

Challenges That Confront Offenders During Reentry Into Kenyan Communities

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Abstract

Over the last several years, the issue of prisoner reentry has dominated the corrections literature, which should not be surprising considering the volume of ex-inmates who are returning to our communities each year. As a direct result of this nation's increased reliance on imprisonment as a response to criminal behavior, there are record numbers of individuals serving time in correctional facilities. Inmates face many challenges as they attempt to transition from the institution to the community. Securing suitable housing, finding employment, and addressing substance abuse and mental health problems present formidable obstacles to offenders as they attempt to reconnect with society. At the same time, there is strong evidence to suggest that inmates are leaving confinement less prepared to face life in the community. As Petersilia (2001) noted, fewer programs, and a lack of incentives for inmates to participate in them, mean that fewer inmates leave prison having participated in programs to address work, education, and substance use deficiencies. One undeniable consequence of the imprisonment binge has been the release of record numbers of inmates, who have served longer sentences and are less prepared to face life in society. While these facts are in themselves concerning, prisoner reentry takes on a new level of significance when one considers the impact these returning inmates will have on their communities. As Travis et al. (2001) report, "nearly two-thirds of released prisoners are expected to be rearrested for a felony or serious misdemeanor within three years of their release," which "translate[s] into thousands of new victimizations each year." While public safety concerns are paramount, the consequences of prisoner reentry are not limited to fears of re-offending. Given evidence from available research studies, the impact of prisoner reentry has far reaching consequences, a fact which has not escaped the attention of either policymakers or academics. Over the last several years, this issue has received considerable attention. At the same time, this issue has become the focal point for many researchers, which has both increased our awareness of the consequences of this phenomenon, as well as guided policy makers in the development of new programs. It is upon this backdrop that this study sought to investigate the challenges facing prisoners as they return to the community after serving their sentences. A sample of 146 respondents comprising male and female recidivists at Kakamega and Shikusa Prisons in western Kenya were considered for the study. Research objective and hypothesis were formulated based on the study constructs. A standard questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents who were identified using purposive sampling technique. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected and analyzed. Statistically quantitative data was analyzed using inferential statistics. Study findings revealed that that offenders face challenges during reentry and the time spent in prison was a statistically significant predictor of the reentry experience of offenders.

Keywords: Prisoner, re-entry, community

1.1 Introduction

Criminologists have researched the stigma of being an ex-prisoner. In Shane Kilcommin's work he found that prisoners miss the transition roles to becoming an adult when they go to prison. This means that getting an education, being married, and attaining a job are markers of being an adult, yet when someone goes to jail they miss all these markers. People in the work force therefore judge incarcerated individuals by how they are reintegrating into citizen roles such as workforce participants. Some individuals cannot gain full time employment because they cannot obtain labor and technical licenses (Ducksworth, 2010). These licenses may be required to hold certain jobs. Few inmates have marketable employment skills or sufficient literacy to be gainfully employed (Petersilia, 2003). This means that the employee does not receive constant work and payment from the employer. Another problem that prisoners face in the reentry process into employment is the views of the individuals of the workplace. Employers and other workers show signs of discrimination when working with someone who has gone to prison. Very few former prisoners ever truly enter or reenter the workforce; only a small percentage of the group actually obtain positions with status, which also provide a good living salary (Ducksworth, 2010). The two articles written by Ducksworth and Petersilia focus on the struggles that prisoners face when looking for employment, they each agree that many individuals leaving incarceration do not have the skills to gain employment and have trouble holding positions once they have them. Entering the work force is extremely difficult for incarcerated individuals because of discrimination, prohibitions against licenses, and the stigma of not being able to gain higher than entry-level jobs. Studies show that by having a job with a good paying wage will keep the ex-prisoner from re-offending (Garland 2013). Having a good job is just part of being able to reenter successfully into society.

The relationships that an ex-offender forms with members of society can lead to the prisoner facing

problems they would not have experienced if they were not labeled an “incarcerated individual”. Prisoner reentry is a “geographically concentrated phenomenon in the sense that most returning prisoners move to a relatively small number of cities, counties, and even neighborhoods” (Morenoff 2014). These neighborhoods are usually lower class neighborhoods either in cities or low-income housing areas. People in these areas view these incarcerated individuals as having a negative impact on the neighborhood and on society as a whole. These once incarcerated individuals face the problem of returning into a society that has already anticipated a negative impact of the individual returning. One study found that high rates of prison release were associated with high levels of crime in Sacramento neighborhoods (Morenoff 2014). The results from studies in other cities were more mixed with their findings.

Part of the reentry process is rehabilitation. Rehabilitation, by definition, “is the reshaping of the psyche wherein unconventional, detrimental, and criminal attitudes and values are redirected toward a pro social and self-efficacy raising outlook” (Miller 2010). One focus of rehabilitation is to provide proper treatment for each individual. When not receiving the right type of treatment while returning back to society, the reentry individual not only puts themselves in danger but also the communities that they go back to. Less than one-third of exiting prisoners receive substance abuse treatment or other forms of mental health treatment while in prison (Petersilia 2003). Evaluations of reentry programs have primarily focused on the effectiveness of drug treatment, as disrupting the drugs–crime nexus is a major goal in many jurisdictions. As with the vocational program literature, most have found modest levels of support for the ability of substance abuse treatment to reduce recidivism. Similarly, evaluations of halfway houses and cognitive - behavioral therapies for violent and sex offenders have shown promise for reducing recidivism or, at least, time to recidivism (Miller 2010). If individuals do not receive help then they have a very high chance of returning to prison.

1.2 Statement of the problem

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, the prison population total including pre-trial detainees and remand prisoners stood at 52,000 as at February, 2012. This is against the official capacity of prison system in Kenya which is 22,000. The occupancy level based on official capacity is 236.4%, a fact that there is overcrowding in the 99 institutions established across the country, which accommodates prisoners, according to the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government. This high figure of prisoners is occasioned by a growing number of re-offenders being incarcerated. According to Dennis Lumiti (2004), 700 out of 744 inmates released under Presidential amnesty it was found that more than 60% of the inmates had returned to prison. This extraordinarily high rate of recidivism among prisoners has tremendous costs in terms of public safety and in money spent to arrest, prosecute, and incarcerate re-offenders. From the trend in the high prevalence of recidivism in many countries globally, including Kenya, there is a staggering high number of people being incarcerated and eventually released back to the community. There is also a high risk of re-arrest and re-incarceration of the released offenders which is a concern for policymakers, criminologists, and those involved in corrections. From this background, it was therefore imperative to establish the challenges facing the ex-offenders in the reentry process which forces them to relapse into criminal activities soon after being released from Kenyan prisons.

1.3 Study objective

Establish the challenges faced by offenders during reentry to the community.

1.4 Study hypothesis

H₀₁: Offenders do not face any significant challenges during reentry to the community.

1.5 Challenges offenders face during reentry

Prisoners face a number of challenges during reentry. Below are a number of factors that influence prisoners’ reentry back into the community and their probability of reoffending according to various scholars.

1.5.1 Housing challenges

A major problem prisoners reentering society face is finding housing. One choice is going to a halfway house. This can be a good choice because, “a halfway house provides a structured environment where there are rules that must be adhered to and onsite criminal justice staff providing constant oversight. There is also onsite access to support and guidance, and a step between immediate return to the community and prison” (Williams 2014). A halfway house stay also helps in the transition from an environment where there is sensory deprivation to the community where there is sensory overload (Williams 2014). This means that individuals can slowly return to society in a controlled environment instead of being overwhelmed and without help when returning into normal communities. Incarcerated individuals that return to society under community supervision, like parole or supervised release, do not live in a structured and supportive environment like that of a halfway house. A downside to Halfway Houses is that the individual may only be able to stay at the house for certain duration of time (Inderbitzin 2009). Studies have shown that the first month after release is a vulnerable period “during which the

risk of becoming homeless and/or returning to criminal justice involvement is high” (Cortes and Rogers 2010). Many private homes are not in reach for reentering individuals because they do not have enough funds to purchase and maintain these homes. Also, some landlords do not want to rent out homes or spaces to people that have a criminal background.

Homeless shelters are looked at as a last resort (Cortes and Rogers 2010). Public housing is an option yet owners may refuse to house people with certain criminal records. Public housing applications may also be lengthy and intimidating (Cortes and Rogers 2010). Some public housing districts require applicants to verify their income. This is a problem because ex-prisoners may not have a steady income yet. Another housing option is supportive housing. Supportive housing helps support the reentry individual. Community corporations or neighborhood housing corporations run these types of homes and the individual only pays 30% of the rent (Inderbitzin 2009). Again, people can be denied this type of housing because of their criminal record. There are different types of homes for an ex-offender yet their status of an offender still affects their access to these types of housing.

1.5.2 Stigmatization

An initial barrier for all returning prisoners is the label “convicted felon.” Those who were convicted of a felony in Florida in the U.S.A were more likely to recidivate than those who were sentenced to probation, (Chiricos et al., 2007). The “convicted” label itself shapes recidivism, especially for those who are otherwise less likely to recidivate, and perhaps they have more to lose by the label. Those who are most likely to recidivate (men, racial and ethnic minorities, and those with a more extensive criminal record) are less influenced by conviction (Chiricos et al., 2007).

1.5.3 Relationships

In addition to self-conceptions, the relationships former prisoners have are central to their reentry experiences. One of the most commonly discussed types of relationships is that with romantic partners (Giordano et al., 2002). Among male offenders, marriage has a positive effect of reducing offending by increasing social control, changing routine activities, and decreasing time spent with offending peers (Horney et al., 1995). The effect for women is less clear (Giordano et al., 2002). Just over half of the prisoners in U.S. state and federal prisons have minor children; two thirds of women and half of men in prison are parents (Glaze & Maruschak, 2008). The current caregiver of the children of incarcerated fathers is usually the child's mother (88%). In contrast, only 37% of those with incarcerated mothers live with their fathers; these children are most likely to live with a grandparent (45%) or other relatives (23%) (Glaze & Maruschak, 2008). Both men and women often hope to reestablish relationships with their children once they are released from prison. Understanding peer networks and the likelihood of returning to criminogenic social networks, particularly among male offenders, is a focus of much desistance research (Scott, 2004). Those who resume pre-incarceration patterns of behavior, including spending time with old friends, looking for easy money, or engaging in side relationships or one-night stands, were more likely to be reincarcerated than those who socially isolated themselves or those who engaged in more prosocial behavior and relationship patterns (Seal et al., 2007). Yet for some, rejoining criminal networks may seem like one of few options available to ex-prisoners, even when they know this may be self-defeating (Scott, 2004). Many former prisoners lose or break ties with friends or acquaintances. Nearly half of the Chicago Urban Institute sample reports no close friends 8 months after release (Vigne et al., 2004). Some may choose to distance themselves from co-offending peers, whereas others lose a sense of commonality if they are desisting from offending and drug use. Some may create new networks, and others socially isolate themselves. Both of these approaches may be an attempt to create a lifestyle that is more conducive to desistance (Laub & Sampson, 2003).

1.5.4 The family

Although all ex-prisoners experience a “hangover identity” from their previous status as offender, this residual role may be especially pronounced in long-term relationships (Ebaugh, 1988; Goffman, 1963). These relationships often are fraught with tension and history related to offending and drug use, yet they also may provide beneficial support and continuity. In one study of Florida inmates, prisoners were most likely to be visited, and visited more often, by parents (Bales & Mears, 2008). They also found that visits, and more frequent visits, were related to reduced recidivism. Male inmates reporting positive family relationships before their incarceration had lower recidivism rates than those reporting negative family relationships (La Vigne et al., 2004).

1.6 Prisoner Rehabilitation Program (PREP)

Prisoner Rehabilitation Program (PREP) has been in operation since the year 1999. The program was started in 2 prisons in Nyanza province later reaching 27 prisons and over 50 community groups in 5 provinces in Kenya. Currently the Program is implementing its activities in Rift Valley, Nyanza, Central, Nairobi and Western provinces (Omosa, 2011).

It has been particularly successful in training prisoners, prison officers, ex-prisoners and community group members in the areas of sustainable agriculture, natural resource management, appropriate technology, HIV/AIDS and drug & substance abuse. The program is concerned with the increasing rates of poverty, unemployment, crime and re-offending in Kenya. The aim of this program is to equip the target beneficiaries with

skills for self reliance, poverty reduction, food security and make them aware of the issues of HIV/AIDS, gender and drug & substance abuse so as to cut the cycle of poverty, crime and re-offending (Omosa, 2011).

The program builds the capacity of prisoners by equipping them with skills and technologies for self reliance and income generation after they leave prison. After release of the inmates, we have a component of ex-prisoners follow-up to monitor their progress/performance, give them additional training, assess project impact and to support them to re-integrate back to the community. The ex-prisoners are encouraged to share the skills he/she acquired while in prison with the community members and to form Community Livelihood Improvement Groups (CLIGs) to speed up their acceptance and address poverty at community level. In addition the ex-prisoner is supported to set up an income generating project, (Omosa, 2011).

1.7 Theoretical framework

This study was guided by labeling theory. Tannenbaum (1938) was the first labeling theorist. His main concept was the dramatization of evil. With it, he argued that the process of tagging, defining, identifying, segregating, describing, and emphasizing any individual out for special treatment becomes a way of stimulating, suggesting, and evoking the very traits that are complained of. A person becomes the thing they are described as being.

According to Tannenbaum, deviance and its control involve a process of social definition which involves the response from others to an individual's behavior which is key to how an individual views himself. Deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an offender. Labeling theory includes both primary deviance and secondary deviance. Primary deviance is the original act of breaking the rules. Secondary deviance is when a person who has successfully been labeled deviant accepts that label and identity and the individual continues to engage in the deviant behavior (Buchanan, 2007). When it becomes known that a person has engaged in deviant acts, she or he is then segregated from society and thus labeled thief or whore. This can be used to explain the segregation that the prisoners encounter when they are released from Kenyan prisons. This process of segregation creates outsiders, who are outcast from society, and then begin to associate with other individuals who have also been cast out. When more and more people begin to think of these individuals as deviants, they respond to them as such; thus the deviant reacts to such a response by continuing to engage in the behavior society now expects from them. This in turn causes relapsing into criminal activities by ex-offenders creating a cycle of recidivism.

1.8 Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design where 146 respondents were identified using purposive sampling from Government of Kenya Prisons in Kakamega County. A standard questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Questionnaire method is preferred especially where there are large numbers of respondents to be handled because it facilitates easy and quick derivation of information within a short time (Kerlinger, 2004). The structured (closed-ended) and unstructured (open-ended) items were used so as to get the responses from respondents. The data obtained from the field was organized, edited to ensure completeness, comprehensibility and consistency, classified and coded according to the study hypothesis and objective for analysis. Study data was analyzed by use of both descriptive and inferential statistical procedures by the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0 for windows. Each question related to a variable was assigned a score or numerical value by use of likert scale method. The number on a likert scale was ordered such that they indicated the presence or absence of the characteristics being measured. All statistical measurements were performed within 95% confidence level.

1.9 Findings

1.9.1 Respondent's age at first conviction

Findings in table 1 reveal that 34% of the respondents were first convicted below eighteen years. This is an indication that most of the people who get convicted as juveniles would most likely get subsequent convictions as adults. It was observed that 33% of the respondents were first convicted at the age of 19 to 25 years while 20% said that they were first convicted at the age of 26 to 35 years. Further still, 12% of the respondents were first convicted at the age of 36 to 45 years while no respondent was convicted for the first time at the age of 55 years or more. This demonstrates that most re-offending occurs among the younger people as compared to the older members of the society.

Table 1: Respondent's age at first conviction

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18 years or less	48	34
19 - 25 years	46	33
26 – 35 years	28	20
36 – 45 years	17	12
46 - 55 years	02	1
Over 55 years	-	0.0
Total	139	100

1.9.2 Marital status of the respondents

Results in figure 1 indicate that 50.4% of the respondents were married while 23% were separated while a further 15.8% were single. Findings also reveal that 5.8% of the respondents were widowed while 5% were divorced. This shows that most people who are incarcerated leave their families without anybody to adequately provide for them since most of the respondents were married and therefore had dependants in the name of their spouses and children.

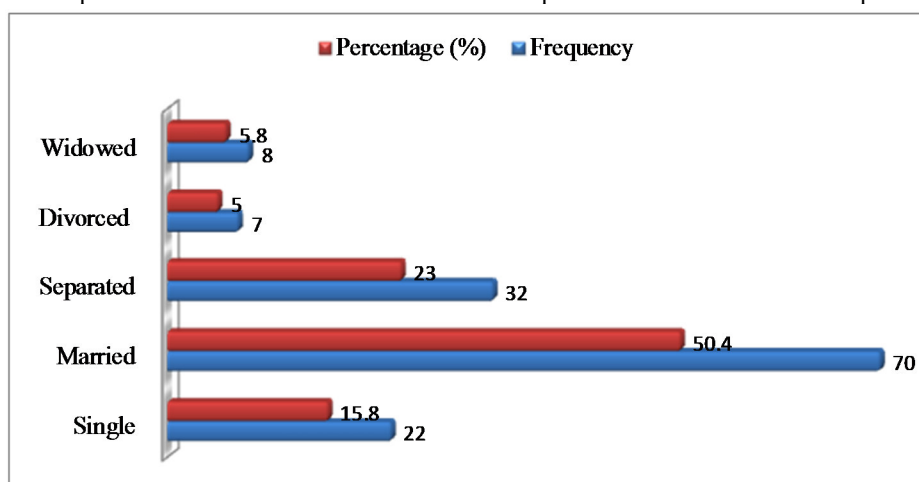


Figure 1: Marital status of respondents

1.9.3 Level of education of respondents

Results in table 2 show that most respondents had attained primary level of education and this category constituted 43.9% while 26.6% of the respondents had reached secondary school level. It was also revealed from the findings of the study that 22.3% of the respondents had not attained any formal education while 4.3% had been trained in trade tests and other technical courses. The least number of respondents was that of people who had reached tertiary level of education and they constituted 2.9% of the respondents. Since most respondents had primary level of education and no formal education at all, it can be argued that education plays a significant role in shaping people's behaviour. The more educated people are more engaged in constructive activities and therefore they are less likely to commit crimes as compared to the less educated and those who are not educated at all.

Table 2: Level of education of respondents

Education level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No formal education	31	22.3%
Primary education	61	43.9%
Secondary education	37	26.6%
Tertiary education	4	2.9%
Trade/Technical	6	4.3%
Total	139	100.0

1.9.4 Employment status before conviction

Study findings in figure 2 show that 53.2% of the respondents were in employment of some sort before conviction. Results also show that 36.7% of the respondents were self employed before conviction while a further 10.1% were students. The results imply that most of the incarcerated members of the community were engaging themselves in some productive activities of nation building before they were convicted.

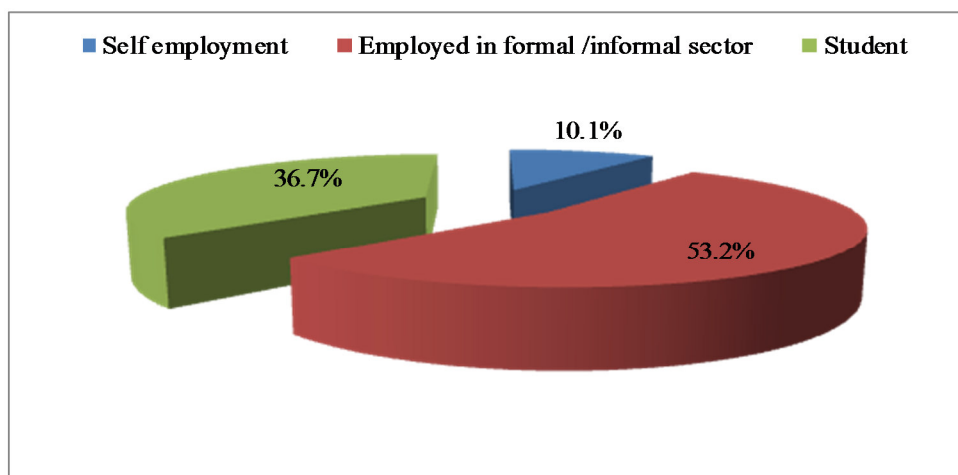


Figure 2: Employment status before conviction

Table 3: Multinomial Logistic Regression Analysis for the challenges that are faced by offenders during reentry

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
1	(Constant)	1.115	.081		4.117	.000
	Challenges faced	.192	.076	.148	1.132	.015

a- Predictors: Challenges faced by offenders

b- Dependent Variable: Reentry of offenders

A bivariate correlation and regression analysis was conducted using challenges faced by offenders during reentry as a predictor of the direction and magnitude of influence on the experiences during reentry. The results indicated that 76% of variance in the reentry experiences of offenders was attributed to their life in prison (Beta 0.148, T= 1.132, P<0.05). This means that time spent at the prison was a statistically significant predictor of the reentry experience of offenders. This result reveal that the longer the duration spent in prison, the worse the reentry experience since those inmates who were served longer sentences suffered the greatest reentry experiences occasioned by disintegrated families, inability to easily secure employment after release, and high chances of reoffending.

Challenges that are faced by offenders during reentry experience were analyzed to determine their magnitude and direction of influence on the ability of prisoners to cope well and reintegrate back into the society upon release from prison. Findings are presented in table 4.

Table 4: Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations and Reliability estimates for factors on experiences of inmates

Measure of challenge faced	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Perception by family	0.63	0.61	-									
Visits by family members	0.81	4.36	.591*	-								
Reception by community	11.32	2.82	.659*	.421	-							
How offender spent time	2.21	2.00	.677*	.498	.431	-						
Time lapse before recidivating	2.73	2.39	.565*	.765	.599*	.871*	-					
Influence of community on reoffending	1.72	0.56	.876**	.536*	.828**	.495	.731*	-				
How offender secured material/financial support	1.32	0.69	.667*	.755*	.409	.503*	.604*	.832**	-			
Presence of ex-offender in the family	12.3	5.22	.709*	.661*	.873*	.397	.595*	.637*	.454	-		
Number of children	0.93	3.09	.691*	.549*	.570*	.465*	.699*	.476*	.661*	.713**	-	
Current caregiver	0.48	0.72	.788*	.871**	.675*	.705*	.881**	.873*	.569*	.691**	.741**	-

Note: N = 139; reliability coefficients =.819.

*p < .01 **p < .05

Findings in table 4 show that perception by family members of the offender upon release had a statistically significant influence on their feelings of acceptance and by extension to their prospects of recidivating (SD=0.61;

Mean=0.63). When considering perception by family members as a determinant for visiting the inmate while in prison, a statistically significant positive relationship was recorded at 95% confidence level ($r=0.591$; $P<0.05$). This shows that inmates who were positively perceived by their family members were more likely to be visited in prison as compared to those who were negatively perceived. From the study, it is evident that offenders who maintained good relationships with their families and who had positive ties with their families while in prison were less likely to reoffend. This finding corroborates other studies which have been conducted showing that the relationships that former prisoners have are central to their reentry experiences. One of the most commonly discussed types of relationships is that with romantic partners (Huebner, 2007; King, Massoglia, & Macmillan, 2007). Among male offenders, marriage has a positive effect of reducing offending by increasing social control, changing routine activities, and decreasing time spent with offending peers (Laub et al., 1998; Warr, 1998).

Findings of the study further show that most recidivists were previously negatively received from their respective communities upon release from prison owing to their crimes ($SD=2.82$; $Mean=11.32$). It was also found that most inmates who were negatively received by their communities could relapse and go back to crime as opposed to those who did not expect a negative reception from the community ($r=0.599$; $P<0.05$).

Most respondents spent much of their time with a crop of old friends who were offenders and newly established networks of offenders at prisons ($SD=2.00$; $Mean=2.21$). This means that prison experience does not break the bonds of old friends and that the influence of old offending friends goes beyond the post release period, as also new networks between offenders are established in prisons and extended to post release and such friendships and networks have a significant influence on recidivism ($r=0.871$; $P<0.05$). Respondents generally took a shorter time to go back to crime ($SD=2.39$; $Mean=2.73$). Most relapses were due to peer pressure and bad association during post release times ($r=0.431$; $P>0.05$). Other studies have tried to understand how peer networks and the likelihood of returning to criminogenic social networks, particularly among male offenders may influence reentry experiences of offenders (Scott, 2004; Warr, 1998). Those who resume pre-incarceration patterns of behavior, including spending time with old friends, looking for easy money, or engaging in side relationships or one-night stands, were more likely to be reincarcerated than those who socially isolated themselves or those who engaged in more pro-social behavior and relationship patterns (Seal, Eldridge, Kacanek, Binson, & Macgowan, 2007).

A significant number of respondents indicated that the community had a role to play in recidivism. Findings indicate that respondents perceived that the community influences recidivism through labeling and demonizing offenders where upon such offenders move in full throttle to fulfill the image that the community gives them as potential offenders ($SD=0.56$; $Mean=1.72$; $r=0.828$; $P<0.05$). Findings of this study corroborate findings of a study conducted by Chiricos et al. (2007) who found that the “convicted” label itself shapes recidivism, especially for those who are otherwise less likely to recidivate, and perhaps they have more to lose by the label.

Most respondents indicated that they used personal efforts to secure financial and material support after release from prison since the family and community members were reluctant in offering support to them upon release ($r=0.755$; $P<0.05$). Quite a significant number of respondents secured financial and material support from offender support programs, notably those involving the prisons institutions and other non-governmental organizations, while fewer respondents received support from family and community members. This means that upon release from prisons, there are no express provisions to ensure smooth transition of the prisoner back into the community on matters to do with financial and material support.

There was a statistically significant relationship between presence of an ex-offender in the family and the possibility of reoffending and those inmates who had an ex-offender in their families took a shorter time to recidivate as compared to those inmates who did not ($SD=5.22$; $Mean=12.3$; $r=0.596$; $P<0.05$). This point to the fact that there is potential negative influence within the family that may lead a given inmate to return to crime after release.

Most respondents had more than three children with a standard deviation of 3.09 and mean of 0.93. It was also noted that most respondents had children below the age of 18 years. Where respondents were asked who cared for their children while they serve prison sentences, majority of the respondents who were male indicated that the caregivers were the mothers of their children. Whereas most men who are convicted indicated that their children are in the custody of their mother's, majority of the women who are convicted, their children were under the custody of their grandparents/relatives and not their fathers. This is a clear sign that most women who get convicted to serve jail terms leave their children with people who are not fathers to those children. This shows that most husbands of convicted women move on with their lives disregarding the upkeep of the children they sired with women who have been incarcerated.

2.0 Conclusions of the study

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that offenders experience a number of challenges upon their release from prisons in Kenya and that the family and the community were a key determinant in successful reentry process. Failure by the family members to visit offenders while in prisons, negative perception by both the

family and the community members, labeling of offenders by the community members after their release from prisons, failure by the offenders to get access to legitimate means of goal attainment in the community due to segregation and negative reception of the offenders by the community were all challenges faced by the offenders in the reentry process and that compelled them to relapse into criminal activities soon after release from prisons.

2.1 Recommendations of the study

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

- i. There is need for the establishment of pre-release programs meant to enable inmates to have smooth transitions from correctional institutions to their communities. Offenders and the various stakeholders including the family, community and correctional institutions should be involved to develop plans, including housing, employment and participation in post-release programs. This will help inmates to successfully reenter their communities since members of the family and the community would have been involved in the process.
- ii. There is need to work with various stakeholders to build a social service networks to connect offenders to post-release supportive services such as treatment, counseling, housing assistance, education and job training and placement.
- iii. The training that is offered in prisons should be geared as closely as possible to the needs of, and skills gaps in, the surrounding labour market. While in prisons, prisoners should have the opportunity of engaging in training and educational programs that will increase their employability. There should be an assessment of the individual prisoner's competences, needs and aspirations, at the point of admission, and on the basis of which an appropriate resettlement plan can be developed.

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