for successful reintegration could be another study, where a parole handbook is developed, and efforts are made to encourage family and relatives to support the offender as they transition from prisoner to parolee, then ex-parolee. For this reason, a longitudinal study would be an excellent opportunity to influence the parole board's reinstatement and guide several system-related changes for participants. To effect consistent change, the generic activities should be replaced with interest-based programming, as participants expressed a desire to express preference in the rehabilitation activities, which will make a difference. Another interesting area for possible research is assessing the benefits of "earning while learning" vocational programs, where prisoners earn while learning, in contrast, they learn to ascertain the impact earning has on learning, and to accurately evaluate the impact of earning on the preparation to transition from within the prison to society with family and friends.

Economic difficulties were a recognizable barrier that impacted the social reintegration experience of the ex-parolees. This area can provide scope for significant social change impact and opportunities for individuals to prepare for social reintegration. Cardoso et al. (2025) stated that economic challenges weighed most heavily on the overall social integration experience of ex-offenders, indicating that they determined their success or failure. Incarcerations generally affect the economic growth of a country; therefore, a study to assess how the economic status of a country

affects an offender would be appreciated and is hereby recommended. Cui and Yang (2025) explained that elderly ex-offenders are sometimes affected by poor health care services. This is an outcome of economic difficulty, as the social cycle continues to extend, as highlighted in a Lagos study (Ajadi, 2025). Recidivism can sometimes impede economic growth and development. Marshall (2025) explained that, in order to offer proper rehabilitation that yields great success, the socioeconomic behavior of the inmate needs to be catered to accordingly. Ajada (2025) described recidivism as a significant outcome of economic distress. This highlights a needed area for future research, supported by information described by the participants of this current study. Several study participants in Guyana resoundingly echoed the need for financial support. This need highlights an alignment with other countries within the Caribbean and worldwide. Other contributing factors were also highlighted because of economic difficulties, specifically, the need for support for individuals preparing to transition through social reintegration. Fischer (2025) stated that emotional and psychological support can bolster the social reintegration experience to effect positive social change. When positive social change is realized, transformation is evident, and this can ultimately boost belief in change and the desire to maintain consistency for improved output and social growth.

Implications

Through system-generated interventions and improvements, there can be actualization of enhanced psychological and mental health and well-being opportunities for offenders. There can be development and adjustments to the policy to foster the inclusion of offenders' preferences and enable a holistic rehabilitative schedule and programming that meets their needs. There can be policy development

that prioritizes the mental health of the offenders, where more qualified professionals can provide psychological services to the inmates and prepare them more adequately for transition into society.

The findings of this study can bring significant benefits for each offender, parolee, and ex-parolee. With these individuals benefiting from decisions, plans, and interventions, recidivism can be reduced. Reducing recidivism can promote social benefits for families and the wider community. From the results, participants explained that being unable to earn while incarcerated, even if they do, does not have significant value after release. This study can affect social change by developing systems to facilitate the 'earn as you learn'. Offenders can earn and save for their transition from prison to social reintegration into society. There can be a reduction in the national budget whereby investments can be made to help individuals circumvent fulfilling their criminogenic needs. More families can build memories with fathers and male individuals. Similarly, females can be better encouraged and sustained, and overall, children will receive greater guidance to desist from criminal involvement and engagement. Also, the study findings show that offenders can be transitioned to a mentorship program as they prepare to be socially reintegrated with their families. The mentorship program can serve as an interceptor for juveniles to desist from criminal involvement, and adults can effect social change, contributing to individuals' national growth and development.

Conclusion

Within this research study, I utilized a generic qualitative approach. From a Guyanese perspective, the research focused on understanding how rehabilitation impacts social reintegration through the title, metamorphosing from prisoner to

parolee, then ex-parolee. The study's findings align with other research studies done in other countries, with other populations, with slight variations attributed to differences in geographic locations and cultural practices. The study found that while some inmates benefited from discipline and basic skills, Guyana's prison rehabilitation system suffers from inconsistency, limited practical training, and over-reliance on menial tasks. Additionally, reforms should focus on standardized, skill-based programs with post-release support to improve the success of social reintegration.

Research findings revealed that inadequate preparation for transition, limited governmental post-release support, family support or the lack thereof, little or no psychological support during incarceration, during parole, and after sentence completion, stigma, and discrimination are all contributors to the successful or unsuccessful experience of the offender. The study revealed that the mental health of offenders, while not treated as a priority, has a strong influence on the overall well-being and behavioral outcome of the offender.

The findings of this study identified areas for improvement at the government level and within communities, particularly in families. Families ought to be more supportive of their family members to effect change that can ultimately impact social change. Parents may benefit from the results of this study, as they can be more deliberate in exerting efforts to prevent their children, specifically male offspring, from going down the path of criminal offending, as some offenders began their journey in their youth.

When individuals are empowered to make healthier choices, their families will be positively impacted, and the community will experience the ripple effect of these

changes. The ripple effect will be realized through government-led interventions and strategies aimed at reducing crime and addressing the impacts and the direct act of recidivism. When business-led strategies are utilized, citizens of Guyana will meet their needs, and crime will not be a means to an end in providing basic utilities. The reduction of crime will become a united effort, and individuals will work towards resolving societal ills, thereby metamorphosing from prisoner to parolee, then ex-parolee. A Guyanese perspective will be experienced nationally as Guyanese are empowered to end recidivism and refrain from criminal involvement.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. How would you describe your rehabilitation experience while being incarcerated?
 - a) Prompt: What rehabilitative activity did you do?
 - b) Prompt: What was the duration of your engagement in rehabilitation-related activities?
 - c) Prompt: how would you rate the quality of rehabilitation within Guyana?
 - d) Prompt: how often did you engage in this activity?
 - e) Prompt: how has it helped you?
2. How has rehabilitation during incarceration impacted your social reintegration experience?
 - a) Prompt: were you able to transition easily?
 - b) Prompt: has there been a connection between the activities you did while in prison and the activities within communities while on parole?
 - c) Prompt: were you able to apply the knowledge gained in prison with transitional smoothness?
 - d) Prompt: was rehabilitation helpful or relevant for your transition into the community?
 - e) Prompt: has your prison experience influenced employment discrimination?
3. What contributing factors positively affected your social reintegration process?
 - a) Prompt: were your rehabilitation skills useful and relevant?
 - b) Prompt: has rehabilitation influenced your level of self-discipline?
 - c) Prompt: were you impacted by a strong support system?
4. What contributing factors negatively affected your social reintegration process?

- a) Prompt: has rehabilitation served as a hindrance to you being employed?
 - b) Prompt: was employment forthcoming because of your rehabilitation?
 - c) Prompt: was your support system reliable and strong?
 - d) Prompt: has your family supported you after your release from parole sentence?
 - e) Prompt: how have your family, relatives, and friends related to you after your release from a penal institution?
5. Has a history of incarceration bothered you?
- a) Prompt: how has your incarcerated past affected you emotionally?
 - b) Prompt: how has your incarcerated past affected you economically?
 - c) Prompt: how has your incarcerated past affected you spiritually?
 - d) Prompt: how has your incarcerated past affected you socially?
6. What can the Government of Guyana do to enhance parolee's social reintegration experience?
- a) Prompt: have you benefited directly from assistance after your parole sentence release?
 - b) Prompt: what assistance have you received while serving your parole sentence?
 - c) Prompt: what can be done to support parolees and ex-parolees?
7. What would you have done differently if you had to serve back your parole sentence?
- a) Prompt: was psychological therapy included in your rehabilitative experience?

- b) Prompt: how many professionals were you exposed to during rehabilitation?
8. What guidance would you recommend should be given to new parolees?
- a) Prompt: what are two things that should be improved from the current system?
 - b) Prompt: is there a handbook for parolees?
 - c) Prompt: would you return to interact with incarcerated individuals?
9. Do you see a connection between rehabilitation and actual life outside of incarceration?
- a) Prompt: has rehabilitation made your life easier?
 - b) Prompt: is the practical side of rehabilitation worth doing it all together?
 - c) Prompt: do you think enough is done for the rehabilitation of offenders?
 - d) Prompt: what else do you think can be done for criminal offenders?
10. What policy would you suggest making the social reintegration process suited for greater success?
- a) Prompt: what entities would you suggest should contribute mostly in terms of resources pooling for successful social reintegration for the parolees?
 - b) Prompt: what resources are most needed for social reintegration
 - c) Prompt: what should be a suggested duration for governmental support to those individuals who are on parole sentencing?

Appendix B: Email Invitation

Email Invitation Template

Subject line:

Interviewing ex-parolee

Email message:

There is a new study about understanding rehabilitation through the experiences of ex-parolees as they were socially reintegrated. For this study, you are invited to describe your experiences during social reintegration, sharing the impact of rehabilitation of your life experiences as an ex-parolee.

About the study:

- One 60-minute in-person interview that will be audio recorded (no video recording)
- You would receive a small thank-you token in the form of a thermostat cup, thank you
- To protect your privacy, the published study will not share any names or details that identify you

Volunteers must meet these requirements:

- Be Guyanese male ex-parolees, ages 45 and 65 both ages inclusive.
- History of being incarcerated
- Has served and completed a parole sentence

This interview is part of the doctoral study for La-Toya Arthur-Tucker, a Ph.D. student at Walden University. Interviews will take place in January 2025

Please email XXXXXX to let the researcher know of your interest. You are welcome to forward it to others who might be interested.

XXX-XXX-XXXX