

**Impact of Rehabilitation on Recidivism among Female
Prisoners in Adiala Jail: A Qualitative Study**



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A thesis submitted to the National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad,

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Supervisor: Dr. Rabia Zaid

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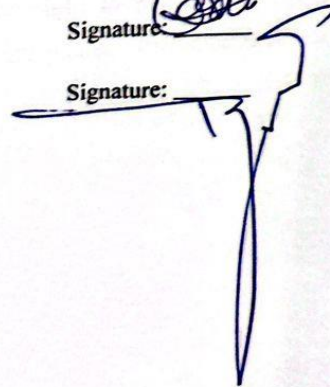
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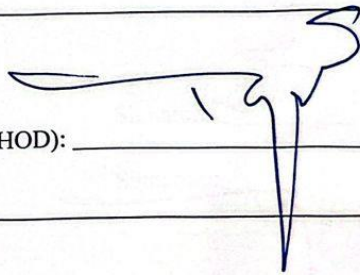
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LIST OF SYMBOLS, ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

NCHR	National Commission for Human Rights Pakistan
WHO	World Health Organization
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
HDR	Human Development Report

ABSTRACT

This research explores impact of rehabilitation on recidivism among female inmates of Adiala Jail, Pakistan with an aim to understand the challenges associated with the implementation of rehabilitation in reducing recidivism. This study, via qualitative research approach, collected data through 14 Interviews from female inmates of Adiala Jail who have engaged in recidivism. The findings reveal diverse perspectives among female inmates with history of recidivism regarding impact of rehabilitation on recidivism, with some acknowledging it as an outcome of economic hardship and others extending their perspective by highlighting the need to change criminal justice system from its very essence. Challenges related to the implementation of existing rehabilitation, including economic hardships outside the prison, dysfunctional family dynamics, outdated and ineffective rehabilitation programs and influence of criminal networks. By using thematic analysis, researcher will identify the themes which expose the reasons behind ineffectiveness of rehabilitation in reducing recidivism among female inmates of Adiala Jail who have engaged in recidivism. This study contributes to the existing literature gap by providing insights into factors contributing to female recidivism and how in prison, rehabilitation stands ineffective in reducing recidivism, barricading a successful reintegration post-release. Moreover, this study contributes to the Sustainable Development Goal 16 by highlighting female inmates as an integral part of development who shall not be left behind during sustainable development of a society. These challenges, when highlighted, can contribute to evidence-based policy-making and intervention strategies to address this issue effectively.

***Keywords:** Rehabilitation, recidivism, female inmates, Adiala Jail, Pakistan, justice system, reintegration, development.*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

For years, academic researchers have used the phenomenon of rehabilitation in the research studies. In order to define “rehabilitation”, fields of criminal justice, criminology along with penology describe it as the process of reforming a deviant individual back to normality. Rehabilitation becomes necessary when an individual’s normal functioning is disrupted due to environmental or societal factors, hence making in a deviant behavior. Let us assume that a person has been apprehended after committing a crime, found guilty and sent to prison. When an individual is incarcerated, their contribution to society is none, making them isolated and as a result forcing them to adjust to an entirely different environment (the prison) than the one they left. In order to reintegrate that incarcerated individual into the society, it is important to rehabilitate them by providing assistance from an external group. This phenomenon or process can be referred to as rehabilitation (Bhutta, 2010). Although the process of rehabilitation of the offenders consists of various intervention models, the primary goal is to actively involve prisoners by equipping them with life and employment skills (Sharma, 2013).

Defining rehabilitation becomes a tangled endeavor due to the abundance of associated terms. Among them, "reform" and "redemption" boast long-standing histories, while "reintegration," "resettlement," and "return" emerge as more recent additions. It's evident that these terms all bear the prefix "re," signaling a common aim: to restore to a former state (Robinson & Crow, 2009, 2). Understanding rehabilitation involves grappling with its multifaceted nature, intertwined with various conceptual nuances. In a broad sense,

rehabilitation aligns closely with the concept of 'restoration,' implying a return to a previous, often more desirable, state or condition. This foundational understanding offers a starting point for contemplating the rehabilitation of offenders. Common perception would likely characterize a 'rehabilitated offender' as someone whose history of criminal behavior has ceased, marking a return to 'normal,' law-abiding conduct—a definition primarily anchored in observable behavioral changes.

Many scholars are of the view that for offenders to reform and successfully reintegrate into the society, they must be rehabilitated through the programs that are not only meaningful but also address their needs (Morita, 2013). Over time, the growing number of prison population has brought forth the necessity for effective rehabilitation. It is surprising to see that the female imprisonment rates have not only risen swiftly, but they have increased much faster than male population levels.

Since 2000, the prison population around the world has been estimated to have increased by over 20 percent, compared to more than 50 percent increase in the overall number of imprisoned women (Institute for Criminal Policy Research, 2018) (ICPR). Imprisonment of females has caused increased worrying particularly due to surpassing growth rate of males in prisons (ICPR, 2015). The ICPR, (2018) shows that there were over 700,000 women detained in penal institutions throughout the world, either as remand prisoners or having been convicted or sentenced in 2017.

1.2 Overview of Recidivism (Penological and Criminological Views)

In the criminal justice system, recidivism is defined as 'an act committed by individual to revert to the criminal behavior after they have been convicted of a prior offense, sentenced,

and (presumably) corrected' (Maltz, 1984, p. 1). In essence, recidivism encompasses two fundamental elements: (1) commission of an offense (2) by an individual who has formerly committed at least one offense (Harris et al., 2011). Rhodes (2013) defined recidivism as an individual's re-arrest for committing a serious crime, the revocation of parole, probation or supervision or a combination of rearrest and revocation. Incidents involving minor offenses such as traffic violations or disturbances of public peace are not included in this definition.

Recidivism in its literal meaning, refers to a relapse to previous patterns of behavior, which characterizes human conduct. The term recidivism has gained prominence in sociology, criminology, and related fields because of its strong applications in criminal justice system, referring to an individual's relapse to criminal behavior (Armstrong, 2013). As of now, there is no generally accepted single definition of recidivism. The variations in definition of recidivism are contextual and methodical. (Fortune & Lambie, 2006; Johnson, 2017).

According to a report by Hunt and Dumville (2016) for the US Sentencing Commission, recidivism is defined as the re-arrest, reconviction and reincarceration of an individual who has previously completed a custodial or non-custodial sentence and had undergone treatment. Hunt and Dumville (2016) measures recidivism, using three variables: rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration. An individual who satisfies any of these three variables can be therefore classified as a recidivist. According to this definition, offenders that have relapsed into criminal behavior when they encounter the criminal justice system for two or more times through arrest can be classified as a recidivist and does not necessarily mean they have to be reincarcerated to be a considered as a recidivist.

In definition, recidivism is the tendency of previously incarcerated individuals to reoffend and it represents a significant challenge for criminal justice systems globally. This phenomenon not only burdens law enforcement and judicial systems but also poses profound social and economic costs. Effective interventions, therefore, are crucial in lowering recidivism rates and enabling a successful reintegration of previous offenders back into the society. The aim of the study is to explore these dynamics within the context of Adiala Jail Pakistan, with a particular focus on female prisoners.

Due to the lack of effective rehabilitation programs, many offenders end up reoffending and eventually end up entangled back into criminal justice system. Several research studies have been conducted by the scholars to identify the factors responsible for recidivism. Those factors include demographic factors, social or cultural and predictive factors (Montoya, 2009). However, unfortunately, in Pakistan, until now there is a sheer lack of documents to identify criminals who have reentered into prison after recidivism. Due to this, many ex-offenders who fall into the criteria of recidivism pretend to be first time offenders when caught again. Others take refuge in districts or rural areas where lack of proper data and identification systems makes it impossible to get any information on the offender being caught (Fasihuddin, 2013).

Recidivism is a multi-layered subject that considerably impacts the individual, the community, and the society on a broader level. Failures within the criminal justice system to rehabilitate offenders and adequately support their successful reintegration in to society can be seen as factors contributing to high recidivism rates. This, in turn, perpetuates a cycle of crime and punishment that is costly both financially and socially (Fazel & Wolf, 2015). The implications of recidivism are wide-ranging. For the individual, repeated

involvement with the criminal justice system can lead to diminished opportunities for employment, education, and stable housing, all of which are critical for successful reintegration (Lösel & Schmucker, 2005). On a community level, high recidivism rates can contribute to increased crime rates, which erode public safety and community cohesion. Economically, the costs associated with re-incarcerating individuals are substantial, diverting resources that could be better utilized in preventive measures and support services (Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006).

1.3 Crime Rate in Pakistan

In order to look at crime statistics in Pakistan, Global Organized Crime Index, an advanced tool, has been designed to gauge the extent of organized crime within a country and to evaluate its resilience against organized criminal activity. As per the 2023 report of Global Organized Crime Index, Pakistan ranks 47th of 193 countries on the index of organized criminal activity with a total score of 6.03. Whereas, its neighbor country ranks 61st of 193 countries on criminality score with a total score of 5.75. When compared to Asian countries, Pakistan ranks 20th of 46 countries and when compared to Southern Asian states, Pakistan ranks 3rd of 8 countries in terms of level of organized criminal activity. The resilience score of Pakistan to organized criminal activity is 3.96 which is lower than its rival nation India i.e.; 5.42. But surprisingly, the most significant organized criminal activity in both countries (India and Pakistan) is Human Trafficking (Global Organized Crime Index, 2023).

The Pakistan Penal Code is a legal code that outlines crimes and their punishments in Pakistan. It was established in 1860 during British rule and continues to be the basis of criminal law in Pakistan. The code covers a wide range of offenses, including those related

to theft, assault, homicide, and various other criminal activities. It provides guidelines for the investigation, prosecution, and punishment of crimes committed within the jurisdiction of Pakistan. The Pakistan Penal Code has undergone multiple amendments since its inception to address evolving legal and societal needs (Paprachha, Sajjad & Sultan, 2012)

1.4 Key Statistics related to Recidivism in Pakistan compared with India and Bangladesh

Disparities in recidivism rates across Pakistan, India and Bangladesh are notable because of the current societal structures, economic conditions and the efficacy of rehabilitation programs in all three countries. However, unfortunately, Pakistan has a much higher recidivism rate, estimated to be very high. Many factors such as lack of effective rehabilitation, poor prison conditions and limited post-release support are to be credited for higher recidivism rates in Pakistan (Siddiqui, 2020). Pakistan, instead of focusing on rehabilitation, has focused on reincarceration resulting in overcrowding of prisons by 152.2% mostly due to the return of ex-convicts who could not make ends meet post-release and ended up committing the crime again (Tahir, 2024).

Whereas, recidivism rate in India is comparatively lower than Pakistan and is estimated to be 15-20% due to extensive rehabilitation programs and investment on education and vocational training inside the prisons (National Crime Records Bureau, 2022). India has focused on parole and community-based prison programs which successfully reintegrate ex-offenders into the society. NGOs in India play a pivotal role in supporting these initiatives,

However, recidivism in Bangladesh tends to be around 40-50%. With the rehabilitation programs in place, the effectiveness of those programs in reducing recidivism varies significantly. Issues like overcrowding, lack of adequate resources for effective rehabilitation and insufficient training for prison staff are some of the issues that result in recidivism, (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2022).

With these comparisons, it is safe to say that India has the most effective rehabilitation programs, explaining why its recidivism rates are decreasing. On the other hand, Pakistan and Bangladesh face substantial challenges that make it difficult for them to lower their rates of recidivism. To address these problems, these countries' criminal justice systems must undergo extensive change that prioritizes reintegration and rehabilitation over punishment (2022).

Amidst high rates of recidivism in Pakistan, the judicial and legislative response is not in any way proportional with the urgent need to reduce crime via the introduction of reentry programs. Additionally, it is worth noting that most of the studies carried out in Pakistan are more concerned with the prisons and not prisoners, hence, leaving a huge literature gap and dire need of studies on various aspects of rehabilitation process to avoid criminality from spreading (Memon et al., 2022).

A substantial figure of individuals exits Pakistani prisons annually, reintegrating into their families and communities. While a limited few successfully reintegrate, the majority find themselves committing new offenses, leading to re-incarceration. The deficiency in rehabilitation programs within Pakistani correctional institutions stands out as a primary factor contributing to recidivism (Anwar, 2015). Consequently, a significant portion of ex-

offenders from lower-class backgrounds resort to re-offending as a means of survival. This circumstance is reflected in Pakistan ranking fifth on the global list of nations with the highest recidivism rates in 2020, as reported by the World Population Review (Shuja, 2022).

1.5 Women as Prisoners in Pakistan

Women's prison conditions are generally considered to be somewhat better in comparison to those for men. Female prisoners are typically housed in designated prisons or sections within 12 different facilities. They are exclusively supervised and searched by female staff members. Unlike male prisoners, female prisoners are subject to less stringent security measures, such as the limited use of handcuffs, which are reserved for significant security incidents, and the complete absence of shackles. In terms of accommodations, female prisoners typically have beds constructed from woven webbing or hemp, stretched over a wooden frame with four legs.

However, female prisoners in Pakistan face numerous challenges in their daily lives, not limited to, inadequate medical care, and emotional discomfort leading to many psychological issues. These factors have impacted female convicts on emotional, psychological and physical level and also hindered their effective rehabilitation and successful reintegration into society upon release. (Islam, Farooq, & Mahmood, 2019).

1.6 Problem Statement

The aim of this qualitative study is to determine factors that contribute to recidivism among female prisoners in Adiala Jail, Pakistan. This study also aims to explore the impact of

rehabilitation on female prisoners in Adiala Jail. Exploring these factors is necessary to improve the current rehabilitation interventions provided to female prisoners in Adiala Jail. Providing a proper environment for the prisoners' habitation and modifying their behavior accordingly so that they can return to their communities with positive behaviors are repeated challenges and this can be possible only via rehabilitation ((Ahmed et al., 2022) Moreover, there is a dire need to study the crucial literature gap on the factors contributing to recidivism and impact of rehabilitation on recidivism among female prisoners specifically in context of Adiala Jail, Pakistan. Additionally, Pakistan aims to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve a sustainable future and a fairer society for all. However, even though the roadmap of SDGs is to uplift marginalized communities, a particular portion of Pakistan's marginalized population has been neglected in this Vision so far: the prisoners (Human Rights Watch, 2023). In particular, female prisoners face many issues such as ineffective rehabilitation, absence of timely justice and lack of legal assistance which violate the SGD goal 16 (Zafar, 2023). Therefore, is important to study how rehabilitation plays a role in impacting recidivism and making female individuals a reformed part of community post-release. Moreover, there is a dire need to study the crucial literature gap on the factors contributing to recidivism in Pakistan (Gul, 2018). Additionally, it is important to study the impact of rehabilitation on recidivism among female prisoners specifically in context of Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi which currently houses more than 7000 prisoners against its official capacity of 2200 (Amnesty International, 2021). Hence, by studying factors that lead to female recidivism and how rehabilitation impacts in reducing factors that lead to recidivism, we can come up with a way forward towards reducing recidivism to promote a peaceful and justful society.

1.7 Research Aim

This research is an attempt to investigate the impact of the rehabilitation programs on the recidivism rates among female prisoners of Adiala Jail. This study seeks to investigate the factors which contribute towards recidivism among female prisoners and assess the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programs provided in the premises of Adiala Jail and how they impact the factors that lead to recidivism. Understanding these dynamics is essential for developing more operative policies to support the re-integration of female prisoners into society and reduce the recidivism rates.

1.8 Research Objectives

The primary objectives in this study are mentioned as below:

1. To explore the factors that contribute towards the recidivism patterns among the female prisoners in Adiala Jail.
2. To explore the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programs being offered in the Adiala Jail.

1.9 Research Questions

To achieve the above objectives, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the primary factors contributing to recidivism among female prisoners in Adiala Jail?

2. How does rehabilitation programs impact the recidivism among female prisoners in Adiala Jail?

1.10 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework produced below depicts the direction of this study. This framework focuses on the challenges and obstacles that female prisoners in Adiala Jail, have when trying to participate in effective rehabilitation programs, and the subsequent impact on recidivism rates. The study investigates the factors that prevent effective rehabilitation and reintegration, including lack of program availability, poor quality of existing programs, and structural problems with the criminal justice and social systems. The framework calls for advancements in rehabilitation techniques, strengthening prison staff's ability, regulating rehabilitation initiatives, and safeguarding and empowering female prisoners. Raising awareness about these issues among the policymakers and general public is important to achieve these justice needs.

The flow-diagram, Figure 1.1, illustrates the relationships between the theoretical framework, the contributing factors towards recidivism, deeming rehabilitation ineffective, and its impact on recidivism rates among the female prisoners.

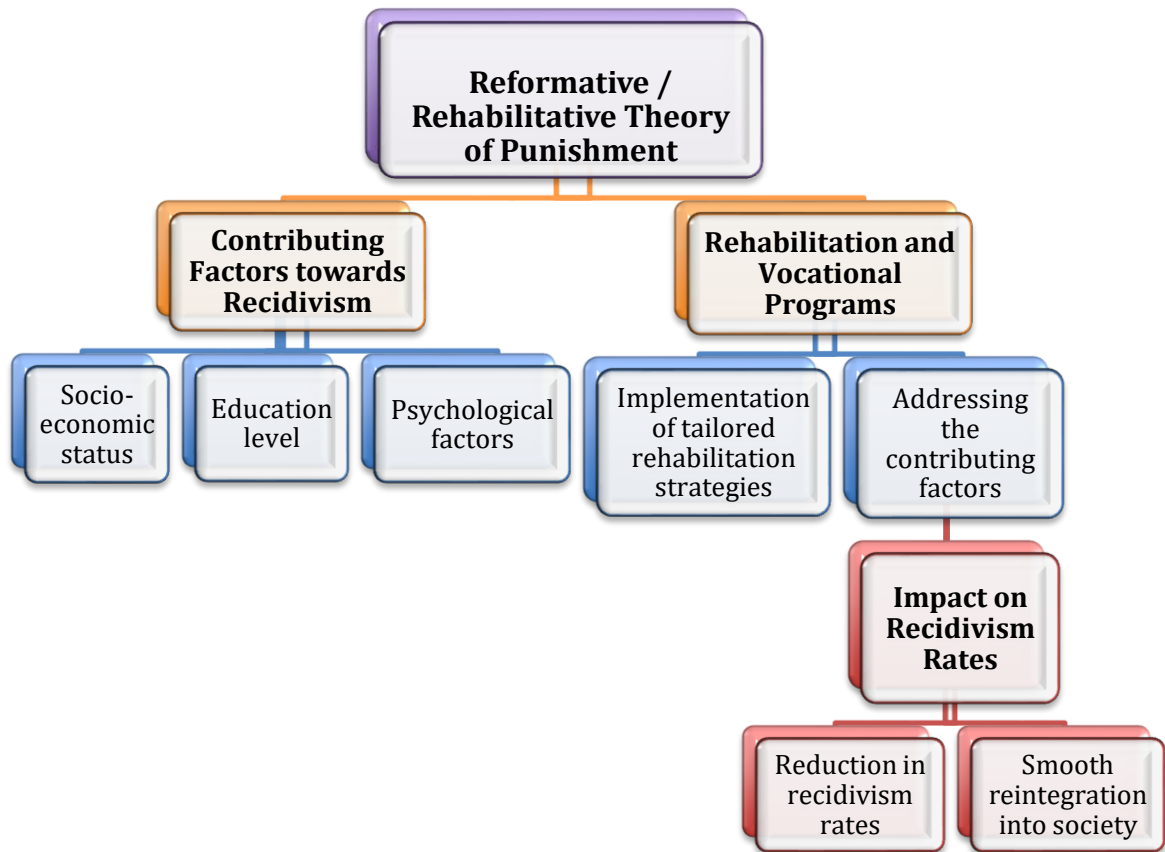


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework- author's creation

1.11 Linking to SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 Goals and 139 targets on a global agenda to provide the nations with the frameworks to achieve sustainable development in the social, economic, and environmental dimensions (Kusuma & Babu, 2017). SDGs took the place of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were in effect for 15 years. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) provide development frameworks and were successful in advancing various fields. Nevertheless, less developed

nations were unable to effectively adopt this advancement, and several objectives were not achieved (UN, 2014).

Goal 16 is to develop inclusive, responsible, and productive institutions at all levels of government while also fostering peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. One of its main goals is to drastically lower the global death toll from all types of violence and related causes (Target 16.1), as well as to advance the rule of law both domestically and internationally and guarantee that everyone has equal access to the legal system (Target 16.3).

Comprehensive rehabilitation programs have the potential to dramatically lower female prisoners' recidivism rates. Reducing recidivism is in line with the objectives of encouraging peaceful communities and lowering crime rates by improving community safety. To cease the cycle of crime and make the community more stable and peaceful, formerly incarcerated individuals need to reintegrate into society and become valuable members of it successfully. For prisoners to reintegrate into society upon release, rehabilitation programs often incorporate elements like legal schooling, vocational education and psychological support. Rehabilitation programs not only lower the chance of reoffending and equip ex-offenders with the means to reintegrate into society, but also uphold the rule of law and prevent recidivism. Therefore, equal access to justice and maintaining the rule of law are objectives that ensure equitable access to these rehabilitation services.

The study on the impact of rehabilitation on recidivism among female prisoners in Adiala Jail directly supports SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. It emphasizes how

crucial comprehensive rehabilitation programs are for maintaining equal access to justice, fostering the rule of law, and lowering crime rates. The study emphasizes the vital role that inclusive and effective institutions play in attaining sustainable development by showing how these programs promote peaceful and inclusive societies.



Figure 1.4 UN SDG 16 (UN, 2022)

Figure 1.2 UN Sustainable Goals Wheel (UNESCO, 2024)

1.12 Organization of the Thesis

This study is organized as follows. The ongoing Chapter 1 discusses the problem of rehabilitation in Adiala jail and prevalence of recidivism among prisoners. Moreover, this division will also be including a brief rationale of the study along with theoretical and conceptual framework, aim and objectives, and research questions for this study. Followed by Chapter 2 which underlines the existing literature on recidivism, its culture in Pakistan and the impact of rehabilitation on recidivism among female prisoners in Adiala Jail.

Furthermore, Chapter 3 includes a comprehensive profile of the research area from where the data was collected, coupled with research methodology that has been used to collect data along with the research limitations and ethical considerations. In Chapter 4, data collection has been analyzed using thematic analysis. Finally, chapter 5 marks the conclusion of the entire study where a link has been developed between recidivism and rehabilitation, how both affect one another and what steps, including the improvement of existing gaps at societal and institutional levels, can be taken to improve rehabilitation in a way that it reduces the chances of recidivism among female prisoners of Adiala Jail, Pakistan.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW / THEORITICAL BACKGROUND

The purpose and aim of the current study are to identify and explore additional factors which are directly and indirectly responsible for increasing rates of recidivism using a qualitative method. Moreover, using a qualitative method of research may provide a deeper and more rigorous understanding of the causes involved in recidivism. In the current chapter, the previous literature findings were also discussed, which demonstrated that increased recidivism is due various psychosocial factors.

2.1 Recidivism Among Female Prisoners

Despite women representing only a minority of criminal justice populations, there is a steady rise in the number of women convicted of crimes (Heilbrun et al., 2008; Walmsley, 2015). Mainly, crimes arise due to economic resources deprivation, illiteracy, marital breakdowns, and betrayal by partners (Islam et al., 2019) Research in Pakistan on female criminality also shows that lower class in Pakistani society suffers from extreme poverty, illiteracy and lawlessness which is the main cause of high crime rate among poor women (Ferdoos & Hafeez, 2016).

2.1.1 Factors Contributing to Recidivism Among Female Prisoners

There are many factors which contribute to recidivism among female prisoners in Pakistan and some of them under the light of literature are highlighted below.

2.1.1.1 Psychological Health

It is worth mentioning here that in Pakistan, early marriage and lack of decision-making power on reproduction can lead to mental and physical challenges in females (Lebni et al., 2023). These challenges lead to negative coping mechanisms which include committing crimes. Many female offenders commonly experience psychological issues such as depression and anxiety, often originating from prior trauma and victimization in their lives (McIvor, 2008; Brennan et al., 2012; Blanchetter and Brown, 2007; Van Voorish et al., 2010; Salisbury and Van Voorhis, 2009). Many studies have confirmed that unaddressed depressive disorders among females are associated with crimes (Fazel et al., 2015).

Additionally, low self-esteem and a lack of confidence are also frequently reported among female offenders (Belknap & Holsinger, 2006; Blanchetter & Brown, 2007). Significant challenges to secure employment have been found to be caused by the psychological health problems, according to studies on female prisoners in various researches. (Opsal & Foley, 2013; Leverntz, 2006; Huebner et al., 2010).

More useful studies have been found to focus on a specific segment of prison population such as [Khan et al. \(2012\)](#) who study psychological depression among female prisoners in Peshawar noted that the health and quality of life of female prisoners in Pakistan is severely neglected, with overcrowding being a major issue. At the time of the study, there were 97 prisons with a capacity of 41,873 but a population of 92,013. Conditions are deplorable, with inadequate sleeping arrangements, sanitation, food, and medical facilities, particularly for women and children. Mental health care is virtually non-existent, with a study revealing a 59.4% incidence of depression in the Central Prison in Peshawar. Factors contributing to

depression include overcrowded living conditions, lack of healthcare, smoking, number of children, and urban locality. Middle-aged, married women with low socio-economic status are at higher risk. Future studies should address limitations such as sample size and medical history to better understand depression risk factors among prisoners.

Bilal and Saeed (2011, pp. 6–7) noted a significantly high psychiatric morbidity rate (62.50%) among female prisoners in Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi, consistent with other international studies. The disorders identified included depressive illnesses (19.5%), anxiety-related disorders (10.2%), stress-related disorders (13.3%), and somatoform and psychotic disorders. The majority of prisoners with mental illnesses were not receiving treatment at the time of their arrest.

2.1.1.2 Education and Employment

Links to offending has been associated with low level of education and broader problems at school (Morrison et al., 2018). Lower levels of educational attainment often result in limited employment opportunities which are often faced by females released from prison.

Furthermore, financial pressures can heighten the likelihood of repeating offenses (Opsal and Foley, 2013; Spjeldnes et al., 2009). In Pakistan, economic hardship led women to commit crimes like drug-trafficking and that 92% of the female in prison had committed drug-related offenses due to socioeconomic hardships like illiteracy, poor socioeconomic backgrounds and lack of employment among husbands and themselves (Baloch, 2014). Financial instability is another factor which can increase the likelihood of re-offending (Opsal & Foley, 2013; Boober et al., 2011). Since most female inmates come from lower backgrounds, having limited vocational skills and employment histories, they are more

likely to experience greater hurdles in obtaining sustainable employment and housing in comparison to male parolees (Couloute, 2018).

2.1.2.1 Family dysfunction

Female offenders frequently have dysfunctional families of origin. dysfunctional families often encounter multiple social issues, such as family violence, alcoholism, sexual and substance abuse, etc. all of which can contribute to delinquent behavior to a great extent (Best, Ioane, & Lambie, 2021). Familial conflicts, negative emotional environments, crime and alcoholism within the family, particularly of parents, lack of parental attentions towards to children, and insufficient engagement in children's daily lives can contribute to deviant behavior in children. Notably, such families often exhibit involvement in parental crime, marital conflict and abuse, substance and alcohol abuse, and neglect of children (Belknap, 2007; Giordano et al., 2006). These childhood experiences leave lasting impact of trauma and emotional dysregulation which often leads to chronic anger (citation) and 'Criminal learning, which is also a resulting outcome (Giordano et al., 2006). According to Chaudhary & Dutt (2022), family dynamics in Pakistan are power differential in which women hold a place of subordination and economic dependence on male family members (e.g., father, husband, or brother) by performing unpaid labor for them. The family dynamics where women are economically dependent and patriarchal system are the prevalent, force women to commit crimes (Islam et al., 2019).

By examining the previous researches, it can be established that a huge variety of factors are directly and indirectly responsible for high-risk recidivism. For instance, the dysfunctional family dynamics often encounter multiple social issues, such as family

violence, alcoholism, sexual and substance abuse, etc. all of which can contribute to criminal offense to escape the cycle of abuse (Subotin & Odalovik, 2016, pp. 43-55). Qualitative researchers have examined the problem of recidivism through an in-depth exploration of the causes and experiences of prisoners inside and outside of prison which were hardly previously found in other researches. By discovering new themes and providing treatment to handle these issues is still in need as the rate of recidivism is still increasing.

2.1.2.2 Childhood Victimization

In a study by Carranza (2018) it was found that physical and sexual abuse are predictors of future female offending. They further mentioned that society hardly mentions women's violence, and while sentencing a woman, courts do not take into account her pathway to criminality. Studies show that while most of the crimes committed by women are not violent offenses, their crimes are mostly determined by the history of physically abused committed crimes of assault. The trauma that these women endured from the abuse has caused them to rebel against the society. Similarly, Sharpe (2012) concluded that that a large number of female offenders have endured sexual and/or physical abuse during childhood or adolescence. Such victimization has been linked with negative behavioral and psychological consequences such as substance abuse and mental illness (Brennan et al., 2012; Wattanaporn, 2014). These factors can give rise to criminal behavior, typically involving females using drugs and alcohol as coping mechanisms to escape abuse and hence resort to committing theft to sustain their substance use (Sharpe, 2012; Giordano et al., 2006).

2.1.2.3 Abusive Partner Relationships

Female prisoners are frequently entangled in abusive relationships that are characterized with violence and emotional dominance and control exerted by their partners (McIvor, 2008). Several studies have highlighted abusive relationships, particularly when the partner is involved in criminal behavior, are directly linked with women's own offending (King & Gibbs, 2002; Giordano et al., 2006). Brennan et al.'s (2012) study revealed that dysfunctional intimate relationships undermined women's independence, leading to depression, anxiety, substance abuse and increased vulnerability to victimization in adulthood. Female offenders are also more inclined than male offenders to commit crimes to maintain a relationship with a partner who is actively engaged in crimes (Barry, 2007).

Mushtaq and Yasin (2021) identifies the sociocultural factors contributing to female prisoners' recidivism and the impact of incarceration on their well-being. According to reports, it indicates that most female prisoners come from low-income backgrounds and rely on their male family members financially. These women face challenges such as domestic violence, power dynamics, marital incompatibility, and boyfriend deception. Furthermore, many have limited literacy skills and as a result of their extramarital affairs, most female prisoners have murdered their spouses. These are considered the main reasons behind the crimes committed by female prisoners. It was also demonstrated that women involved in drug and human trafficking and robbery had a criminal history. They are usually unafraid due to their family's support.

2.1.2.4 Parenting Difficulties

Studies often highlight the difficulties of parenting linked to females re-offending. Common stressors such as strains and emotional distress of losing custody of children or striving to maintain or regain custody (Opsal & Foley, 2013; Shechon & Flynn, 2007; Huebner et al., 2010) appear to reduce women's likelihood of desistance (Opsal & Foley, 2013). Children are affected due to the mothers' imprisonment because majority of aboriginal women are mothers (Carter, et al 2022). However, according to Rule 326 of Pakistan Prison Rules, 1978, female prisoners are allowed to keep their children with them till they reach the age of six years (Rani et al., 2022).

2.1.2.5 Accommodation

Post-release, women face many challenges in securing appropriate housing, especially when they also have dependent children (McPherson, 2007; Opsal & Foley, 2012). This particular factor can increase the chance of them going back to unsafe living situations, such as residing with abusive partners and in similar conditions where they learnt criminality. The neighborhood environment also influences the likelihood of re-offending to the degree where it promotes the development of antisocial relationships (Huebner et al., 2010)

All in all, there are various characteristics associated with female prisoners hence the rehabilitation personnel should take into account such factors when designing correctional gender-responsive programs and services.

2.1.3 Substance Abuse

2.1.3.1 Drugs and alcohol

Among many women, substance abuse is typically a gateway to crime (Sharpe, 2012; King & Gibbs, 2012; Brennan et al., 2012; Blanchette & Brown, 2007; Severson et al., 2012). As a coping mechanism, women often turn to substance abuse to endure neglect and abuse (Sharpe, 2012). Female offenders often commit crimes to finance their drug addiction, which are at times initiated and exacerbated by male partners (McIvor, 2008; Barry, 2007). Recidivism can be more likely due to substance abuse as it limits employment opportunities, maintaining familial relationships or receiving social support. (Huebner et al., 2010; Cobbina, 2010).

2.1.4 Socioeconomic Factors and Crime

Many researchers contend that the social factor for recidivism can stem from individuals returning to their community when they are not adequately prepared and or reintegrated to a community that is hinders their success. It has been noted that increased rate of poverty and economic inequality is the major cause of women's crime in Pakistan. Research also shows that lower class in Pakistani society suffers from extreme poverty, illiteracy and lawlessness which is the main cause of high crime rate among poor women (Ferdoos & Hafeez, 2016). A qualitative study conducted on factors contributing to female criminality explained that change in social aspects, such as economic conditions, illiteracy, are major contributors to crime among females (Saeed et al., 2018). The exploratory study conducted in the women's prisons of Sindh province found that female prisoners were involved in a range of criminal activities, including kidnapping, murder, and other offenses (Baloch, 2013). This highlights the need for a deeper understanding of the factors that lead women to engage in recidivism in the first place, as well as the effectiveness of the current rehabilitation interventions.

2.2 Prison Conditions

Adiala Jail, located in Pakistan, serves as the focal point of this study. A comprehensive overview includes its geographical location, capacity, and the challenges posed by overpopulation and diverse inmate types (Adiala Jail Annual Report, 2022). Additionally, an exploration of Pakistan's criminal justice system sheds light on the broader institutional challenges influencing the rehabilitation of prisoners (Pakistan Ministry of Justice, 2017).

2.2.1 Adiala Jail overview: location, capacity, overpopulation, inmate types

Adiala Jail, officially known as Central Jail Rawalpindi, is a significant correctional facility situated in Rawalpindi, Punjab, Pakistan. Managed by the Government of Punjab, Pakistan, the jail falls under the security classification of Maximum. It was opened in 1986 and is currently directed by Arshad Ullah Warraich, Senior Superintendent of Jail (Central Jail Rawalpindi, 2023).

In 2022, many of 91 jails in Pakistan were more than 100% over capacity hence making Pakistan one of the world's most overcrowded prison systems in the world. Where overcrowding has worsened existing health deficiencies among the Prisoners, many prisoners are vulnerable to transmittable diseases such as HIV, AIDs, STIs, and have very little access to medicine and treatment even for basic health needs. These conditions were explicitly deteriorated due to the outbreak of Covid-19 in 2020 and then the mid 2023 floods that impacted several areas in Sindh (Human Rights Watch, 2023).

Prisons in Pakistan are severely overcrowded, rendering rehabilitation complicated. It grapples with numerous challenges affecting its operation and the well-being of its

prisoners. Overcrowding in prisons as highlighted by (Gul, 2018), leads to various issues that include but are not limited to the spread of chronic diseases, inadequate hygiene, insufficient programmatic interventions (such as psychological support, education, vocational training, and religion), substandard food quality, prison riots, insufficient oversight mechanisms and inadequate categorization of prisoners based on their sex, age, and nature of the crime, etc. One of the major drawbacks of overcrowding is that female prisoners in Adiala Jail share prison cells due to lack of categorization and classification, they also end up sharing ideas and thoughts on how to commit other crimes (Jabeen, 2022). Reports reveal instances of torture, ranging from physical beatings to solitary confinement, in clear violation of Rule 44 of the Mandela Rules, which have been ratified by Pakistan (National Commission for Human Rights Pakistan [NCHR Pakistan], 2022). International standards recommend around 50 offenders per officer at most (Huma et al., 2024). The issue of overcrowding can be attributed to the fact that 73% of prisoners being held in prisons of Pakistan, including Adiala Jail, are awaiting verdicts in their cases. During the second half of 2023, the total number of pending cases showed an increase by 3.9%, reaching a staggering 2.26 million cases (Iqbal, 2022).

2.2.2 Unhygienic Conditions in Prisons of Pakistan

Another study done by Gorar and Zulfikar (2010) notes that prevalence of hepatitis C among the prison population in Pakistan is high. The study highlights the high prevalence of Hepatitis C among prisoners in Pakistan, significantly higher (12.8%) than the general population (4.9%). North Sindh jails, especially Jacobabad (16.7%) and Shikarpur (15.8%), exhibit the highest rates. Factors include drug abuse, needle sharing, poor hygiene, and unsafe medical practices both before and during incarceration. District Jail Malir has the

highest rates of both Hepatitis C (15.4%) and HIV (2.8%) due to a concentration of injection drug users. Despite being lower than in developed countries, these figures are alarming and indicate a potential for further spread in the community.

2.3 Recidivism and Rehabilitation in Pakistan

More than 400,000 correctional officers are currently working in local, state, and federal detention facilities across the country. Every day, these professionals exhibit the strength of character, mental sharpness, and teamwork required to safely manage over 2.2 million incarcerated individuals (National Academy for Prisons Administration, 2022). According to a survey conducted by the World Population Review, Pakistan held the fifth position among nations with the highest recidivism rates in 2020 (Shuja, 2022). These ranking underscores the significance of exploring the factors contributing to recidivism within our country's criminal justice system.

Pakistan faces a concerning trend of escalating crime rates, marked by a disquieting phenomenon – a notable number of ex-convicts engaging in criminal activities anew upon release, often without a clear understanding of the antecedents of their recidivism or the psychological consequences involved. The study endeavors to contribute valuable insights that can inform targeted interventions and policies aimed at mitigating the recurrence of criminal behavior and fostering rehabilitation in the Pakistani context.

2.3.1 Rehabilitation in Prisons of Pakistan

According to the Ministry of Human Rights, Government of Pakistan (2023), a committee report observes that vocational training programs are accessible for female prisoners in

majority of the provinces in Pakistan. Additionally, provision of mental health services to female prisoners are provided by female psychologists in prison. It can be proven via previous studies such as a meta-analysis study which found that inmates who participate in correctional education programs have 43% lower odds of recidivating, translating to 13%-point reduction in recidivism risk compared to non-participants (Davis et al., 2013). However, the report indicates the necessity for expanded psycho-social services, specifically counselling for victims of drug abuse, sexual abuse and violence. According to Artz et al. (2013), female prisoners desired to be offered education on business development, financial management, carpentry, photography, interior designing, catering, car mechanics and bookkeeping in jails. This supports the idea of vocational services to be provided at jails.

2.3.1.1 Lack of Effective Rehabilitation Leads to Recidivism Among Female Prisoners

In Pakistan, women in prisons face numerous psychological challenges due to ineffective rehabilitation. Women live in poor condition due to overcrowding and under resourced prisons. These conditions further deteriorate mental health hence making rehabilitation ineffective (Watch, 2020). For rehabilitation to be effective, it is pertinent that the environment in which rehabilitation is to be provided must have a safe and sound effect on mind.

Moreover, female prisoners in Pakistan's criminal justice system are exposed to mistreatment, physical and psychological abuse and sexual assault. As a result of their

experiences inside the prison, many women struggle with mental health issues like depression and PTSD (Alam, 2018). Another study found that women have easy accessibility to drugs in jail and hence acquire substance misuse disorders, making it difficult post-release to reintegrate into society and hence, resulting in recidivism (Afzal, Zaheer, Maqsood, Arshad, & Mahmood, 2020).

2.3.2 *Punishment or Rehabilitation?*

Rais Gul (2018) notes that the prison system in Pakistan focuses on several prevailing issues in jails, including but not limited to overcrowding, instances of mental and physical abuse, lack of rehabilitation and inadequate training among staff. While the study offers a sound theoretical assessment, it lacks empirical data to support its main hypothesis. Akbar and Bhutta (2012) in their comparative analysis study of prison systems in India and Pakistan noted that the state of prisons reflects the civilization of society hence a crucial component of the criminal justice system. The worsening conditions of prisons, including overcrowding, poor accommodation, lack of medical facilities, inadequate security, and insufficient market-oriented jail industries, contribute to the low self-esteem and degradation of prisoners. The inadequacies in the judicial process, such as poor conviction rates, lengthy trials, and delays in awarding jail remissions, further complicate the situation. This grim scenario hampers the rehabilitative and reformatory processes for prisoners. Community-based rehabilitation methods like probation and parole are underutilized in India and Pakistan's criminal justice systems. There is a pressing need to enhance the professional capacity of prison managers and administrators, training them according to global criminal justice paradigms. A comprehensive study involving criminologists, sociologists, psychologists, criminal justice practitioners, and other stakeholders is

necessary to understand and improve the prison systems in India and Pakistan. The study should lead to a redefinition of the roles of prisons and the criminal justice system based on the findings

2.3.3 Analysis of Recidivism Rates in Pakistan over the Years

Amidst the multitude of theories addressing crime and criminal behavior, recidivism stands out as a paramount subject in contemporary criminology (Bernard & Engel, 2001). This phenomenon not only poses a significant challenge to the criminal justice system but also underscores the need for comprehensive understanding and effective interventions in addressing repeat criminal behavior.

In 2011, the Committee for the Welfare of Prisoners – Legal Aid Office located in Sindh conducted a study on mental health. It aimed to gather foundational data on the mental health needs of women in the Karachi Women’s Prison, utilizing a sample of 140 incarcerated women. Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview (MINI) was utilized to evaluate their mental well-being and was revealed that a significant majority of women exhibited symptoms of various mental health disorders. Suicidality, panic disorders, post-traumatic stress disorders, generalized anxiety disorders and major depressive episodes were among the most common disorders reported. The study highlighted a substantial but frequently overlooked issue. The research recommended the necessity of consistent mental health service providers in prisons, raising awareness about mental concerns within and beyond prisons, and adequate training of prison staff in mental health and suicide prevention

The examination of recidivism rates in Pakistan over an extended period is crucial for understanding the evolving dynamics of criminal reoffending within the country. This in-depth analysis aims to scrutinize historical trends, identify contributing factors, and assess the effectiveness of interventions implemented over the years.

2.4 Comparative Analysis of Rehabilitation Programs

Implementation of support, supervision and rehabilitation programs can be used to decrease recidivism. However, the efficacy of these programs is largely dependent on how well the personnel delivering them adhere to evidence-based practices and requirements. Due to the majority of studies conducted on men, this research emphasizes how these programs relate to women.

2.4.1 Rehabilitation Programs in Other Countries (e.g., India)

In a study investigating rehabilitation programs in prisons in India, Suman et al. (2023) found that rehabilitation programs are effective in decreasing recidivism among offenders. This study indicated that offenders who participated in treatments for substance addiction, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), educational and vocational training programs have a decreased likelihood to reoffend comparatively those who do not engage in them. Reduction in recidivism rates can also be seen in programs that focus on providing mental health treatments and acquisition of life skills. Variables such as program quality, duration of offender participation, and level of support provided after release can influence the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs. Furthermore, some offenders may not be

receptive to these rehabilitation programs or may have underlying issues that necessitate more intensive therapy.

2.4.2 Biasness in Rehabilitation of Male and Female Prisoners in Pakistan

A report by Justice Project Pakistan (JPP) noted that male prisoners in Balochistan have rehabilitation programs entailing shoe-making and sewing, while female prisoners have no means of earning. Hence, based on the Bangkok Rules, there is a strong need to facilitate the reintegration of female prisoners back into the community to stop recidivism (Afzal, 2023).

2.5 Impact of Social Stigma on Rehabilitation and Recidivism

Social stigma occurs when society labels and deprecate individuals based on their status or social circumstances, casting them in negative light. Shuja, Kanwar Hamza & Abbas, Jaffar. (2022) investigate the various factors leading to recidivism among ex-convicts. Their qualitative study revealed that the social stigma, negative labeling, and discrimination are significant contributors to recidivism. The reactions from society often make ex-convicts feel isolated and frustrated, pushing them back into reoffending. The study highlights that in collectivist cultures, such as those in Asia, societal relationships and group identity play a crucial role, with crimes perceived as offenses against the entire group, leading to social ostracization. The study employed a snowball sampling technique, allowing for a diverse and willing participant pool, and incorporated inter-rater reliability to reduce researcher bias. Despite its exploratory nature and qualitative methodology, which limit generalizability, the research offers valuable insights and practical recommendations for future studies and interventions aimed at reducing recidivism. These

include developing scales to predict recidivism factors and creating rehabilitation programs that provide social and psychological support to ex-convicts. The unique cultural context of the study adds a new perspective to the existing body of knowledge on recidivism.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

Evaluating the risk of recidivism is an important concern for the criminal justice system, judiciary, correctional services, and society (Sjöstedt and Långström, 2001). Recidivism refers to the relapse into criminal behavior following a previous offence. In essence, recidivism involves two key components: (1) the commission of an offence and (2) by an individual who has previously committed at least one other offence (Harris et al., 2011).

The investigations into recidivism and the course of development of manageable interventions necessitate a big theoretical foundation that can illuminate the intricacies of the criminal behavior. This section delves into the theoretical framework shaping the research methodology and the analysis. Our study can better be understood by using Reformatory or Rehabilitative Theory of Punishment. This research aims to provide a deeper insight into the factors that cause ex-offenders females to reoffend or recidivate. Including Reformatory or Rehabilitative Theory of Punishment in our research is important to understand why female ex-offenders relapse into criminal activities. Moreover, this theory will also provide us with an examination to how rehabilitation can be made more effective for female prisoners.

This theoretical framework aims to offer significant perspectives behind the occurrence of criminal behavior and the identification of factors that contribute to female prisoners relapsing into criminal activities. Moreover, framework in this section will explain its

significance to the study's methodology and analytical approach, as we proceed to unveil the complex relationship between theoretical understanding and practical application in the realm of recidivism and rehabilitation.

2.6.1 Reformatory or Rehabilitative Theory of Punishment

Reformatory theory of punishment is one of the theories of punishments in criminology. Thom Brooks highlights that "punishment should teach the offenders a lesson." (Brooks, 2012, p. 52) The goal is also to "to restore a sentenced offender to a constructive place in the society through some combination of treatment, education, and training." (Clear & Cole, 2000, p, 513) Therefore, it is also called the educational or Rehabilitative Theory of Punishment (RTP). It aims to reform or educate and rehabilitate the offender by treating the crime as a disease which shall be cured. Cesare Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham promoted the idea of humane treatment of offenders and advocated for punishment to only be used as a means of preventing the future crimes (Yadav, 2021).

The Rehabilitative Theory of Punishment is also focused on ensuring that the guilty person does not engage in criminal conduct in future. It seeks to neutralise the very desire to commit crimes. The focus is on reforming the wrongdoer so that he does not want to commit crimes any longer while it seeks to influence the character of a person (Rai, 2010). This theory of punishment reforms the character of the criminal by punishing him or her. It also tries to educate the criminal by inflicting punishment. This theory subscribes to the prevalent norms of contemporary humanism. This theory tries to reform the character of the criminal by punishment. Thus, it punishes the criminal in order to reform him or her. For example, if a person has harassed another person, he or she will be punished so that he

or she may be reformed. So, by punishment, the character of the criminal is reformed. It tries to educate the criminal or say the offender by punishment. It hopes that when a criminal is punished, he or she will have the education that it is wrong to do such a crime. For example, if a person steals something, then the criminal will be punished so that he or she may be educated. Thus, the theory punishes the criminal to educate him or her.

In the Reformative or Rehabilitative Theory of Punishment, the focus is on the criminal and not on the crime. This theory treats the offending individual as a person who requires help in order to change his inclination towards criminal conduct. Thus, this theory considers the propensity to commit crimes as an affliction which can be treated. (Crime and Theories of Punishment, n.d.) Thus, the focus is on imposing such punishment which would bring about attitudinal and behavioural changes in the concerned individual. This is achieved through the educational components inherent in the punitive measures.

While there are relational similarities in the manifestations of reformative theory and deterrent theory, there are striking differences in their approach. In the deterrent theory of punishment, other than imprisonment, other forms of punishment such as whipping, death penalty, fine etc are also incorporated into the punitive scheme. However, in the reformative theory, the only form of permissible punishment is imprisonment or probation.

For punishment to have such curative effect, the reformative theory mandates a more hospitable prison environment. Provision for vocational or technical training of the offender during the period of imprisonment is essential to the idea of reform and rehabilitation (Reyna, 2024). Educational opportunities and appropriate psychological counselling, facility to maintain links with the family and the community during the period of

imprisonment are also considered as essential aspects of a rehabilitative approach towards punishment. Proponents of the reformatory theory denounce any mode of punishment which is degrading or which does not have a positive influence on the character of a person. Punishment is perceived as a medicinal instrument which is supposed to bring about a change in the personality and character of the offender (Karimullah, 2023). So reformatory or say the educational theory of punishment is a theory of punishment which tries to reform a criminal by punishment, which educated a criminal by imposing punishment upon him or her and not to mention has a humanistic subscription.

When this theory of punishment first arrived, it had a diametrically opposed view towards the deterrent theory of punishment and the retributive theory of punishment. It was especially enforced by the criminologists who did not want to treat the offenders as criminals but as patients. But gradually the theory developed and at the present time “there are two general ways of rehabilitation.” (Brooks, *ibid.*, p. 53) They are the deontological rehabilitation and the consequentialist rehabilitation. Deontological rehabilitation tries to rehabilitate criminals as it is the just thing to do. On the other hand, the consequentialist rehabilitation tries to rehabilitate criminals as everyone will get better off. Between these two prominent theories of rehabilitation, the majority of the advocates of rehabilitation are keen towards the latter one. In any case, the rehabilitation is achieved when the criminal understands that what he or she has done was wrong and deliberately chooses to refrain from doing those things again. But still, there are some who think that crime should be treated as a mental illness.

2.7 Overview of Qualitative Research in Prison Studies

Limited systematic review of qualitative research methods has been examined in prison-based studies. A review focused on standardized data collection methods for comparing cross-studies, found that the data collection processes were poorly reported in research involving violent offenders (Daniels, Angleman, & Grinnan, 2015). Due to this, this current research undertakes the deficiencies in that review by using this current research conducted on women's experiences with healthcare in prison (Abbott, Magin, Davison, & Hu, 2017). During this study, challenges of conducting thorough qualitative health research in this setting were considered, particularly regarding participant recruitment and data collection. There is also necessity for guidance on how qualitative researchers conduct research within the limitations and opportunities presented by the prison setting.

Studying individuals in prison setting necessitates thorough ethical consideration before commencing. However, prison prisoners retain the right to engage in research that could potentially benefit them and others, and qualitative research in this regard can provide significant value. For instance, the demand for health services research within correctional facilities are increased and the viewpoints of prison prisoners regarding their healthcare needs and services are crucial for such studies. Therefore, there is a necessity to provide a balance between the protection of prisoners and facilitating research participation (Coughlin, Lewis, & Smith, 2016). This balance can be more likely attained through thorough planning that acknowledges specific challenges in prison setting and identifies ways to address these challenges using appropriate research methodologies.

2.8 Literature Gap

The literature gap in studying female recidivism in Pakistan is a significant concern. Pakistani studies largely focus on the general prison conditions and systemic challenges when the global research increasingly addresses criminal the justice and prison reforms. However, there is a notable deficiency in research specifically examining the experiences and recidivism of female prisoners (Khalid & Khan, 2013; Memon et al., 2022).

Female prisoners face unique challenges, such as gender-specific pathways to crime, family responsibilities, and social stigma, which necessitate our research. The lack of such research in Pakistan hinders the development of effective, evidence-based interventions tailored to the needs of female prisoners, thereby perpetuating high recidivism rates (Bloom et al., 2003). Addressing this gap is crucial for developing policies that support the successful reintegration of female offenders and reduce recidivism, ultimately contributing to a more equitable criminal justice system in Pakistan.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter three outlines the research methodology that constructs this study. This chapter will look into the research design and methodology, necessary for understanding how the data collection was done, analysis was made and interpretation was built. It also aims to provide a vivid and systematic approach to conduct the research, making sure that the findings in this study are robust, reliable, and capable of contributing significantly to the ongoing discourse on impact of rehabilitation on recidivism among female inmates in Adiala jail, Pakistan. The detailed methodological framework in this chapter will set the groundwork for investigating impact of rehabilitation on recidivism among female inmates in Adiala Jail, Pakistan which is a pivotal aspect of this research.

3.1 Research Design

The criminal justice system in Pakistan comprises of four levels: The magisterial, session, high, and supreme courts. About 2% of Pakistan's total prison population consists of women (Raghavan, 2021). In Pakistan, crime rate is increasing steadily due to multiple factors, leading to capacity constraints and deteriorating conditions in prisons as number of prisoners increase. Very few separate jails are available for women as most prisons are joint prisons. However, separate cells for women have been established for confining female prisoners. The below information provides statistical figure of the female prisoners in Adiala Jail.

Table 3.1 Female Prisoners Statistics in Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi

Sr. No	Name of Jail	Females				Total No. of Female Prisoners
		UT	CT	UCCP	CP	
01	Central Jail Adiala, Rawalpindi	161	46	1	0	208

Source: Punjab Prisons, Government of Punjab (May 2024)

Note: UT: Under Trial, CT: Convicted Prisoners, UCCP: Under Criminal Code of Pakistan, CP: Condemned Prisoners

This study employs an exploratory research design using a qualitative research approach that relies on concepts from interpretive social science which lays its foundation on description and understanding of the “actual human interactions, meanings and processes that create the real-life organizational settings” (Gephart, 2004, p. 455). In qualitative research, the primary goal is to explore the social and cultural context of the study area. Therefore, data analysis takes place in natural circumstances. This type of research provides a wide margin of flexibility to help the researcher focus on data best suited for the study throughout the process (Tenny et al., 2022). Moreover, qualitative research integrates the development of research questions, determining the relevant research data, collection of identified data and writing of findings of collected data which involves describing patterns, themes, or categories that emerged from the data (Barroga & Matanguihan, 2022).

The need for qualitative research design is due to this study's requirements as we aim to create an in-depth analysis. A quantitative research design is insufficient to extract vital information because female inmates who have recidivated, as research respondents, do not find it easy to engage in quantitative analysis which is built on structured surveys or questionnaires with predetermined response options. Using such methods in this study can be restrictive and might not capture the complexity of the experiences, emotions, and circumstances related to impact of rehabilitation on recidivism among female inmates in Adiala Jail. Lastly, the research questions in the study are well suited for a qualitative approach for effective analysis.

3.2 Sampling and Sample Size

The respondents for this research study were sampled using a purposive sampling strategy. The reason for utilizing the purposive sampling is based on the idea that, given the aims and objectives of the research, specific kinds of people may have different and crucial views about the issues at question and thus require to be included in the sample (Campbell et al., 2020). The reason is to move away from any random form of sampling and gather essential information that other methods cannot obtain (Nyimbili & Nyimbili, 2024). The basis of purposive sampling was the researcher's intent to look at the field of study from the perspective of female inmates who have recidivated. Therefore, 14 female inmates who have recidivated were interviewed.

Furthermore, before data collection, the researcher intended to sample 30 female inmates who have recidivated. 10 respondents decided to opt out of the study and therefore, we were left with a sample of 20 respondents out of which 14 were selected as the remaining

6 participants were undertrial for recidivism. A sample of 14 was considered sufficient because it has formerly been endorsed that qualitative research requires a sample size of a minimum of 12 Respondents to reach saturation point (Braun, 2016; Fugard, 2015). However, the researcher reached a saturation point on a sample of 9 respondents. Even after reaching a saturation point, collecting data from few more respondents can be beneficial to reduce biases, enhance the validity of recognized themes, making them more robust and defensible when presenting or publishing the results (Leung, 2015).

Moreover, data was collected from respondents who had experienced recidivism and were given incarceration sentences longer and not less than 5 years, indicating they were likely involved in serious or repeated offenses. Female inmates under trial for recidivism were excluded due to ambiguity of incarceration sentences awarded. Inmates under the age of 14 and above the age of 50 were excluded due to ethical guidelines.

The breakdown of respondents’ interviews has been explained in the Annexure A.

The demographic and criminal information about the participants is shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Female Prisoners

Sr. No	Alias	Previous Occupation	Marital Status	1st crime	Time Spent Between 1st crime and Recidivism	2nd crime
1	NB	House wife	Married	Selling Narcotics	7 months	Selling Narcotics

2	SB	House help	Widow	Selling Narcotics	15 years	Terrorism against police
3	RB	Fashion Designer	Married	Selling Narcotics	3 years	Selling Narcotics
4	NW	Asst. Prof	Married	Cheque fraud	2 ½ months	Cheque fraud
5	YZG	House wife	Divorced	Selling Narcotics	3 years	Selling Narcotics
6	SA	House wife	Widow	Selling Narcotics	2 ½ months	Selling Narcotics
7	AA	House help	Married	Theft	2 ½ months	Sex Racket and Selling Narcotics
8	SB	House help	Married	Selling Narcotics	8 years	Selling Narcotics
9	SS	House help	M	Begging	8 months	Selling Narcotics
10	NJ	House help	M	Sex Racket	1 year	Selling Narcotics
11	SB	House help	M	Selling Narcotics	2 years	Selling Narcotics
12	SA	Housewife	M	Selling Narcotics	4 years	Selling Narcotics
13	RK	Midwife	M	Section 457 of PPC: 3m on bail	14 months	Selling Narcotics

14	IU	House Wife	M	Theft Begging	+	9 months	Selling Narcotics
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3.3 Data Collection

Interviews are the most commonly used data gathering technique in qualitative research. The research method employed for this study was in-depth semi-structured interviews. For this study, semi-structured interviews were utilized as they require the interviewer to have a pre-prepared list of questions and topics, which can be asked in various ways (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Through semi-structured interviews, the responsiveness of the interview can be increased by asking probing questions while keeping the interview on track, increasing the reliability and credibility of the data (Mashuri et al., 2022). The respondents of this research study were female inmates with recidivism; therefore, extracting information from a limited research method – for instance, a structured questionnaire or close-ended interviews – could not result in comprehensive and multidimensional results. In-depth interviews require using prompts to discover new insights from the answer presented by interviewee/s. A few researchers have explained the role of in-depth interviews by stating that their role is to capture people’s experiences “without imposing any a-priori categorization that may limit the field of investigation” (Politz, 2024). Therefore, an in-depth semi-structured interview allowed the researcher to gain insight into the female inmate’s perceptions about factors that lead to her recidivating, impact of rehabilitation programs on recidivism, while also focusing on the ways rehabilitation programs can be made effective to mitigate the chances of recidivism among female inmates of Adiala Jail.

Thus, fourteen in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with the respondents against six emerging themes identified from primary data. As research respondents, female inmates who have recidivated have not been exposed to this type of study often. Therefore, creating an atmosphere of trust was mandatory before getting into a formal research-related conversation. Interview data was collected in Urdu and English to comprehend the issue better. However, the interview responses are translated and quoted in the research study for the better understanding of the readers. The locale of this research study was Adiala Jail, Pakistan.

3.4 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is a research method which is used in identifying and interpreting the patterns or themes in a data set. This type of analysis often leads to new insights and understanding. However, researchers must be critically aware of not allowing their own perceptions and schemas to interfere with the identification of key themes (Naeem et al., 2023).

Thematic analysis is chosen primarily because it aligns well with the study's research objectives and exploratory aspect. The research explored factors that lead to recidivism and impact of rehabilitation on among female inmates who have recidivated. Also, the challenges to enforcing effective rehabilitation among female inmates who have recidivated were also brought forward and will be discussed in the results section. Thematic analysis was used to identify the main themes and patterns in the interview material. The data is organized into themes which allows researchers to understand the topic better and explore the complexities of the respondents' perspectives (Kallio et al., 2016).

Moreover, the difference between thematic analysis and other qualitative methods, like phenomenological analysis is that the former does not apply a specific theoretical framework or predetermined ideas to the data. Instead, the themes are allowed to arise naturally from the data while ensuring that the analysis is rooted in the respondents' perspectives and experiences (Wiltshire, 2021). In this study, thematic analysis was used to organize and evaluate data from 14 respondents.

The thematic analysis in qualitative research involves 6 steps of coding proposed by Braun and Clarke in 2006 are data collection, initial coding, finding themes, reviewing themes, naming themes, and writing the report (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Figure 3.2. explains the steps used in data collection and analysis by using Clarke and Braun's 6 steps of thematic analysis.

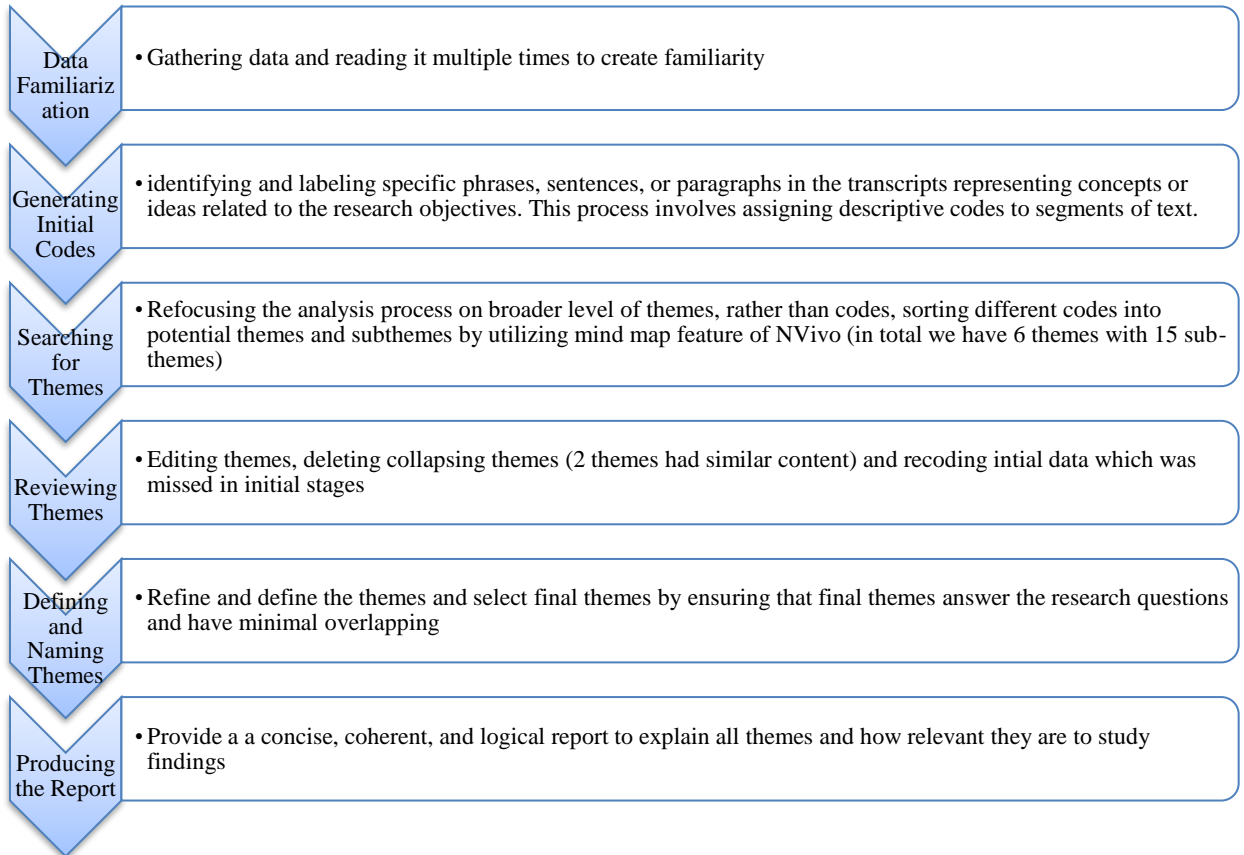


Figure 3.1 Thematic analysis created by using steps adapted from Braun and Clarke,

2006

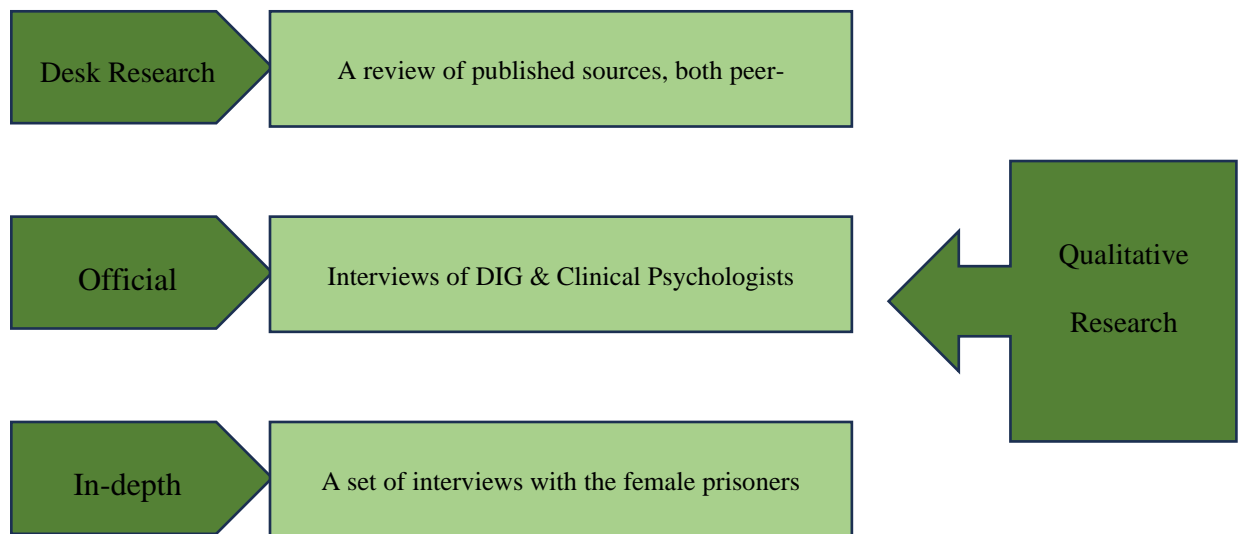


Figure 3.2 Qualitative Research Framework (author’s creation)

Moreover, we used Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) NVivo as a repository for storing the data, and all the coding was manually performed. The core function of NVivo is to act as a data management package, and not to analyze data but rather to assist the analysis process of which the researcher should always be in control of (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019). While NVivo is well-suited for mixed-methods of qualitative research, the presence of nodes in NVivo makes it more compatible with grounded theory and thematic analysis approaches by providing ‘a simple to work with structure’ for creating codes and discovering themes (Zamawe, 2015). Moreover, NVivo identifies and tags the co-occurrence of codes within the text and groups them in broad topic areas.

3.4.1 Summary of Data Collection and Analysis

Below illustrates visual representation of data collection method through sequential design:

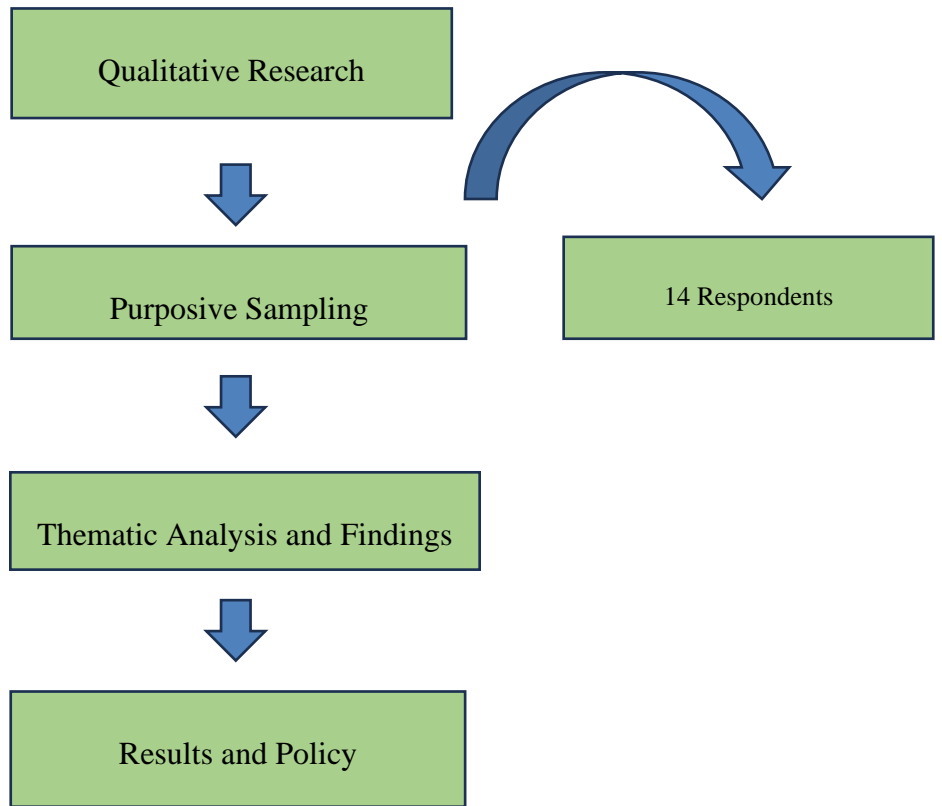


Figure 3.3 Summary of Data Collection & Analysis (author’s creation)

The codes, sub-themes and main themes identified are listed below in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Codes, Sub-themes and Main themes

S.No.	Codes	Sub-Themes	Main Themes
1.	Poverty	Economic Factors	Socioeconomic Hardships
	Financial necessity	Family Pressure	
	Lack of employment	Lack of education/Illiteracy	

2.	Delinquent Household	Normalization of crime	Family Dynamics
	Male dominance	Decision making power	
	Negative role models	Impact on Children	
3.	Inadequate prison facilities	Overcrowding	Ineffective Rehabilitation
	Outdated rehabilitation Programs	Reintegration Challenges	
	Barriers to Rehabilitation	Low Perceived Benefit	
	Inadequate deterrence	Inadequate Legal Consequences	
	Depression	Psychological and Emotional Factors	
4.	Peer Pressure	Drug-dealing	Criminal Network Influence
	Danger to One's Life	Forced to Sell Narcotics	
	Stigmatization	Lack of Acceptance	

3.5 Ethical Considerations

When conducting sensitive research such as exploring the impact of rehabilitation on recidivism among female inmates in Adiala Jail, ethical approval is an integral part of the study to ensure that the study is established on ethical standards and guidelines. In order to gain ethical approval, a detailed research proposal was submitted to the School of Social Sciences and Humanities (S3H) at National University of Science and Technology (NUST). The proposal involved a step-by-step outline of research: research objectives, methodology, potential risks and how confidentiality will be maintained. Additionally, another letter to allow the research being conducted was requested from the supervisor due to a special request from prison administration. Informed consent and information about the topic of research, the right to withdraw any time during interview without penalty, and how the data would be used and protected (pseudonyms used to protect participants' identities) was also added in the interview guide. The questioning was simple, and the language preferred for the conversation was Urdu in order to avoid any confusion for our respondents.

Ethical approval was also needed for data collection tools (interview questionnaire) due to the sensitivity of the topic. Not doing so could have raised questions about integrity of research and the confidentiality of participants, especially for research conducted in a prison setting. Following ethical considerations and standards not only ensure confidentiality of participants but also increase the credibility and acceptability of the research within the academic community and beyond. Moreover, the APA citation method, given by the Dissertation Handbook, was used to cite the work of every author/researcher who contributed in building literature for this study. This ensures transparency and honesty and eliminates any illegal proceedings.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter of the study will include a thorough research analysis of the data collected through interviews from the respondents under four main emerging themes and further sub-themes curated by the author. The discussion includes socio-economic, cultural and legal aspects that contribute to impact of rehabilitation on recidivism among female inmates in Adiala Jail, Pakistan. These results are significant in highlighting the prevailing challenges and shortcomings crucial for addressing this research topic.

4.1 Major Findings

Table 4.1: Themes and Major Findings

No.	Themes	Major Findings
1.	Socioeconomic Hardships	The theme of socioeconomic hardships is found to have a strong correlation with every other theme of the research study. Pre-existing illiteracy, not addressed in rehabilitation in Adiala Jail, leads to lack of good employment opportunities post-release which keeps the poverty and financial constraints unchanged. The family pressure to make ends meet paves a way to repeating the crime (recidivism) once again.

2. Family Dynamics This theme focuses on the need to change family dynamics of female inmates. Post-release, female inmates go back to their families which are most of the times also involved in criminal behaviour, hence leading to recidivism. Children also learn criminality by observing and modelling the behaviour of their mother and family members.

3. Ineffective Rehabilitation In this theme the focus is on ineffective rehabilitation which sheds light on the importance of deterrence, improved rehabilitation programs and creating proper classifications of prisoners instead of putting first time offenders with repeat offenders.

This theme also highlights the need to address the lack of mental health support to female inmates and managing drug addiction via rehabilitation in a way that post-release women can manage their emotions and stay away from drug abuse.

4. Criminal Network Influence In this theme, focus is on addressing the peer relations that female inmates have outside prison. Post-release ex-convicts are pulled into peer

groups which sell and abuse drugs. The criminal network influence ends up forcing an ex-convict towards recidivism.

4.1.1 Theme 1: Socioeconomic Hardships

Post-release socioeconomic hardships in Pakistan lead females to commit recidivism post-release which is not hard to believe with 39.4 percent of total population, in 2024, living below poverty line which is a five percentage-point increase since 2022 (Ahmed, 2024). This theme analysis highlights the never-ending cycle of poverty due to illiteracy which is not addressed in Adiala Jail to reduce recidivism among female inmates' post-release.

The first question response given by Respondent 1 was:

“Well, I have 7 kids and they are all young. My husband and I are illiterate and he alone cannot make the ends meet. Of course, someone had to step up to provide well for the family so I thought why not me.”

Respondent used the terms “*anpardh*” for herself and partner which translates as “illiterate”

Whereas, Respondent 3 answered the question as:

“I decided to repeat my crime because my daughter's cancer treatment took a lot of money from us and that left us nearly broke.”

These interviews indicate that post-release economic hardship created due to family pressure and financial constraints cause recidivism among female inmates in Adiala Jail. These responses also answer the research question one which explores the factors contributing to recidivism among female inmates in Adiala Jail: economic hardship is one of the major factors contributing to recidivism. Moreover, illiteracy and lack education of both partners add financial frustrations in a household leading to recidivism. A qualitative study conducted on factors contributing to female criminality explained that change in social aspects, such as economic conditions, illiteracy, are major contributors to crime among females (Saeed et al., 2018).

Respondent 1 further added to her statement by stating:

“No one wants to repeat crime after serving their time in the jail but at the same time greed is a curse especially when that greed is fulfilling the needs of your house. A lot of women over here commit crime again and again because they do not have any other means of earning. They live in poor conditions and the only way they can make the ends meet is by doing something which is a crime in the eyes of the law.”

She further stated:

“What you think is illegal in the eyes of law is the source of income for us.”

Similar trends female criminality was observed in a study conducted in Kot Lakhpat Jail, Lahore where 114 women were sampled and it was found that criminal activities among women were attributed to factors like poverty, revenge, anger and lack of empowerment. It also found that women who committed drug-related offenses, theft and prostitution belonged to economically disadvantaged backgrounds and were involved in such crimes to make ends meet. Most of these women were divorced, separated, widowed or single and sole breadwinners of the family (Khalid & Khan, 2013).

The fact that socioeconomic hardships lead to recidivism among female inmates of Adiala Jail can further be affirmed by the statement provided by Respondent 6:

“After I was released from prison the first time, I started selling cocaine. I did that to collect some money for my sister's dowry. In 1 1/2 month I collected more than 200,000 PKR and got my sister married.”

Respondent 6, a 22-year-old female, shared her perspective on socioeconomic hardships that she faced before her first offense which was five years ago. Her husband had passed away in 2016 and at the age of 15, without any qualification and employment, she had to provide for her two kids. She resorted to selling cocaine and after realizing how much money she had earned; she did not stop. The second time, she also sold cocaine because she had to pay for the dowry of her sister.

Respondent 10 shared the economic burden in following words,

“My first crime was being a sex racket for which I was imprisoned for 16 months and was bailed out by my handler. After that I had to work for my handler to pay off the debt. During that time, my brother eloped with a girl and brought her to my house which put extra burden on me.”

Respondent 13 stated,

“I am forced to repeat the crime due to my poor economic conditions”

In Pakistan, economic hardship led women to commit crimes like drug-trafficking and that 92% of the female in prison had committed drug-related offenses due to socioeconomic hardships like illiteracy, poor socioeconomic backgrounds and lack of employment among husbands and themselves (Baloch, 2014).

Respondent 9 shared the reason behind her recidivism in following words,

“I have to repeat crime because I am poor and do not have any other means of supporting my family. My husband is a drug abuser and he does not bring any money home so I have to make the ends meet by selling flowers and drugs. Even if I get out this time I will resort to recidivism because I do not have any other skill that I can use to provide for my family.”

The aim of this theme is to explore why rehabilitation is not impacting women positively by equipping them with post-release reintegration strategies. To explain that, it can be

concluded that many women wanted to be enrolled in rehabilitation programs that addressed illiteracy and lack of education, but those needs were not addressed. It can be proven via previous studies such as a meta-analysis study which found that inmates who participate in correctional education programs have 43% lower odds of recidivating, translating to 13%-point reduction in recidivism risk compared to non-participants (Davis et al., 2013).

It must be observed that socioeconomic hardships for female inmates do not cease to exist after exiting prison. Few correctional institutions can address the unique needs of female inmates by offering gender-responsive programs or specially trained staff to handle female inmates and equip them with post release reintegration. Since most female inmates come from lower backgrounds, having limited vocational skills and employment histories, they are more likely to experience greater hurdles in obtaining sustainable employment and housing in comparison to male parolees (Couloute, 2018). Similarly, in our study it has been noted that increased rate of poverty and economic hardship is the major cause of female's recidivism in Pakistan. Research in Pakistan on female criminality also shows that lower class in Pakistani society suffers from extreme poverty, illiteracy and lawlessness which is the main cause of high crime rate among poor women (Ferdoos & Hafeez, 2016).

4.1.2 Theme 2: Family Dynamics

This theme delves on the role of family dynamics as one of the contributors in recidivism among female inmates of Adiala Jail, Pakistan. Family dynamics are the interactions carried out among relatives, their roles and relationships, and the various factors via which

the interactions are shaped and interplayed. Factors like male dominance in a patriarchal household give a very little decision-making power to women. This leads to coerced recidivism among female who live in male dominated households. In a family dynamic, a delinquent household influences criminal behavior by increasing the chances of recidivism.

Respondent 12 shared her experience of a delinquent household's contribution to recidivism by stating:

“Four years later, after my first offense of selling narcotics, I was forced to recidivate because me in laws are drug abusers and they're very poor. Selling drugs is their only source of income.”

When asked if her parents knew about what her in-laws were forcing her to do, she stated:

“Oh, I cannot tell my parents because in order to get married, I ran away from house. You see, my husband and I are from different sects.”

She further stated, after being asked if she sold drugs willingly;

“Do you think I have a choice? I cannot go to my family as they will never accept me. I was 14 years old when I ran away and now, I am 19 years old. If I say no, my in-laws will kick me out of the house along with my kids and I will have nowhere to go.”

According to Chaudhary & Dutt (2022), explained that family dynamics in Pakistan as a power differential in which women hold a place of subordination and economic

dependence on male family members (e.g., father, husband, or brother) by performing unpaid labor for them. Moreover, children born in such family dynamics where delinquency and male dominance contribute to female recidivism create delinquent children.

Respondent 11, 50-year-old women explained the effects of delinquent household on family dynamics by sharing her personal story of recidivism as:

“At the time of first crime my age was 30 and I was arrested under the charges of selling drugs and was imprisoned to 7 years. Post release I started working at a factory. I did not want to sell drugs again but my husband is a repeat offender and he's also in jail because he keeps on selling drugs. He forced me to sell drugs too. I am imprisoned to 14 years now. My 29-year-old daughter, my 19-year-old daughter-in-law, my son who is also in his 20s and my husband who is in late 50s are all in jail under the same charges of drug abuse and drug selling.”

The analysis generated from responses in this theme lead us to a conclusion that in a criminal family dynamic, factors such as delinquency, male-dominance and negative role models play an important role in causing female recidivism. Same way, Respondent 12 was coerced into selling drugs due to the involvement of her in-laws in delinquency and she could not refuse to become a part of that delinquency because she lacked the decision-making power in a male-dominant household. In Pakistan, family dynamics where women

are economically dependent and patriarchal system are the prevalent, force women to commit crimes (Islam et al., 2019).

According to Respondent 5:

“I regret what I have done but I was forced to sell my body and drugs as in nine years of being married, my husband took all the money from me for his drug addiction and he did not allow need to go back to my house even once.”

This is consistent with extensive literature that specified that dysfunctional family dynamics often encounter multiple social issues, such as family violence, alcoholism, sexual and substance abuse, etc. all of which can contribute to criminal offense to escape the cycle of abuse (Subotin & Odalovik, 2016, pp. 43-55). Respondent 5, even after committing her first offense and serving time in prison, could not be stopped from recidivism because she had to go back to the same abusive and delinquent household as before. Moreover, a delinquent family dynamic will normalize the crime in a way that even the children in that household will adopt delinquency due to absence of positive role models. For instance, Respondent 11 had her kids in the prison with her under same charges of selling drugs because growing up, the presence of a positive role model was absent to those kids. She states that her children adopted criminality by observing her and in her absence, they learnt criminality from their father. She further stated:

“While I was imprisoned the first time for 7 years, my husband forced my kids to sell drugs for him. He would beat them with kicks and punches if they had refused to do so. (the inmate started crying

and wiped her tears from her “dupatta” – a piece of cloth used in subcontinent to cover the head). *If I had not been in prison for 7 years, I would have made sure that none of my kids had fallen into this dirt (ghaalazat).”*

This analysis in this theme concludes that children who grown up in delinquent households have been likely to be involved in criminal patterns.

Moreover, our study found that among the respondents, two respondents had their underage children inside the prison- a 10-years old girl and another 13-year-old girl. According to Rule 326 of Pakistan Prison Rules, 1978, female prisoners are allowed to keep their children with them till they reach the age of six years (Rani et al., 2022). Therefore, these young girls were kept inside the prison not only against the law but the prison authorities were not concerned either. These young girls were not main respondents of our interview but while their mothers (R8 and R1, respectively) were being interviewed, these little girls just stood next to them, without any remorse of what their mothers had done which resulted in them being confined in jail. These young girls were extremely friendly with rest of the prisoners inside the correctional facility and that is worrisome because young minds are an easy target for brainwashing.

4.1.3 Theme 3: Ineffective Rehabilitation

The analysis of this theme will highlight the impact of rehabilitation on recidivism which is the second research question of our study rationale. So far, we have taken into account the factors that contribute to recidivism post-release. But it is important to highlight that many women stated the reason behind their recidivism to be ineffective rehabilitation

inside the prison. Moreover, to make rehabilitation effective, it is pertinent to explore what specific rehabilitation strategies are most effective in reducing recidivism. The theme of ineffective rehabilitation has been created using five sub-themes: overcrowding, reintegration challenges, low perceived benefit of rehabilitation, inadequate fear of legal consequences and drug addiction

To explain how overcrowding renders rehabilitation ineffective, Respondent 5 stated her perspective:

“As far as your question is concerned on the impact of rehabilitation programs on recidivism, I will tell you that in prison we have a lot of young girls who are under trial for selling narcotics and that and those girls are put in the same cells as first-time offenders and repeat offenders due to overcrowding. Even the categories for minor and major offenders do not exist. And while young girls and first time offenders spend their time in the prison along with other prisoners and convicts, they get to know of new techniques and ways of committing crimes of even higher degree. You will see how we have repeat offenders who have been to the jail for more than five times under the similar charges but every time they are bailed out because of lack of evidence. So as long as the prison administration does not separate first time offenders with repeaters, rehabilitation will not work!”

In the literal words of Respondent 5:

“Jo chota jurm karti hai wo yaha a k bara jurm karnay ki degree lay k jati hain.” (those who commit minor offenses get a degree in how to commit bigger offense once they are in here)”

So far, no attempts have been made to address the most urgent issue of overcrowding in prisons of Pakistan. Despite being designed to accommodate 2,174 individuals, the Adiala jail currently houses a staggering more than 7000 prisoners, leading to severe overcrowding (These figures exclude the administrative territory of Gilgit-Baltistan) (NCHR Pakistan, 2022). As of August 2023, there were only 79 probation officers in Punjab probation and detention facilities. This means that roughly 500 offenders are assigned to each officer. International standards recommend around 50 offenders per officer at most (Huma et al., 2024). The issue of overcrowding can be attributed to the fact that 73% of prisoners being held in prisons of Pakistan, including Adiala Jail, are awaiting verdicts in their cases. During the second half of 2023, the total number of pending cases showed an increase by 3.9%, reaching a staggering 2.26 million cases (Iqbal, 2022). Lack of speedy justice leads to overcrowding in prisons, resulting in the interaction between major and minor offenders, thus rendering rehabilitation ineffective after release. Respondent 7 shared her perspective on overcrowding and its impact on rehabilitation in following words,

“My recidivism was after 2 1/2 months of being released after my first crime. The second time, I was caught because I started selling ice and cocaine.

When asked why did she sell ice and cocaine, even though her first crime was theft, the Respondent stated,

“That happened because the first time I was here, I met respondent 6 in the prison and she told me how selling cocaine and other drugs in Islamabad earned you a lot of money. So, when I got out, I contacted her and she introduced me to her dealer. We used to sell drugs and were caught together. You must have met her (refers to Respondent 6).

Same thoughts were shared by Respondent 14, who was also caught under drug charges and it was her second offense,

”The other beggars inside Adiala were caught under the charges of selling drugs multiple times and they told me that along with begging they are also selling narcotics which helps them financially.”

Therefore, for this sub-theme it can be concluded that when female inmates in Adiala Jail share prison cells due to lack of categorization and classification, they also end up sharing ideas and thoughts on how to commit other crimes (Jabeen, 2022). Rule 232 of Pakistan Prison Rules, 1978 clearly state that firstly, casual convicted inmates shall not be kept in the same prison as habitual convicted inmates and secondly, all habitual criminals, as much as possible, shall be confined in special prisons which are only for habitual criminals. Moreover, Rule 242 of Pakistan Prison Rules, 1978 outlines the classification of prisoners in A, B, and C class. As per the Rule 242, Class A shall imprison the casual prisoners of good character (based on social status, education and lifestyle) and have committed white-collar crimes. Class B imprisons the prisoners who are habitual criminals (recidivism), and

class C will consist of prisoners who do not fall in Class A or Class B category. Moreover, Rule 309 talks about separating female prisoners on basis of age and type of crime: on-trial female prisoners shall be kept separate from convicted female prisoners; juvenile female prisoners shall be kept separate from adolescent and adolescent from adult prisoners. Moreover, habitual female prisoners to be separated from casual offender female prisoners and prostitutes and procuresses from respectable women (Government of Pakistan, 1978). Taking into account the abovementioned rules, not even a single rule is being followed when imprisoning female prisoners of Adiala Jail. Respondent 2, a 50-year-old female, sentenced to 14 years of imprisonment, described the current situation of ongoing rehabilitation programs in Adiala in following words:

“Nothing will work, my child. Because first-time offenders are young girls most of the times, and they are put in same prison as murderers and convicts. So, you can imagine how that affects those girls. We have women like ZG and AA who have murdered their children and they roam around freely and mingle with young girls telling the tales of their crime. So, when young girls get out of here, they have mastered new techniques to commit even bigger crimes”

Another big issue is lack of rehabilitation programs for drug offenders. We asked the prison administration to provide us with a list of rehabilitation programs for female inmates but among those programs not even a single program was dedicated to rehabilitate drug offenders. Respondent 3 mentioned that due to the lack of availability of slots she could not get any rehabilitation program as there are only 2 female psychologists in Adiala Jail

for a population of more than 7000 inmates. Moreover, it is based on the free-will of the female inmates of Adiala Jail whether they want to join a rehabilitation program or not.

Respondent 3, a drug offender, stated that she did not want to join any rehabilitation program and just wanted to be on a medication for her depression. In her words:

“When I came in for the first time I was not rehabilitated or counseled in any way. And this time, even though I am here now for the last eight months and two days I have not met any mental health specialist or joined any vocational training or any other sort of rehabilitation program.”

When asked why she did not want to be counseled, Respondent 3 stated:

“What’s the use of rehabilitation? The programs that they have here do not have benefit for me. I already know how to stitch clothes and I know that does not earn a livelihood enough to run a house.”

Whereas, Respondent 6 shared her thoughts on impact of rehabilitation programs on recidivism by adding,

“I do not want to participate in any vocational program here. The psychologist here also tried talking to me but I told her to leave me alone. She cannot force me to talk to her. Even if I am put in vocational courses here do you think any course will ready me to earn 200,000pkr in 1 ½ months? No, right?”

Respondent 7 stated her perspective on perceived benefit, impact of rehabilitation and its effective on recidivism by adding,

“I had not attended any rehabilitation program when I first came here and this time too, I have not joined any program as it has only been three to four days since I have arrived at the prison and even if offered, I will not take the program. These programs cannot help us because we are poor and in order to have money, we have no other choice but to resort to crime.”

Respondent 9 stated,

“Even if I get out this time I will resort to recidivism because I do not have any other skills that I can use to provide for my family. I do not want to learn the skills that they offer here. I already know how to stitch clothes and, in my area, women only pay rs 400 PKR per dress for stitching, whereas, selling flowers alone earns me 1000 PKR profit every day and with that selling drugs adds up a huge sum of profit which I cannot earn by stitching clothes or working in a parlor.”

Lack of improved and updated vocational or skill development programs for women in Pakistan has led to low perceived benefit of rehabilitation. Study has found that female prisoners desired to be offered education on business development, financial management, carpentry, photography, interior designing, catering, car mechanics and bookkeeping (Artz et al., 2013).

Moreover, there is sheer lack of deterrence in Adiala Jail for female inmates. When we questioned Respondents regarding their enrollment in rehabilitation programs (vocational, religious and mental well-being programs), most of them showed little or no interest in receiving rehabilitation. To our surprise, any female inmate in Adiala cannot be forced by prison administration to take part in rehabilitation, if not willing. Respondent 1 told us that she can choose to be enrolled in any program she wants but, in her perspective, prison authorities were doing very less to make her quit her old habits. She stated,

“I already know how to stitch clothes. I even learnt beautician courses.”

When asked if she would like to earn a livelihood using these skills, she said,

“I do not have any money to start my own business. My life is ruined, I know that.”

Respondent 2 stated that despite her willingness to join vocational programs this time, she could not do so due to her poor sight. As far as counselling and therapy was concerned, she said she did not believe that she had any mental problems that contributed to recidivism, even though she was on medications for mood and sleep disorder.

In words of Respondent 2,

“This time even when they asked me to enroll for stitching courses, I said no because my eyesight is poor and I cannot do it.”

Respondent 4 explains the lack of deterrence and its impact of rehabilitation on recidivism in following words,

“Women find it more entertaining to gossip than to spend their time in a religious setting, vocational training or with the mental health therapist. I do not have any concerns to report to the authorities of the prison except this: make these women participate in rehabilitation programs. They sit together, talk and learn more ways of criminality. No one in the prison can force them to do any kind of work. They just eat and get fat. Look at their health!”

She further added:

“And yes, the environment of the prison makes me feel safe. I do not experience any challenges or barriers participating in the programs as I said before it is entirely based on your own free will whether you want to get rehabilitated or not.”

Respondent 6, when questioned if prison authorities were doing enough to make her quit her old habits, responded,

“She (referring to psychologist) cannot force me to talk to her.”

Respondent 5 stated,

“I feel safe at the prison. I have no issues as everyone is my friend now.”

Respondent 8 stated

“I feel supported by the prison staff. They do not hurt me”

Respondent 9 stated,

“I do enjoy my time in the prison as I get food three times a day and almost everyone here is now my friend.”

Respondent 10 added,

“I don't feel supported by the prison staff however I have not yet joined any rehabilitation program and do not even plan on joining it.”

It is worth noting here that, so far there is no data on how deterrence affects the likelihood of reoffending among females in Pakistan. But in our study, we found that lack of deterrence increases the likelihood of reoffending or recidivism. Imprisonment of offenders is generally said to have four purposes: (1) to allow retribution on behalf of society, (2) to reform the wrongdoer, (3) to deter individuals from re-engaging in future criminal activity, and (4) to incapacitate the wrongdoer so as to protect civil society from their criminal behavior (de Oliveira Morsch, 2019). However, in Pakistan, most of the respondents reported that they could not be forced to take part in rehabilitation. They also reported that

no one at prison can make them do hard labor as that is against prison rules and when asked how they knew that rule existed, they mentioned how Women Aid Trust (WAT) has made them aware of their rights in prison. Some of the Respondents considered prison their safe haven.

Most of the females who sell drugs, are drug abusers as well leading to many psychological problems. It must be noted that drug abuse starts due to psychological and emotional issues which further get deteriorated after drug abuse. Respondent 6 was questioned on her occupation before getting arrested. In her literal words,

“Powder karti ho, powder karti bhi hon or baichti b hon.”

Meaning, “I abuse drugs and I sell drugs.”

Respondent 6 was in such a bad state that when she was brought to the meeting room, two female guards were holding her from both sides as the cocaine withdrawals made her unable to walk. She kept on scratching her leg which is a common side effect of withdrawal. She had been in Adiala for the last 1 week.

Similarly, Respondent 7 also confessed that due to her friendship with Respondent 6, she started drug abuse as well and as a result of intoxication, she was raped by two men. While crying heavily, Respondent 7 stated,

“I was raped by two men who called me under the false notion that they needed cocaine but in reality, they raped me. I was under the influence of drugs so I did not realize what were they doing to me. But after the influence wore off, I found myself naked in

woods and that is when I realized that I had been raped. Two weeks after that incident, I was arrested for selling drugs. If my family gets to know that I am pregnant they will kill me. I am begging you, sister, please, please, I will touch your feet, ask the lady health worker here to give me a pill so I can abort this pregnancy.”

When asked if she told anyone in her family, she replied

“I cannot tell my husband and I have been living in separation from him for the last one and a half year. That is also a reason why I need to abort this baby. He would know that this child is not his!”

Respondent 12 casually stated,

“Of course, when you sell drugs there comes a time when you want to get a hit of it too. There is so much stress in the kind of business we do. To release that stress, we have to smoke a joint or two per day.”

Respondent 13 shared her experience of drug abuse in following words,

“I was selling drugs and buying for my husband, but eventually my husband and I would share “powder” and “syringes” (referring to heroine shots). My husband now has TB as he shared

syringes with other people too. I am worried for him as he is also taking care of my four children while being sick.”

Respondent 1 shared her story of drug abuse and drug selling in following words,

“I was never into drug business before marriage but after my marriage, the first night with my husband, he made me smoke “hashish” (an oleoresin made by compressing and processing parts of the cannabis plant). That was my first encounter with a drug and soon after that my husband told me that everyone in the house was selling drugs and that I was also required to do that. Tell me? Did I have a choice?”

While highlighting the challenges that lead to ineffective rehabilitation, it is important to mention the role of unaddressed psychological and emotional factors of Respondents in Adiala Jail. Many Respondents reported having depression and mood disorders. It is worth mentioning here that in Pakistan, early marriage and lack of decision-making power on reproduction can lead to mental and physical challenges in females (Lebni et al., 2023). These challenges lead to negative coping mechanisms which include committing crimes. Many studies have confirmed that unaddressed depressive disorders among females are associated with crimes (Fazel et al., 2015).

Lack of psychological help in Adiala Jail is to such an extent that the most of the Respondents were not even aware of what simple terms like “counseling” or “therapy.” When asked questions on mental health assistance in simpler words, Respondent 2 stated,

“I only met the brain doctor (referring to psychologist) here once. I asked her to put me on medication for my mood and sleep. She did that!”

Respondent 3 stated,

“I know that I am in depression but I do not want to be counseled that's why I told the doctor here to put me on medication for sleep and she did that.”

Moreover, the fact that psychological and emotional needs are often addressed with medication instead of counseling and therapy, was further confirmed by other Respondents too.

Respondent 4, who was qualified enough to understand what therapy and counseling is, stated,

“The first time that I came here I was counseled by a psychologist however that wasn't really helpful as that was only one time thing. This time, I have been here for the last 11 days but have not had a session with the psychologist yet.”

Respondent 5 stated,

“When I first arrived here, I used to stay in my room like a dead body. I did not want to talk to anyone. Then the doctor here put me on medication for my mood and sleep issues. Now I feel happy

but when I run out of my medication, I get sad again and I have violent thoughts.”

Another barrier to participating in rehabilitation programs that was reported by two Respondents and therefore was not made a subtheme of this study, but is worth mentioning here is: The ongoing political situation in the country.

Respondent 11, 13 and Respondent 14 showed their interest in joining vocational programs but due to imprisonment of a female political personality in Adiala Jail, they could not.

Respondent 11 stated,

“I do feel safe here but I have not participated in any of the programs off rehabilitation and even if I want to have any vocational training, I cannot join the program because the ex-prime minister's wife is being imprisoned in the vocational training hall. Believe it or not only the rich and elite can survive in Pakistan be it is inside the prison or outside the prison.”

Moreover, Respondent 13 stated,

“The vocational training is not happening as it used to happen in the hall where ex-prime minister's wife is confined.”

Respondent 14 stated,

“I do feel that there are challenges in participating in the vocational programs especially now that the ex-Prime Minister

Imran Khan's wife has occupied the room in which we used to have our vocational training. Nobody cares that we are wasting your time in the prison not getting any vocational training. Only the rich and influential people can survive in the prison.

Before this woman, it was another political leader. You can say that for the last 3 years we have not had a proper place for vocational training due to political personalities occupying our space.”

The analysis driven from this statement is that firstly, there are no specific rehabilitation programs for drug offenders and secondly, the perceived benefit of effectiveness of rehabilitation is extremely low among female inmates who think that selling drugs will be more beneficial financially than being enrolled in skill development programs. Moreover, the lack of deterrence in prisons contributes to likelihood of reoffending among female inmates in Adiala Jail, Pakistan. Moreover, the pre-existing and post imprisonment mental health is deteriorated due to lack of psychological help available on female side. It is worth noting here that for females in Adiala Jail, there are three types of rehabilitation programs. Vocational training program led by Women Aid Trust (WAT), Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA), and Government of the Punjab are currently operating to provide vocational training to female inmates. Female inmates are given diplomas in various skills, including sewing, embroidery, computer and other fields with the help of the Technical Education and Vocational Authority (TEVTA) and other institutions (Shah, 2021). Moreover, Society for Human Rights and Prisoners' Aid (SHARP-Pakistan), operating in Pakistan since 1999, is also operating in Adiala Jail to

provide social support, guidance, counseling and legal aid to female inmates involved in criminal justice system (Sharp Pakistan, 2024). 2) Psychological Support Programs for which Psychologists (BS-17) and (BS-16) are appointed by government of Punjab in Adiala Jail (Rana.Yasif, 2020). However, before 2020, psychologists in prisons of Pakistan including Adiala Jail, were provided via a project by UNODC, but the sheer lack of recreation with only 2 female prisons in Pakistan having TV and no prisons having an indoor or outdoor sports activities still remains a grave concern (UNODC, 2021).

In a report published by Human Rights Commission Pakistan in 2023, it was mentioned that presently 27 psychologists are working as mental health specialists in a total of 43 prisons in Punjab for 50,519 inmates. Out of 27 psychologists, three are working at Adiala Jail for a population of more than 7000 inmates. These inmates are assessed psychologically via different psychological assessments and psychotherapeutic tools. Some of the Psychological assessment tools include scales on suicide prevention, mania, depression, anxiety. Other psychotherapeutic techniques, psychological first aid and narrative exposure therapy are also used (HRCP, 2023). 3) Religious Education Programs are provided by Jamiat Talim ul Quran (JTQ) under their project of “Prison Outreach Program” which has so far enrolled 66,000+ prisoners in 116+ prisons nationwide. This program aims at character building, holistic education, spiritual guidance and skill development of female inmates in Adiala Jail, Pakistan. It teaches redemption by using lessons from Quran and Sunnah (Trust Jamiat Taleem ul Quran, 2024). Moreover, there is reduction of 3-6 months in a prisoner’s sentence if they learn Quran and same rule has been established for Christian and Hindu prisoners (Comms, 2022). Moreover, in 2009, Adiala Jail became first prison facility in Pakistan to open a church for inmates and it has been

operational since then (HRCP, 2009). However, none of our respondents were enrolled in Religious vocational programs and when asked why, they simply added that they did not want to be included.

Despite increasing population of women in prisons, and their extremely different criminogenic profiles compared to incarcerated men, most of the rehabilitation programs in prisons have been tailored for men and only a small portion of those programs is extended to women with little attention (Edwards et al., 2022). Moreover, the frequent lock up of political individuals in Adiala Jail, an already crowded correctional facility, has ceased the vocational activities of female inmates. The responses of Respondent 11, 13 and 14 were confirmed by District Inspector General of Adiala Jail as well. Even though the protocols given to political prisoners in prison impact the general population of prison immensely, no studies in Pakistan have highlighted this factor as one of the factors contributing to making rehabilitation ineffective which impacts recidivism.

4.1.4 Theme 4: Influence of Criminal Networks

Peer pressure or being involved with criminal networks has been reported to increase chances of recidivism resulting in reincarceration. Once an inmate is released from prison, they are likely to go back to the same living condition they were once in before imprisonment. Almost every repeat offender we interviewed in female wing of Adiala Jail reported that once they got out of the prison, their peers who were into drugs and the networks who had hired them to sell drugs, reconnected with them. Many female inmates involved in recidivism explained how peer pressure outside prison led them to abuse drugs

again. These were the peers they had known for a long time, thus holding an immense convincing power.

According to Respondent 3:

“I was told by my friends at boutique to sell narcotics if I wanted to save my daughter. I could not save her, but I did not stop selling narcotics either because now I had to look after my future.”

When asked why did not she stop after getting caught the first time, she stated,

“When I got out of prison the first time, I went back to the boutique because I had no other means of earning a livelihood. That is when my colleague at boutique told me to sell narcotics again and this time, he taught me a different way of doing so but I was caught again as he reported me to the police because he thinks I stole his money from boutique when in reality it was the other colleague.”

Respondent 7 stated the influence of peer on her recidivism in following words,

“I met respondent 6 in the prison and she told me how selling cocaine and other drugs in Islamabad earned you a lot of money. So, when I got out, I contacted her and she introduced me to her dealer. We used to sell drugs and were caught together.”

This theme highlights the influence of peers on criminality. Chances of recidivism are much higher when an inmate goes back to the same environment where they were taught criminality. One conclusion can be drawn that criminal influence and support are coming from same peer, making it difficult to mitigate communication. For instance, in case of Respondent 3, her crime was influenced from the same peer who had given her employment post release, thus making it difficult for her to cut ties with them. This interpretation is supported by the research findings of (Mowen & Boman, 2018) who suggest that the multifaceted role peers play in the recidivism must be understood within a larger context because peers can jointly provide mechanisms of support while also providing criminogenic influences. This corresponds with findings from a literature review, where a study (Spohr, Livingston, Taxman, & Walters, 2019) identified social ties to individuals or criminogenic peers as one of the most significant risk factors for engaging in criminal activity. The study also revealed that social connections with drug-users were a substantial risk factor for future drug abuse.

Moreover, this theme also highlights how some women, due to danger to their life post-release, fall back into criminal activities. It has been noted during this study that many women were recruited by drug cartels again after they got out of the prisons. Not just that, but in many cases the first-time offenders involved in selling drugs and prostitution were bailed out by their handlers. And after getting out of prison, women had to work for them again to pay off the debt of bail money.

Respondent 10 stated:

“I was bailed out by my handler. After that I had to work for my handler to pay off the debt. During that time, my brother eloped with a girl and brought her to my house which put extra burden on me. Along with prostitution, I started selling drugs too.”

She further stated,

“I know my handler will be waiting for me to get out so he can force me to work for him again. I cannot notify the authorities about him as he would hurt my children.”

Respondent 8 shared her concern regarding her 10-years old daughter who is living with her in prison, in following words,

“I am sending my daughter outside the jail now that she is 10 years old and prison administration is no longer allowing me to keep her inside. But I am afraid that the drug cartel that recruited me is going to reach out to her as well. If not that, she has watched me sell drugs and she knows why I am imprisoned.”

While telling her story, Respondent 8 touched the ground and held her ears and said,

“I swear to the God, I will never ever repeat my crime. I am responsible if something happens to my daughter.”

This is the unfortunate story of most of the women working as drug sellers and sex rackets.

This is a new finding in our study which so far has not been highlighted by any literature on female recidivism in Pakistan. Many studies on recidivism among female inmates in Mexico (Crisis Group, 2024) highlight the role of influence of criminal network in forcing women to sell drugs and in return providing security and protection along with hefty income. However, no studies in Pakistan highlight this plight of female inmates and how it contributes to female recidivism. This adds a novelty in our study and provides platform to other researchers to conduct future studies on this specific problem.

Moreover, many females had to adopt recidivism due to lack of legal employment opportunities. Many reported that post-release, they were stigmatized and nobody wanted to hire them.

Respondent 2 stated,

“When I was caught the first time, the substitute maid told everyone in the area that I had been caught for selling narcotics. After that, everyone was afraid of hiring me as house-help. They weren’t concerned that I was only providing drugs to my husband because he used to beat me, they just saw me as a “criminal” and decided not to hire me again.”

Respondent 10 stated,

“I do regret that I have to recidivate again and again but I have no other choice because no one will hire me due to my past.”

Whereas, Respondent 1, while being tearful stated,

“Do you think that anyone would like to hire an ex-convict? And I do not have any money to start my own business. My life is ruined, I know that.”

Respondent 5 stated,

“After I was released from prison the first time, no one wanted to hire me. Even the lady that I used to work for blocked my number. People only look at the crime that I have committed, but no one looks at the reason.”

In Pakistan, the stigmatization of women involved in criminal justice system leaves them with no other option but to adopt illegal means of livelihood again. It has been found that women inmates in Pakistan, bear the burden of negative stereotyping, inadequate legal support, and discrimination in men dominated criminal justice system of Pakistan (Jafri, Khokhar, & Mubeen, 2022). Moreover, women involved in drug-related crimes are more vulnerable to stereotyping. Such women may face barriers of reintegration into family and community (Asian Human Rights Commission, 2015).

Respondent 5 stated,

“Ever since I have been incarcerated, no one from my family has called or visited me. We are Pushtoons and in our culture a woman committing a crime is an embarrassment. If I had been not incarcerated and my family had known what I have done, they would have buried me alive.”

Respondent 10 stated,

“I have an infant who could not join me as my mother took him away. She said that I would teach him criminality too. I miss my child and family as no one has visited me. They have cut off all contacts.”

Post-release, unacceptability from family and relatives leaves a woman vulnerable and that creates an opportunity for criminal networks to lure them into criminal traps. Women not only sell drugs but also abuse drugs to relieve stress. It has been found that there exists a strong relationship between visitation and positive post-release outcomes. Inmates who had frequent visitations from families showed increased chances of successful reintegration into society (Folk et al., 2019). A metaanalysis consisting of male and female sample found that recidivism reduction is up to 26% due to frequent visitations from friends and family (Mitchell et al., 2016). However, much of the existing research on how visitations impact post-release functioning has been conducted with male samples (Folk et al., 2019). A very little literature exists on effects of visitations on successful reintegration of female inmates in Pakistan when compared to men and other countries, therefore, this study along with highlighting challenges is also providing groundwork for future studies.

In conclusion, the challenges associated with the effective implementation of rehabilitation programs in reducing recidivism among female inmates of Adiala Jail are multifaceted, involving economic and educational barriers, implementation issues, and resistance from inmates due to lack of deterrence. A holistic approach must be adopted to address these challenges in order to revamp the whole criminal justice system. Moreover, societal

changes, empowering women by making education more reachable, and awareness of addressing mental health shall be considered as a vital part of holistic approach.

4.3 Discussion

The aim of this study is to highlight the challenges faced by female inmates that contribute to recidivism and the impact of rehabilitation on recidivism. The investigation carried out in this study highlighted four major themes: Socio Economic hardships, family dynamics, ineffective rehabilitation and criminal network influence. The socioeconomic hardship and ineffective rehabilitation stand as main themes of our study and align with the Reformatory Theory of Punishment which states that to reform an inmate, it is important to consider the factors that lead to criminal behavior and one such factor includes economic hardships faced by inmates.

Socio-economic hardship emerges as a dominant theme of this study, reflecting how women are lured into the trap of recidivism due to economic factors like poverty, social factors such as family pressure, and lack of education. It is important to note that the Reformatory Theory of Punishment maintains economic hardship and social factors as one of the ways to recidivism. Therefore, it deems the provision of vocational or technical training necessary for the offender during the period of imprisonment to ensure reduction in recidivism (Reyna, 2024). Reformatory Theory of Punishment also entails various aspects of criminality like economic factors, social factors, family dynamics and psychological or emotional problems while considering crime as a disease and criminal as a patient. In this study, Respondents interviewed were of different age brackets and from diverse backgrounds; with low incomes, mostly uneducated, unprivileged, and

underprivileged. The first section of the data analyses reveals that a common theme found among Respondents was the socio-economic hardship that they were facing. Factors like poverty, financial necessity and lack of employment opportunity due to lack of education led to recidivism. There was one respondent (Respondent 4) who was working as an Assistant Professor at college and had her Master's degree in Arabic Literature. But she was married to a partner who was uneducated and worked in a stationary shop. The Respondent explained how she was forced to marry her partner as they were cousins. Respondent has 4 kids and stated that they could not solely depend on her salary check considering the partner contributed very little to the household income. Therefore, she was forced to repeat her crime. For these types of findings, applying Reformatory Theory of Punishment is most suitable due to its focus on individual rehabilitation by taking into consideration the aspects of education, societal integration and rehabilitating them of their criminal mentality. In this case, the educational aspect of the husband led the Respondent 4 to commit crime.

Moreover, family dynamics play a huge role in increasing the likelihood of recidivism among females. Many females are involved in drug-trafficking due to their partners forcing them to sell drugs (Fleetwood & Leban, 2022). Most of our Respondents were imprisoned under the charges of drug-trafficking, and stated that they were being forced by their husbands who were also drug-traffickers and abusers to sell the drugs. The application of rehabilitation theory is necessary as it focuses on personal change in the offender's character so that the offender can discontinue the criminal activity. That personal change can be brought in inmates by imparting psychiatric therapy, counseling, vocational training, better education, drug-rehabilitation programs and other techniques based on scientific

method which can reduce recidivism among female inmates of Adiala Jail and make them play a more constructive role in society.

Furthermore, the theme of ineffective rehabilitation can be addressed by applying the basic idea behind Reformatory Theory of Punishment that every inmate has criminogenic needs which must be identified and that before sentencing a woman, courts shall take into account the factor that led to recidivism. Many of our Respondents showed lack of will to be rehabilitated due to low perceived benefit of rehabilitation programs. RTP, by identifying every individual's criminogenic needs, proposes a rehabilitation path that is not only intriguing to the inmate due to incentives involved but also reduces recidivism. Reformatory theory of punishment is against the notion of deterrence theory and retribution theory of punishment from Draconian law, but it does not necessarily result in a lenient penalty than inmates would have received under a retributive or deterrent philosophy. For instance, it must be made mandatory for female inmates in Adiala Jail to participate in rehabilitation programs and based on their participation and the amount of reform exhibited, inmates shall be given incentives.

Additionally, based on the themes generated by our Respondents' interview, The Reformatory Theory of Punishment will argue that every Respondent in our study has a different need based on risk, requiring a different response. Respondents committed crime due to economic hardship, family dysfunction, emotional and psychological factors, criminal network influence and prison conditions and so on. Therefore, to tackle the problem of recidivism, the Reformatory Theory of Punishment offers Supporters of rehabilitation theory agree that this approach is more humane and cost-effective long-term.

Socioeconomic statuses and area of residence, were also evaluated in the interviews of the female convicts were determined to understand the causes of the recidivism (Dhiman, 2022) from which we analyzed the influence of criminal networks on recidivism - another major theme of our study. The analysis of this theme found further justification that the majority of the female prisoners go back to the same area of residence where criminality thrives. Women find it hard to find accommodation post-release due to lack of finances and thus go back to neighborhoods where chances of recidivism are increased (Huebner et al., 2010). RTP addresses this issue by empowering women to learn vocational programs inside the prison so that post-release they are equipped with enough resources to relocate to a better neighborhood where criminality is frowned upon.

The journey in the analysis of literature in Chapter 2, from recidivism to rehabilitation, we see the consistent connection of recidivism among the female prisoners. The theoretical framework we mentioned in Chapter 1, also tells that the strain births negative emotions which with the passage of time lead to several negative outcomes including the worse criminal behavior (Agnew, 1995). In Pakistan, a variety of legal challenges are faced by female prisoners that affect their legal rights and state of well-being. On the other hand, Pakistani female prisoners face numerous psychological challenges that adversely affect their mental health. Depression, anxiety, traumas and emotional distress are prevalent psychiatric concerns among them. Complete psychological damage can be caused by incarceration which is known to cause feelings of loneliness, powerlessness and social isolation. Female prisoners often express their feelings of anxiety and depression stemming from uncertainties about their future, absence of family members and relatives and a lack of social support.

In Pakistan, female convicts experience social marginalization and stigma, which can further exacerbate their psychological misery. Female prisoners are often ostracized from society due to the stigma associated with their criminal records, leading to feelings of shame and embarrassment. Upon release from prison, their reintegration into society can be tough due to further hindrance by this stigmatization, which can restrict access to employment and social services. As a result, they return towards recidivism.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND POLICYIMPLICATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate how comprehensive rehabilitation programs affected the recidivism rates of female prisoners at Adiala Jail. The study investigated 14 female prisoners' experiences and opinions of the rehabilitation programs that were made available to them through interviews. A qualitative investigation that offered a nuanced understanding of the influence of rehabilitation programs on female prisoners' experiences and perceptions at Adiala Jail was made possible by the sample size, despite the fact that it was not representative. This included information about how individuals participated in these programs while they were incarcerated, what they anticipated and planned for their post-release reintegration, and the difficulties they encountered both during and after their time in the rehabilitation programs.

The in-depth analysis shows that although the goal of comprehensive rehabilitation programs is to lower recidivism rates, the most difficult aspects of the process are those of the implementation and engagement. This research emphasizes the necessity for policymakers and prison administrators to pay attention to both the delivery and uptake of these programs by female prisoners. In order to improve efficiency and effectiveness, these institutions must now carry out their own internal reviews to identify particular areas where delays or obstacles arise in the execution of programs and inmate engagement.

In order to more thoroughly identify the procedural, process, and cultural challenges within the rehabilitation programs, a strong theoretical framework, Pathways theory, was supplied

for this qualitative study. Numerous programs had common problems, such as difficulties meeting psychological health needs, offering dependable vocational training, and guaranteeing equal access to educational possibilities. Unique issues were found throughout the research on the impact of rehabilitation programs on recidivism rates. By the help of these useful findings, we have a foundation for the future rehabilitation program evaluation and focused training.

Contrary to our proposed hypothesis, which said that the implementation of the rehabilitation programs would significantly reduce the likelihood of the recidivism patterns among the female prisoners, the research data analysis findings did not support this assertion. There was no apparent general effect on recidivism rates, despite the fact that a few female prisoners expressed their level of satisfaction and benefits. These findings infer that, despite their advantages, rehabilitation and vocational programs could not be satisfactory by themselves to considerably lower the recidivism rates in the absence of systemic changes and additional help (Smith, 2020; Johnson, 2019).

5.2 Policy Implications

The findings of this study have several policy implications. First and foremost, effective rehabilitation programs must be given top priority by prison administrators and legislators when allocating funds. It is essential to develop policies that guarantee the sustainability and accessibility of these programs, so that prisoners who are female, irrespective of the duration of their sentence, can take advantage of them. In addition, it is recommended that the incorporation of community and family support services into the rehabilitation process

be formalized in order to improve post-release care, as supported by the positive outcomes linked to strong external support systems (Brown, 2021).

5.2.1 Improving the Rehabilitation Programs in Adiala Jail for Female Inmates

The rehabilitation programs in Adiala Jail are categorized into religious training, vocational training, and psychological assessment. Despite the presence of these programs, a huge population of female prisoners are repeat offenders, indicating a need for substantial improvements. The existing programs do not effectively address the core factors contributing to high recidivism rates. The policymakers must take the following steps in to consideration:

- 1. Vocational Training:** Introduce comprehensive vocational training programs that offer skills with higher employability and income potential. **Invest in prisoners, not prisons!** Prisons in Pakistan are not fulfilling the role of ‘correctional facilities’ and have very little focus on structural programs for the under-trial prisoners. Due to little focus on the vocational training programs for juveniles and adult prisoners, lack of skills cumpers the employment opportunities after release. Hence, most of the ex-prisoners, belonging to the lower class, re-offend to make ends meet post-release.
- 2. Mental Health Support:** Increase the number of psychologists and mental health professionals to provide consistent and individualized support, including mandatory psychological assessments and follow-up sessions to address underlying issues contributing to criminal behavior. To do this, a revamped quota system must be introduced through which number of psychologists shall be allocated based on

prison population. The findings established that female offenders in the Adiala Jail exhibit co-occurring unique psychological issues that are linked to their recidivism behaviors. The study recommends that women involved in the criminal justice system particularly those that end up in jail be screened to help them regarding their psychological needs associated with their offenses. This will ensure that women's issues associated with criminality are identified and subsequently they are placed into correct rehabilitation and treatment programs towards effective rehabilitation during imprisonment. Introduce a separate rehabilitation program for Drug-addicts and drug-traffickers.

- 3. Classification System:** Implement a classification system to separate first-time offenders from repeat offenders and juveniles from adults. Although the Pakistan Prisons Rules, 1978 mention that every prisoner shall be kept in a specific classification based on the crime and in no way first time offenders shall be imprisoned with repeat-offenders. This measure will prevent the transfer of criminal knowledge and behaviors among prisoners.
- 4. Overcrowding Issues:** Overcrowding in prisons exacerbates the challenges in managing and rehabilitating prisoners. The capacity of the female prison in Pakistan is overwhelmingly exceeding, leading to conditions that hinder effective rehabilitation. The study recommends as critical training needs assessment to establish the training gaps for the prison staff that could aide in the effective management and treatment of women prisoners during incarceration.
- 5. Infrastructure and Alternative Sentencing:** Policies should invest in expanding prison infrastructure to accommodate the current prisoner's population adequately

and reduce overcrowding. Also promoting alternative sentencing for non-violent offenders, such as community service, probation, and electronic monitoring, to alleviate prison overcrowding (Johnson, 2019).

6. Deterrence: should be used to prevent repeat offenders from repeating the crime.

It is important to note that the purpose of prison is to reduce crime and when there will be lack of deterrence, crime will not reduce. Most female beggars in prison had no deterrence and were frequently incarcerated.

7. Limit the Involvement of NGOs: The involvement of NGOs in providing bail and

other support can sometimes undermine the justice process if not regulated properly. Some NGOs facilitate early release without due trial procedures, which affects the justice system's effectiveness. A balanced approach is needed to ensure justice while still supporting rehabilitation. Establish clear guidelines for NGO involvement in the justice process to prevent interference with legal procedures. They should focus on providing post-release support rather than affecting the judicial processes. A robust parole and probation system can significantly reduce recidivism rates by providing structured support to the female prisoners upon release. It is the need of the hour for a more effective system that includes skill development and deterrence measures to avoid repeat offenses.

5.3 Limitations

The limitations of this research study are as follows:

1. The researcher opted for a sample size of 14 female inmates with history of recidivism from the Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Future studies in this study can increase the

sample size from other prisons and include more than one specific gender for more generalized findings.

2. The researcher started collecting data in December, 2022. There were days when she could not make an inmate sit for an interview. The researcher wanted face-to-face interviews; therefore, she had to wait for days to interview an inmate due to the sensitivity of topic and location. Moreover, political uncertainty in the country in May, 2023 hampered the researcher's data collection process for a few months. The researcher resumed research in November, 2023 after getting official permission from prison administration.

3. The topic is of very sensitive nature and requires absolute confidentiality. The questions asked may cause respondents to hesitate to fully disclose their opinions. The environment in which interviews were conducted may influence the judgment of respondents.

4. The findings of this study are highly specific to the criminal justice system of Pakistan and may not be directly applicable or transferable to other provinces of Pakistan and countries or regions with different legal, social, and cultural contexts regarding recidivism among female inmates.

5. The findings are only applicable to female inmates of Adiala Jail who are involved in the criminal justice system due to recidivism.

6. This study is based on cross-sectional data, containing data from a population at a specific point in time. Without longitudinal data, it is difficult to assess changes over time

or understand the long-term impact of rehabilitation programs on recidivism rates. The study relies on self-reported data from prisoners and prison officials, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability bias or recall bias, affecting the accuracy and reliability of the data collected.

5.4 Way Forward

Looking ahead, there are many avenues for the further research and policy development on this topic. Future studies should expand the sample size, include both genders and the longitudinal study designs to better understand the long-term impacts of rehabilitation programs on recidivism patterns. Comparative studies across the different regions of Pakistan will provide insights into the effective practices and areas for improvement (Johnson, 2019). Additionally, comparative studies in different prisons and geographic regions across Pakistan could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the most effective rehabilitation program components that help in reducing recidivism. An intensive effort is required to develop and implement standardized rehabilitation program frameworks on a policy level. Moreover, it is important that special rehabilitation programs shall be developed for drug-related offenders. These programs shall be created by seeking partnership with organizations that may have a valuable insight in reducing such drug-related crimes. It can be adapted to different contexts while preserving the core components that have proven effective. Collaboration between the government agencies, non-profit organizations (NGOs), UNODC and community stakeholders will be vital in structuring a holistic support system for female prisoners, both during incarceration and post-release period. This should include psychological support, vocational training, and the community reintegration programs (Brown, 2021). By refining and enhancing the rehabilitation

programs, we can make significant strides towards achieving SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), ultimately nurturing more inclusive and equitable societies (United Nations, 2020).

By addressing these issues, significant progress can be made towards achieving SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions goal. Ensuring equitable access to justice and effective rehabilitation programs will foster a more inclusive and fair justice system, ultimately improving outcomes for all (United Nations, 2020).

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APPENDICES

INTERVIEW GUIDE (2)

1. Purpose of Interview

This interview is being conducted as a part of a Qualitative Research being conducted as the MS Thesis on the topic of “Impact of Rehabilitation on Recidivism among Female Prisoners in Adiala jail, Pakistan: A Qualitative Study.”

The proposed study aims to qualitatively explore Impact of Rehabilitation on Recidivism among Female Prisoners in Adiala Jail. The purpose is to address the significant gaps in the existing literature regarding the specific context of Adiala Jail and the practical implications of rehabilitation for inmate rehabilitation.

2. Terms of Confidentiality

- The interviews will not be a part of the published research in word but only in findings, analysis and conclusion.
- During the research process, only the researcher and supervisor will have access to the confidential information including but not limited to: personal information, employment and designation, answers to interview questions and discussions. This information shall remain confidential until the completion of the research and afterwards.
- The researcher and supervisor will ask permission before sharing this data for any further research with any other party and must not permit unauthorized use of key informant data.
- The interviewee can withdraw consent to be the participant to the study at any time before the completion and publishing of the research/study.
- The researcher will be held liable in case of unauthorized use of data provided by the interviewee under the above stated terms of confidentiality.

3. Format of Interview

- This interview guide has outlined a number of open-ended questions prompts which will be followed by some follow-up questions as the interview proceeds.
- You can answer in the language of your convenience (English/Urdu).

- The answers will be recorded and later transcribed by the researcher.
- The expected duration of the interview is 30-45 minutes.
- The transcribed answers can be shared with the interviewee upon demand.

4. Contact Information

Interviewer: Maryam Tariq (MS Student, S3H NUST)

Mobile No. +923115888772

Email: maryam.mds20s3h@student.nust.edu.pk

5. Consent Form

I, (Name) _____ consent to be a key informant interviewee/participant to the study for the research being conducted on the topic **Impact of Rehabilitation on Recidivism among Female Prisoners in Adiala jail, Pakistan: A Qualitative Study** under the terms of confidentiality given by the interviewer/researcher.

Signature:

Interview Questions

For Prisoners:

1. Background Information

- Name, Age, Qualification, Area of Residence, Marital Status, Occupation

2. Questions on Recidivism:

- How old were you when you first committed the crime?
- Why did you commit the crime?
- How much time did you spend outside the prison before committing crime again?

3. Questions on Rehabilitation:

- Do you have access to rehabilitation in prison?
- What kind of rehabilitation programs are being offered in Adiala jail for Females?

4. **Challenges and Successes:**

- What challenges, if any, have you encountered in participating in rehabilitation Programs, and how were they addressed?
- Are there specific suggestions you would like to share to improve rehabilitation in Adiala jail?

5. **Impact of Rehabilitation on Recidivism:**

- How do you perceive the influence of rehabilitation in reducing your likelihood of recidivism?

6. **Personal Growth and Coping Mechanisms:**

- In what ways have rehabilitation programs contributed to your personal growth and development?
- Have you learned any skill that will allow you to reintegrate into society successfully post-release?