



**UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA  
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
CENTER FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

**INMATES REHABILITATION PROGRAMS AND TRENDS IN  
RECIDIVISM: CASE OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM AT  
MUHANGA PRISON**

Thesis submitted to the UR in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Award of a Master degree of Arts in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation.

**By**

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Musanze, June, 2019

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## DECLARATION

I, Alex Celestine MUGISHA do hereby declare that this study entitled *'Inmates rehabilitation programs and trends in recidivism: case of vocational training program at Muhanga prison* is my original study work and has never been submitted for any academic award to any university or higher learning institution. Nevertheless, the material used of other scholars and publications are acknowledged as indicated in references and bibliography

Signature.....Date .... /...../2019

Students' name: *Alex Celestine MUGISHA*

## **DEDICATION**

To the almighty God

To my beloved wife Suzan

To my beloved Children Bright and Keza

To my parents and extended family

To all my friends and relatives

Thank you all for the support

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and consideration to those who supported me directly or indirectly in carrying out this research. First and foremost, I thank the almighty God for providing me the grace and wisdom to complete this thesis. I would like to express my sincere consideration to my friends and relatives for their moral support.

I wish to extend great thanks to the management of University of Rwanda especially the Center for Conflict Management, Rwanda Correctional Service and Rwanda National Police College, for their facilitation that helped me in achieving this level.

Never can I forget my supervisor, *Dr. P. MUGUME* whose supervision, criticisms and guidance were so much empowering, even though he was very occupied by different academic activities, but he accepted to bear the responsibility of taking over with his generous heart during the course of this thesis; I owe him profound appreciation.

I am indebted to my family members for their moral support throughout my studies; I would like to thank my Dad Celestine Rwiyamirira, my mum Flavia Kayiraba, my wife Suzan Mbabazi, my siblings; Diana Kayirebwa, Denis Rwiyamirira, Ronald Rugamba, Dixon Rwiyamirira and Brendah Mutoni. My son Bright Allan Mugisha and my Daughter Oanah Keza Mugisha. I love you all!

Finally, I am thankful to everyone who directly and indirectly contributed to the achievement of this study.

God bless you all!

**Alex Celestine MUGISHA**

## ABSTRACT

This study is about recidivism of ex-inmates and was conducted at Muhanga Prison in Muhanga District. It has covered a period of time starting from 2015 until 2018. The overall objective of this study was the exploration of factors leading ex-inmates get involved in crime related activities leading to recidivism in Muhanga Prison. The study used the social cognitive theory as well as the theory of planned behavior. Methodologically, the study was qualitative in nature and used questionnaire, interview and documentation review to collect data which were both primary and secondary. Participants were selected from different groups who included inmates convicted of recidivism related crimes, local authorities and correctional officers at Muhanga Prison. The major findings of the study were that, the livelihood of inmates after their previous release, the handling of dangerous drugs and drug abuse, expectation for higher profits and the addiction in drug dealing are the main factors influencing recidivism. It was also revealed that majority of respondents were affirmative that the rehabilitative programs had an effect on them while, a high percentage number of them felt that schools were less helpful and this calls for the need to reassess these programs and replace them with more programs supported by a high number of prisoners. Noted was also that, the categorization in the correctional programs provided by Muhanga Prison, the sensitization to fight against stigmatization of ex-inmates, the information sharing between Muhanga Prison and the local administration authority, as well as the provision of a financial package helping recidivists to start small income generating projects were presented as paramount for the proper reintegration of recidivists into the society. The major conclusions of the study were that, a vital element in the rehabilitation and reintegration of inmates is the role that is played by the correctional system in involving inmates in programs serving to fight against recidivism at Muhanga Prison. It also discovered that there is no systematic policy for taking care of ex-inmates in all local administrative entities. It also found out that they are at risks of a societal stigma, when the people are rejected by their neighborhood and society in general simply for having been in prison, this challenges their reintegration. By combining the two major conclusions above, the study finally revealed that, the education and training about recidivism in Muhanga Prison and the social reinsertion of ex inmates by the local administration constitute elements of crime prevention possibilities which can help to prevent recidivism related crimes in our societies.

***Keywords: Recidivism, Inmates Rehabilitation programs and crime prevention***



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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS**

<b>CCM:</b>	Center for Conflict Management
<b>Dr:</b>	Doctor
<b>Frw:</b>	Rwandan francs
<b>IECMS:</b>	Integrated Electronic Case Management System
<b>MINJUST:</b>	Ministry of Justice
<b>RCS:</b>	Rwanda Correctional Service
<b>UNODC:</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UR:</b>	University of Rwanda
<b>USA:</b>	United States of America

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

In this study, the exploration of factors on the trends in recidivism in relation to the vocational training program extended to prisoners was made and constituted a contribution and an icebreaker for the researcher to the improvement of the correctional system. The study was conducted in Muhanga Prison, located in the southern Province in Muhanga district. It has covered a period of time starting from October 2018- June 2019. The overall objective of this study is the exploration of factors leading ex-inmates get involved in crime related activities leading to recidivism in Muhanga Prison. However, it will also be imperative to find out existing mechanisms and preemptive measures to avoid recidivism of ex-inmates in Muhanga Prison.

This chapter discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, Research objectives, research questions, Scope and delimitation of the study, Significance of the study and Research justification and the structure of the entire research study.

#### **1.0. Background of the Study**

Allan (2003), urges that, the effect of incarceration on former prisoners has been a very common topic of discussion for many years and in most cases, it is believed that many prisoners will find themselves right back where they started, that is in jail. In the United States, 53% of arrested males and 39% of arrested females are incarcerated (Allan, 2003 as cited in carol 2014:1). This act of a person repeating an undesirable behaviour after they have either experienced negative consequences of that behaviour, or have been treated or trained to extinguish that behaviour is referred to as recidivism. The term recidivism is also used to refer to former prisoners who are rearrested, (Baldry, 2003 as cited in carol 2014:1). Recidivist is thus the person who repeats some sort of criminal activities even after he/she has been punished for such or other previous criminal activities.

Additionally, other scholars such as Nathan James, Esperian and Michael Maltz also advanced their arguments on the concept of “recidivism” as follows; Nathan James (2005) views recidivism as the “re-arrest, reconviction, or re-incarceration of an ex-offender within a given time frame”. He argues that the definition of recidivism can affect how recidivism is measured as anticipated, he found that the broader the definition of recidivism, the higher the measured recidivism. Reflecting a broad definition of recidivism, most studies include technical violations of an offender’s parole or probation (James, 2015: 1).

According to Esperian (2010), urges that, Recidivism is a return to criminal behaviour after release. The effectiveness of corrections is often measured by the rates of recidivism. Among the factors that affect recidivism rates are socioeconomic status, effectiveness of post release supervision, length of incarceration, the severity and seriousness of the crime committed, and educational attainment of the individual (Esperian, 2010: 316).

According to Michael D Maltz (2001), recidivism is defined as “arrest only if followed by affirmative prosecutorial action”. From his definition, recidivism need not be determined by arrest alone but by looking at subsequent criminal justice transactions based on the arrest (Maltz: academic Press, 2001:7).

Other than those arguments advanced by those different scholars above on recidivism, also the Rwandan Penal code (2018) pointed up a meaning of recidivism as a re-offense that occurs when a person who was previously sentenced to imprisonment of at least six months, commits another felony or misdemeanour within a period of five years after completion of the penalty. The Rwandan Penal Code (2018) defines felony as an offence punishable under the law by a main penalty of an imprisonment of more than five (5) years (Penal code, 2018: Art. 79).

Indeed, a misdemeanor is defined as an offence punishable under the law by a main penalty of an imprisonment of six (6) months to five (5) in the Rwandan Penal code. Again,

imprisonment derives from “imprison”: which the article three of the law establishing Rwanda Correctional Service (2010) defines as to keep a person in prison following a court decision (Art.3, 2011).

In addition, researchers on recidivism associated it with various factors including the socio economic reintegration system, formal correctional education, and the impact of vocational trainings. They demonstrated that recidivism is a complex concept which can be explained after examination of various dynamics and factors. In his article on the effectiveness of after care services and reintegration of ex-prisoners, Ajala A E.M. (2011) argued that rehabilitation and reintegration is a process by which ex-inmates who finished their sentences re-acquire their status of a normal citizen (Ajala, 2011:185-198).

According to Ajala’s argument, ex-inmates constitute a focus group for reintegration through aftercare efforts and initiatives made within the community or society in terms of restoring their status of wellbeing. Therefore, the rehabilitation and reintegration programs are enough to fight against reoffending in general, and particularly recidivism which, as defined above, is a case of return to criminal behavior after release.

From the arguments above, on the understanding of recidivism advanced by different scholars as well as its meaning in accordance to the Rwandan Penal code, it is also important to look at Inmates Rehabilitation programs as the independent variable in this study and this is explained as follows;

According to Bushway (2003), inmates’ rehabilitation programs fit into three main categories: jobs in the prison setting; Short term vocational training in prison and short term assistance in the job search process upon release (Bushway 2003 as cited in Magali 2016:9). Other programs merge two categories, most commonly providing training inside prison along with job search assistance outside of prison. Prison programs provide: a form of rehabilitation for the inmate; They can help manage the population by occupying the time of

the inmates; aid in the operation of the prison; Possibly generate new revenue; And provide a way for prisoners to “pay back” their debt to society (Bushway 2003 as cited in Magali 2016:10).

Another Scholar, Nathan James (2015), urges that ,there are three facets associated with offender Rehabilitation programs: programs that take place during incarceration, which aim to prepare offenders for their eventual release, programs that take place during offenders’ release period, which seek to connect ex-offenders with the various services they may require, and long term programs that take place as ex-offenders permanently reintegrate into their communities, which attempt to provide offenders with support and supervision (James 2007 as cited in Magali 2016:12).

Vacca (2004) urges that, Inmates are more inclined to participate in programs where they see clear opportunities to improve their skills and capabilities. Vocational training programs experience success because they are kept separate from traditional prison routines, provide follow-up services for inmates once released, and provide marketable training skills (Vacca 2004 as cited in Magali, 2016:13).

Reading from Perry (2014) arguments where the recognition on the role of education and additionally included vocational programs in factors influencing ex-prisoner’s times after release. She found that both education and vocation programs increase survival times for re-arrest and re-confinement, with the larger effects for re-confinement. Between the two program types, the greater impact tends to be for vocational programs which again points to the success.

In the context of Perry (2014) statement, vocational training programs are one of the most successful programs in reducing the rates of recidivism but some recidivists who after serving their sentences and released from prison find it more difficult to fit back to the society due to



other issues like stigmatization or branding them as prisoners. They therefore end up relapsing to criminal activities as a means of not only sustaining their livelihoods but also as a way of trying to fit into the society that have harshly handled them (Perry,2014 as cited in Carol 2014:65).

### **1.1. Statement of the Problem**

Ideally, rehabilitation of inmates takes the form of education programs including vocational training to reform them in a way that they become law abiding citizens contributing to the welfare of the community and society Rehabilitation programs can include all the activities and programming conducted to prepare prisoners to return safely to the community and to live as law abiding citizens (Esperian, 2010: 334).

However, the question that arises after carefully examining countries' levels of expenditure on the criminal justice systems and rehabilitation programs is; what ails these programs? This is because despite most of the criminals having gone through the correctional facilities and dully completed their sentences, statistics show that in a country like U.S., within 3 years almost 7 out of every 10 released criminals will be rearrested and half will be back in prison (Santos 1995 as cited in, Carol 2014:5).

The Rwandan statistics might not exactly replicate the trends in the United Sates but one sure thing is that there are many criminals who after serving their sentences from the prison, they are released into the community either through presidential pardons or after dully serving their sentences, still find their way back into prisons for various reasons. For example, according to Statistics from Rwanda Correctional Service (RCS September, 2018) drawn from Muhanga Prison, indicate that since 2015 to September 2018, there is an estimated number of two hundred and twenty-two recidivists (222) despite the rehabilitation programs including vocational training that is offered to the inmates. And perhaps this might be due to the inefficiency in extending these programs to the targeted inmates in the prison or other

factors related to their reintegration process within Muhanga district thus prompting the researcher to carry out this study.

The Consequence is that if such programs do not exert equal efforts at the tail end of the system for example, by aiming to decrease the likelihood of reoffending among formerly incarcerated persons, this will be a significant issue because ninety-five percent of prisoners will be released back into the community at some point. At this rate, there is reason for concern because if almost half of that percentage is to find their way back into prison, it then follows that they will have done a lot of damage to the society before they get back to prison, a phenomenon that is not desirable by all means.

Therefore, there is need to find out whether vocational training programs such as Tailoring, Construction, Carpentry, brick laying, Prison farm and Masonry that are employed by the correctional facilities have any effect on the trends of recidivism. This is because in most cases, the criminal justice system tends to focus its efforts at the front end of the system, in prisons locking people up and that is why the researcher is interested in analysing the impact of prison rehabilitation programs on trends in recidivism with a focus on vocational training program at Muhanga Prison.

## **1.2. Research objectives**

The research objectives of this study will be categorised as general objective and the specific objectives.

### **1.2.1. General objective**

The overall objective of this study is the exploration of factors leading ex-inmates get involved in crime related activities leading to recidivism in Muhanga Prison. However, it will also be imperative to find out existing mechanisms and preemptive measures to avoid recidivism of ex-inmates in Muhanga Prison.

### **1.2.2. Specific objectives**

The study is guided by the following Specific objectives;

- To find out the common factors associated with Recidivism at Muhanga Prison.
- To find out the effectiveness of vocational training programs in relation to Recidivism.
- To find out existing mechanisms and preemptive measures to prevent recidivism at Muhanga Prison.

### **1.3. Research questions**

In order to examine factors leading ex- inmates to get involved in crimes related activities leading to recidivism in Muhanga Prison, it is important to conduct such research in the social field and research questions are designed to provide orientation of the study. With the aim of contributing to the knowledge related to crime prevention, it is an exploration of why ex-prisoners are doing recidivism when they are offered rehabilitation programs at Muhanga Prison in Muhanga district. All the above considerations lead to the following research questions: Referring to the above mentioned problem statement the researcher set the following questions:

#### **1.3.1. Specific Research questions**

- What are the common factors associated with recidivism at Muhanga Prison?
- How effective is vocational training program in providing adequate skills for ex-inmates at Muhanga Prison?
- What are the existing mechanisms and preemptive measures to prevent recidivism at Muhanga Prison?

#### **1.4. Scope and delimitation of the study**

This research is practically qualitative and explorative. It examines the factors leading ex-inmates to recidivism despite the rehabilitation programs including vocational training that is offered to them at Muhanga Prison with a view to finding possible solutions for remedy. The area of study is Muhanga Prison. It was selected on account that Muhanga Prison is one of the Prisons in Rwanda with the highest number of recidivists in the last five years (2013-2018) according to (RCS Statistics, 2018). Therefore, this was presumed to bring added value to our data collection possibility and efficiency. The research covered inmates sentenced for recidivism imprisoned in Muhanga Prison, the administration of Muhanga Prison and local administration at the Cell level. The period of study is between 2015 and 2018. It is therefore, from this period that the reports from Muhanga Prison started to include more details on inmates' statistics and criminal records.

#### **1.5. Significance of the study and Research justification**

This study is of benefit to academics interested in crime prevention, correctional and rehabilitation systems as well due to the fact that it provides information that assist in making better, the vocational training programs that are in place at Muhanga prison. Thus the study shall achieve this by assessing the effects that the current vocational training programs have on prisoners. The study is thus expected to come up with ways of improving these programs and therefore form policy.

The study is also expected to benefit other countries which are experiencing high rates of recidivism and therefore assess their criminal justice systems of the pressure posed by recidivism. Furthermore, the study shall act as the basis of literature for future studies and will suggest to the scholars on areas that still require further inquiry. They will have a foundation to base their studies on.

Theoretically, the study will add to the pool of knowledge on the impacts of rehabilitation programs in prisons on recidivists in Rwanda and consequently as an officer in the Rwanda Correctional Service (RCS), with the aim of exploring factors of trends in recidivism in relation to the vocational training program extended to prisoners, this study will constitute a contribution and an icebreaker for the researcher to the improvement of the correctional practices with a view to serve the society by addressing recidivism trends through the correctional system.

### **1.6. Structure of the Study**

The Structure of this study composes of five chapters and in this context, chapter one discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, Research objectives, research questions, Scope and delimitation of the study, Significance of the study and Research justification.

Chapter two reviews the existing literature on recidivism and how the vocational training programs that are offered to prisoner's impact on them with the view of making it quite clear that rehabilitation programs affect prisoners to an extend of re-offending. The literature review will discuss on examining the rehabilitation programs for prisoners and their effectiveness in reducing recidivism.

Chapter three presents the methods and methodology used in this research. It provides an overview of the category under which this study falls as well as the population concerned with this study. It describes the sampling method, the source of data, which focuses on primary and secondary data. It also provides a discussion on methods and instruments that were used to collect and analyze, as well as interpret data in order to get meaningful results.

Chapter four looks at data presentation, analysis and discussion and being a qualitative study which gathered data on recidivism in relation to the vocational training that is offered at Muhanga prison, Interview and questionnaire were used to collect data that helped in

responding to research questions in order to achieve the objectives of the research. The Represented data in this chapter are divided into two main categories namely characteristics of respondents, data related to the recidivist character of respondents and data related to the objectives of the study.

Chapter five presents the general conclusion and recommendations that clearly shows the reasons behind the continuity recidivism despite the deterrence and rehabilitation programs especially vocational training that is expected to have been achieved or gained by ex-inmate's stay in prison.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the existing literature on recidivism and how the vocational training programs that are offered to prisoner's impact on them with the view of making it quite clear that rehabilitation programs affect prisoners to an extend of re-offending. The literature review discusses on examining the rehabilitation programs for prisoners and their effectiveness in reducing Recidivism.

In examining rehabilitation programs, I focus on the Vocational training programs and specifically how these types of programs are a form of rehabilitation for inmates by providing them with a marketable skill set to use when looking for a job after they are released from prison. To check if this type of rehabilitation can provide them with a possibility to obtain a job that pays a liveable wage and deter them from returning to criminal activities or returning to prison under other circumstances and factors. Therefore, some contexts might be similar to the case study of this research and this gives orientation to the above mentioned questions and objectives.

#### 2.1. Clarifying key concepts

This section gives clarifications on the key concepts in order to facilitate on understanding the main terms which are based on delivering the research process as well as the focus. The reviewed definitions are based on different authors and scholars. It also uses official documents which are related with the context of the area of the study. The key concepts defined are: *Recidivism, Inmates Rehabilitation programs and crime prevention.*

##### 2.1.1. Concept of Recidivism.

Every year, thousands of mainly young men are sent to prison, often for very short periods of time. Even a short prison term can have a dramatic effect on the emotional and personal well-

being of any person. Apart from exposure to hardened criminals and prison gangs, a young man leaving prison after only six months has probably experienced some of the worst situations and conditions in his life so far. The fact that much of South Africa's prison population is serving sentences of less than six months and that, in all likelihood, no services will be provided to assist them upon their release, is of concern, which with no doubt is partially to blame for the current recidivism rates (Mouzos, Smith & Hind, 2006:17).

According to Nathan James (2005) views recidivism as the "re-arrest, reconviction, or reincarceration of an ex-offender within a given time frame". He argues that the definition of recidivism can affect how recidivism is measured as anticipated, he found that the broader the definition of recidivism, the higher the measured recidivism. Reflecting on a broad definition of recidivism, most studies include technical violations of an offender's parole or probation (James, 2015: 1).

Similarly, Michael D Maltz (2001), states on how decisions and policy conclusions have been based on studies that used definitions of recidivism in USA, recidivism is defined as "arrest only if followed by affirmative prosecutorial action". From his definition, recidivism need not to be determined by arrest alone but by looking at subsequent criminal justice transactions based on the arrest. This usually means that every case folder in the office must be examined to determine the name of the defendant, the nature of the original charge at arrest, whether the charges have been dropped or pursued further, and the present disposition of the case (Maltz, 2001).

Maltz statement suggests that records must be examined to see if an indictment, information, or other prosecutorial actions have taken place, before qualifying a criminal case as recidivism. He continues explaining that a person should be considered as a recidivist even if he shifts from one crime type to a totally different type, and that it is possible to label a person a recidivist only if he commits the same type of crime for which he was originally



convicted. If the arrest date coincides with offense date, then arrest date is a good indicator of recidivism (Maltz, 2001).

Again, the Rwandan Penal code (2018) pointed up a meaning of recidivism as a re-offense that occurs when a person who was previously sentenced to imprisonment of at least six months, commits another felony or misdemeanour within a period of five years after completion of the penalty. The Rwandan Penal Code (2018) defines felony as an offence punishable under the law by a main penalty of an imprisonment of more than five (5) years (Penal code, 2018: Art. 79).

Indeed, a misdemeanor is defined as an offence punishable under the law by a main penalty of an imprisonment of six (6) months to five (5) in the Rwandan Penal code. Again, imprisonment derives from “imprison”: which the article three of the law establishing Rwanda Correctional Service (2010) defines as to keep a person in prison following a court decision (Art.3, 2011).

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNODC (2012), refers recidivism to whether or not a person who is the object of a criminal justice intervention (punishment) commits a new criminal offence. John Esperian (2010), when studying the constraints of budget in US prisons defines recidivism as a return to criminal behavior after release (Esperian 2010:316-334). With references made from the above definitions, this research defined recidivism from the perspective of the Rwandan penal code as reviewed and released in 2018 because that serves the explanation used for the purpose and the context of this study. Therefore, Recidivism is concerned with ex-inmates who have been re-sentenced and condemned for imprisonment, when they have committed other crime or crimes within the period of five years after the completion of the previous penalty.

### **2.1.2. Inmates Rehabilitation programs**

According to Bushway (2003), inmates' rehabilitation programs fit into three main categories: jobs in the prison setting; Short term vocational training in prison and short term assistance in the job search process upon release (Bushway 2003 as cited in Magali 2016:9). Prison programs provide: a form of rehabilitation for the inmate; they can help manage the population by occupying the time of the inmates; aid in the operation of the prison; Possibly generate new revenue; and provide a way for prisoners to "pay back" their debt to society (Bushway 2003 as cited in Magali 2016:10).

Adding on Bushway's explanations on inmates rehabilitation programs, Nathan James (2015), also urges that, there are three facets associated with offender Rehabilitation programs: programs that take place during incarceration, which aim to prepare offenders for their eventual release, programs that take place during offenders' release period, which seek to connect ex-offenders with the various services they may require, and long term programs that take place as ex-offenders permanently reintegrate into their communities, which attempt to provide offenders with support and supervision (James 2007 as cited in Magali 2016:12).

Taking it from James's arguments on inmates' rehabilitation programs above, vacca (2004) states that, inmates are more inclined to participate in programs where they see clear opportunities to improve their skills and capabilities. Vocational training programs experience success because they are kept separate from traditional prison routines, provide follow-up services for inmates once released, and provide marketable training skills (Vacca 2004 as cited in Magali 2016:13).

According to the law that established Rwanda Correctional Service (RCS), which is under Law N ° 34/2010 of 12/11/2010. Shows the mandate of RCS which is primarily to ensure rehabilitation of inmates by designing proper correctional regimes not disregarding promotion of justice that align with international standards, proper coordination with other

justice sector institutions while preparing for effective reintegration of inmates back in society. To achieve its mandate, RCS motto is Justice, Corrections, Knowledge and Production. Again under this law, rehabilitation explains a process of extending different social reparation programs during the incarceration that help inmates behave good and become responsible citizens when back into the society (MINIJUST,2012).

Therefore, inmates' rehabilitation programs including vocational training in this study refer to the programs such as tailoring, carpentry, automobile mechanics, brick laying, electricity engineering and construction works that are extended to the prisoners including the recidivists with the aim of behavioral change and become responsible citizens when back into their societies.

### **2.1.3. Effect of inmate rehabilitation programs including vocational training on prisoners**

Studies have shown that normalizing the prison experience through the offering of education programming, vocational training, and work for pay, along with transitional skill building reduces recidivism exponentially. Prison should not be for the inmate to have a life of leisure with no sense of responsibility to the larger society. Prison should however, be a place where the inmate can make amends, find societal redemption, and learn skills allowing him to live in the larger society as a positive force instead of a liability (Nyauchi, 2009:36).

Based on studies that have been conducted in most parts of the world, it has become very obvious that the keeping of prisoners behind bars should be focused on deterrence and keeping such persons away from the society. Rehabilitation programs have in the recent past come out strongly as the best way to handle prisoners to the change so that they do not get them back to prison. Instead they need to find something meaningful to engage in so that at the end of the day, the rates of crime are reduced. Among the programs that are employed in prisons to rehabilitate prisoners include; allowing mothers to keep children born in prison,

victim offender mediation, boot camp for minors, faith-based prison programs, dogs in jails where inmates are used to train dogs.(Nyauchi, 2009:36).

State prisons and juvenile facilities generally offer at least basic education programming, allowing inmates to work toward a high school diploma or general education equivalency certificate. Inmates may learn valuable employability skills that translate to opportunities for employment upon release. An increase in positive inmate programming has proven to minimize institutional violence because of decreased idleness. (Nyauchi, 2009:37).

## **2.2. Crime Prevention**

Crime Prevention comprises strategies and measures that seek to reduce the risk of crimes occurring, and their potential harmful effects on individuals and society, including fear of crime, by intervening to influence their multiple causes ([www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org) as visited on 03 March 2019).

According to New York Police publication on crime prevention (2018), Crime Prevention is the anticipation, recognition, and appraisal of a crime risk, and the initiation of action to remove or reduce it. It is an active approach utilizing public awareness and preventive measures to reduce crime. It also reflects a philosophy of self-defense where the police and the community take action before crimes are committed. The programs on crime prevention will reduce crime, stimulate public awareness concerning crime prevention and enhance our communities (New York Police publication on crime prevention 2018).

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime(2010),Crime prevention is defined as the strategies and measures that seek to reduce the risk of crimes occurring, and their potential harmful effects on individuals and society, including fear of crime, by intervening to influence their multiple causes (UNODC handbook,2010:9).

At the individual level, risk factors for offending and victimization include biological and personal factors that may lead to early aggressive behavior or serious substance abuse, for example. Risk factors connected with relationships include family characteristics such as harsh or erratic parenting, family conflict and violence and abuse, family circumstances such as poverty and isolation, and relationships with friends and peers that can lead to risk-taking and law breaking (UNODC handbook 2010:10).

### **2.3. Different approaches to recidivism**

An examination of the literature surrounding the topic of recidivism shows that scholars provided various justifications on recidivism; therefore, this section aims at evaluating the different methodologies used in this field so as to identify the appropriate approach for investigating the findings of this study. Based on the literature, research which was made on recidivism with reference to different approaches including the offenders' treatment approach, the social reintegration approach as well as the law enforcement approach.

#### **2.3.1. The offenders' treatment approach**

The UNODC (2012) considers recidivism as a key indicator of the performance of social reintegration programs and initiatives (UNODC, 2012). The UNODC concept of recidivism factors includes both the correctional system and the social reintegration system.

In this regard, the emphasis is accorded on the importance of treatment, education and rehabilitation programs in prisons to prepare prisoners for a successful return to the community and prevent recidivism. It reviews some cognitive-behavioral and other treatment programs, as well as more specialized programs that address the offenders' risk factors and needs and help offenders prepare themselves for the challenges they face after their release. This includes pre-release planning programs and transition facilities that are often crucial to the offenders' successful re-entry into the community and their desistance from crime (UNODC, 2012:12).

Founded on the above conception, the UNODC stresses on the rules and practices preparing ex-inmates to realize their life after release without necessarily focusing on frequency of crime or particular crimes which are sources of recidivism. It is comprehensible that those rules concern the correctional system which has to provide offenders with a package that as far as possible is there to maintain or increase the prisoner's ability to earn an honest living after release. An attention is placed on the need for several international standards relating to the assessment and individualization of treatment to prisoners, offenders' contact with the family and community, education and vocational training. In order to individualize treatment according to offenders, the UNODC argues that there is a need to properly assess prisoners and to prepare a program of treatment suitable to their needs, capacities and dispositions.

On the contacts with family and community, the UNODC argues on the right of prisoners to maintain contact and to be visited by members of their family. The need to provide prisoners with education and to integrate educational programs within the country's system is noted, to ensure that prisoners can continue their education after their release without too much difficulty (UNODC, 2012). The UNODC suggestions are rather about preemptive measures against recidivism in general. It is related with the definition of recidivism, emphasizes on the rules and conventions related with correctional regimes, promoting the individual assessment and treatment of the inmate, the preservation of the contact with the family, education programs during the imprisonment, as well as the social reintegration after release. However, re-offense factors and specific crimes are not given much attention.

John H. Esperian arguments (2010), partially comply with the UNODC about combating recidivism through the educational programs provided to inmates by the prisons. He mentions recidivism when he studied on the insufficiency of the budget in the American prisons. He defines recidivism as a return to criminal behavior after release and focuses on the costs of locking criminals up. (Esperian, 2010: 316-334).

### **2.3.2. The Social reintegration approach**

Again, research has been attentive with the social reintegration. It is highlighted that prison is not transforming the majority of criminals into functioning members of our society. From the School of Social Work at the St. Catherine University, Paulson (2013), put attention toward the growing social problem of recidivism among ex-offenders in the United States.

Referring to Paulson, recidivism is referred when persons continued criminal behavior after receiving some sanctions or undergoing intervention for a previous crime. In this regards, offenders are not prepared for successful release due to societal and personal barriers. The most common themes throughout the findings were the issue behind social stigma in preventing ex-offenders to succeed within their community (Paulson, 2013).

It is comprehensible that, the society in itself has built barriers around ex-offenders that limit their ability to success the conditions of release. Paulson further agrees with the UNODC in terms of the relationship inmates have with the external environment outside the prison, including families and the community in general. Paulson continues that, community ties connections such as family, friends and other supports, as well as resource connections such as employment assistance, housing, and access to basic needs were referred to in this study.

Moreover, Paulson stressed on the idea of personal connections and the importance of having support while incarcerated in order to increase success after release and the mentioning the unrealistic preparedness as well as professionals' unrealistic ideas on how to prepare life after imprisonment. (Paulson, 2013).

Furthermore, understanding why the United States has a high recidivism rate and identifying areas of gaps between systems and individuals is necessary in addressing recidivism. Issues of social stigma as a barrier, the issue with a general lack of basic needs, the importance of community connections in regards to personal and resources, and the idea of a general unrealistic preparedness in ex-offenders were stressed.

## **2.4. Knowledge Gap**

James (2015) observes the relative lack of highly rigorous research on the effectiveness of some rehabilitation programs. James also makes note of an emerging “what works” literature which suggests programs focusing on work training and placement, drug and mental health treatment, and housing assistance have proven to be effective (James 2015 cited in Magali, 2016:12).

Few researchers have examined the benefits of Prison based rehabilitation Programs for prisoners, their families, and the community. In this context, community is defined as the immediate neighbourhood in which the prisoners will live once they are released from prison (Strimple, 2003 cited in Magali 2016:18).

Consequently, inmates benefit from learning life enhancing skills, and communities benefit by lower recidivism rates. However, a number of ex-prisoners are received back in prisons after a short period of release, sentenced again and imprisoned because of recidivism. (Strimple 2003 cited in Magali, 2016:18).

Worldwide, the rates of recidivism are still high despite efforts made by different governments to try and lower these rates. For instance, in recent history, the rate of recidivism in the U.S. has increased dramatically, resulting in prisons being filled to capacity leading to bad conditions and environment for inmates. In many prisons, crime continues inside the prison walls. Gangs exist and flourish on the inside, often with many key tactical decisions being made by leaders who are in jail (Cain 1998 as cited in Carol 2014:2).

In Rwanda, according to Statistics from Rwanda Correctional Service (RCS report,2018) drawn from Muhanga Prison, indicate that since 2015 to September 2018, there is an estimated number of two hundred and twenty-two recidivists (222) despite the rehabilitation programs including vocational training that is offered to the inmates. For such information to exist, there is need for studies to be conducted in an objective way to assess both former



prisoners who recidivate and those who don't. This study shall thus avail information on the impact that vocational training program have on prisoners and if that impact leads to reduced or higher levels of recidivism.

## **2.5. Review of relevant theories (Theoretical framework)**

This section describes the relevant theories to this study by highlighting on an understanding of the relationship of the variables (inmates' rehabilitation programs and trends in recidivism) in line with this study as well as giving explanations in relation to the research problem as explained in chapter one of this study.

### **2.5.1 Social Cognitive Theory**

Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive theory proposes that people are driven not by inner forces, but by external factors. This model suggests that human functioning can be explained by a triadic interaction of behaviour, personal and environmental factors. This is often known as *reciprocal determinism*. Environmental factors represent situational influences and environment in which behaviour is performed while personal factors include instincts, drives, traits, and other individual motivational forces. Several constructs underlie the process of human learning and behaviour change (Bandura, 1986:57).

Bandura (1986) continues to urge that even when individuals have a strong sense of efficacy they may not perform the behaviour if they have no incentive. This seems to suggest that if we are interested in getting others to enact behaviour change it may be important to provide incentives and rewards for the behaviours. This may include providing opportunities for behavioural change, assisting with those changes, and offering social support. It is important to recognize environmental constraints that might deter behaviour change (Bandura 1986:58).

Discussing on the practical explanation of recidivism, William R Arnold (1965) is against the hypothesis which state that ex-inmates go back to criminal activities because of the lack of

work permitting them to benefit gains to support themselves and their relatives. He does neither agree that that ex-convict is more criminally inclined than he or she was when he or she entered the penal institution since jails and pens are schools of crime, where criminals increase expertise in crime, prestige among criminals, and increased antipathy to society is like a stereotype (Arnold, 1965: 212-220).

Summarizing from the theories above, the **Social Cognitive Theory** is relevant to this study since it holds that behaviour change is contributed to by several interrelated aspects of the environment in which an individual is in and since shaping the environment may encourage behaviour change, it is important that stakeholders in prisons and rehabilitation facilities should be able to fully understand this since this study focuses on what effects rehabilitation programs in prison have on recidivists. For prisons and other rehabilitation facilities to have a remarkable impact on the prisoners, then the position taken by this theory must be taken into account. This is because according to this theory, environmental constraints may have the capability of deterring behaviour change and as such, stakeholders should be able to ensure that the environment in prison is such that it encourages behaviour change in the desired direction.

### **2.5.2. Theory of Planned Behaviour**

According to Grizzel (2007) suggests, perceived control over opportunities, resources, and skills needed is an important part of the change process. The individual who is taken to prison committed a criminal offence punishable by law and according to this theory behaviour is only a product of intentions. Additionally, this theory helps to bring out the idea that even though there are rehabilitation programs including vocational training in prisons, recidivism occurs due to the fact that the rehabilitation programs do not do enough to address the root cause of behaviour intentions or the inability to control certain undesirable behaviour (Grizzel, 2007:59).

The **theory of Planned Behaviour** is also important in this study in a way that, recidivism occurs in increasing trends despite efforts to reduce it; it becomes important to note here that there are possibilities of the criminal justice system having ignored the cause of the behaviour that landed a particular individual in prison. Assuming that this is the case then this theory becomes very important for policy formulators and the criminal justice system to take into consideration the fact that there are intentions which were behind the behaviour. Once this is taken into consideration, it will be easier to come up with rehabilitation programs that help change an individual's way of thinking as opposed to vocational programs into which most prisoners are forced yet they don't really have any impact in changing the root cause of a behaviour that sends to them to prison.

## 2.6. The conceptual framework

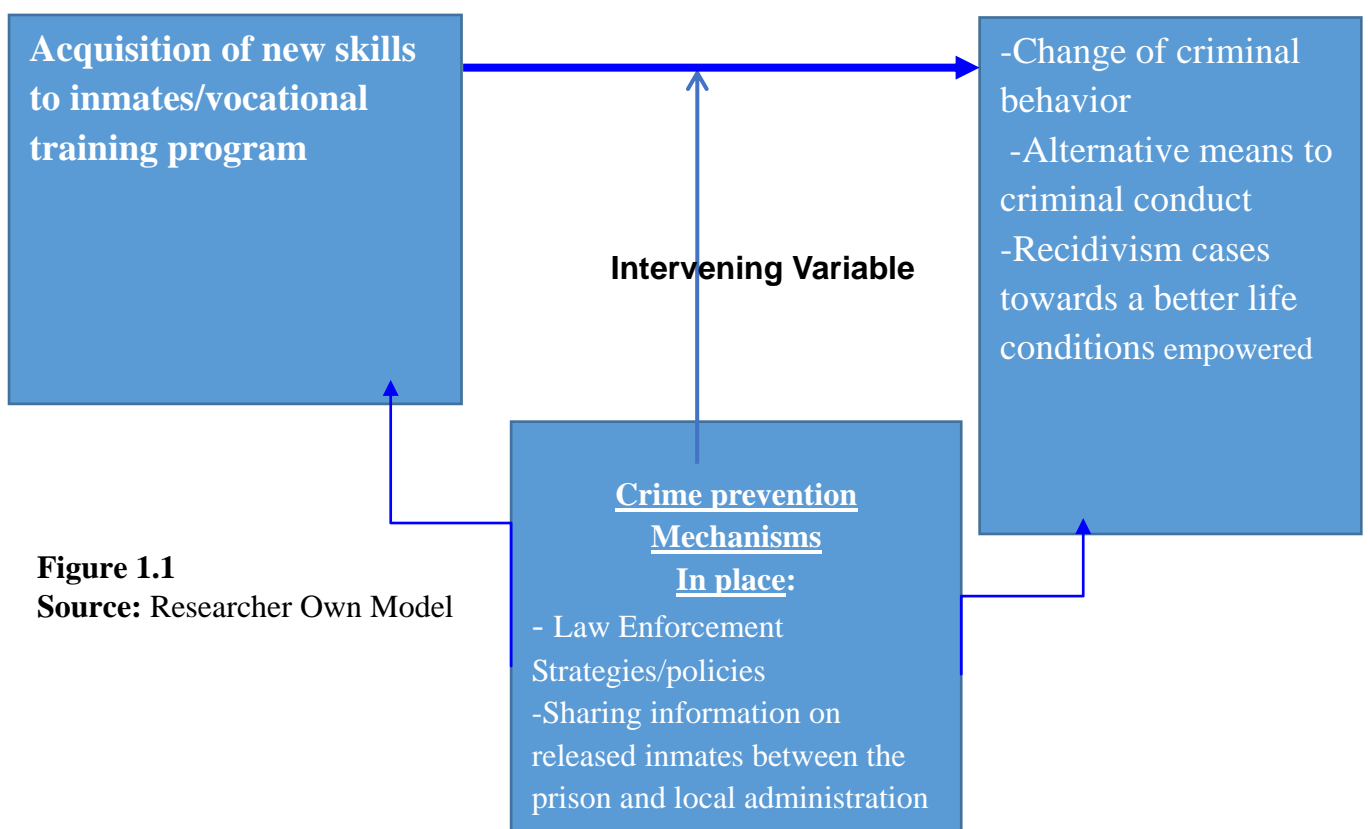
This study relies on two main variables: The Inmates Rehabilitation Programs offered to inmates is the independent variable while the trends in recidivism refer to the dependent. In addition, it shows the relationship of the constructs of both variables and of which are relevant to the discussed theories and key concepts of the study.

### Independent Variable

Inmates Rehabilitation Programs

### Dependent Variable

Trends in Recidivism



**Figure 1.1**

**Source:** Researcher Own Model

For the purpose of this study, the way the rehabilitation programs more especially the vocational training intervenes in the provision of skills to the ex-inmates leads either to a successful or failure ex-prisoners' reintegration into the community. Moreover, the Crime prevention mechanisms in place derive from the existing mechanisms to fight against re-offending and contribute to meaningful life conditions empowerment efforts to fighting against Recidivism and this will be analyzed in the findings of the study.

## **2.7. Chapter summary**

In this chapter the study provided definitions of key concepts, as far as the topic is concerned. The researcher discovered what scholars did on the study of recidivism and rehabilitation programs including vocational training, as well as some theories which were used to understand various status and conditions people fall into recidivism related crimes.

The proponents of the social learning theory generally associate individuals' behaviors leading to commit offenses with learning by observation and imitation to others. Moreover, in the same line with the specific objectives of this study, preventive theory scholars informed various means of fighting against recidivism in general, ranging from the communication through specific vocational skills aimed at successful prisoners' social reintegration into their societies upon release.

The literature review demonstrated societal barriers that disturb successful inmates' reintegration and the eradication of recidivism. It is clear that in order to target this social problem of recidivism, a theoretically perspective is necessary to find out contextual factors that are attributed to the problem with the view of finding possible factors as far as Muhanga Prison is concerned in this context. Consequently, the next chapter discusses the sampling method, the source of data, which focuses on primary and secondary data. It also provides a discussion on methods and instruments that were used to collect and analyze, as well as interpret data in order to get meaningful results.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methods and methodology used in this research. It provides an overview of the category under which this study falls as well as the population concerned with this study. It describes the sampling method, the source of data, which focuses on primary and secondary data. It also provides a discussion on methods and instruments that were used to collect and analyze, as well as interpret data in order to get meaningful results.

#### 3.1. Research design

The research was conducted at Muhanga Prison as a representative sample of prisons in Rwanda, from where I gathered both primary and secondary data and the study was based on qualitative approaches as it was to seek to explore factors leading ex-prisoners to recidivism with regard to the effectiveness of vocational training program at Muhanga Prison.

Also Qualitative methods were used to enable in-depth understanding of the factors prompting the ex-inmates to be involved in crimes leading to recidivism. Exploration in this research was required to generate data which was emanated from respondent's attitudes, perceptions, impressions and insights, but also the study made an investigation from questionnaires which were administered to respondents with a view to collect information from the ground.

According to Kothari (2004), qualitative approach to research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behavior. Such an approach to research generates results either in non-quantitative form or in the form which are not subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis (Kothari, 2004). In the context of this study, elements of qualitative approaches are applied to interpret opinions and viewpoints of those involved with the research in order to understand factors of re-offense in Muhanga prison in relation to vocational training that is extended to inmates at Muhanga prison.

The primary data was collected directly on the population and secondary data from different documents relevant to the subject under study. Thus the study used the desktop research in order to collect secondary information with a view of having supplement to the qualitative primary data gathered, and information gathered for data analysis. Tables will be used to display information in numbers representing characteristic respondents in the study.

### **3.2. Area of the Study**

My area of study is Muhanga prison, which was established under the presidential order No 60/01 of 02/11/2012 that establishes prisons and their mode of construction as modified and complemented to date(as per period of the study). It is located in the southern province of Rwanda in Muhanga district, Shyogwe sector and this was chosen as a representative of other prisons in Rwanda with a particular consideration that it had the highest number of recidivists (RCS September, 2018). Muhanga prison was built in 1973 with inmates occupying capacity of three hundred and fifty (350) prison inmates. After the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi, the prison was rehabilitated and extended to the capacity of accommodating four thousand five hundred (4,500) inmates. According to the statistics from the prison as per February, 2019 the prison has total inmates of five thousand eight hundred and thirty-one (5,831) of which five thousand two hundred eighty-two (5,282) are males and five hundred forty-nine (549) are women (Muhanga prison report for February, 2019).

### **3.3. Study population and sampling**

For the purpose of this study, the population refer to the individuals or organizations from which the researcher expects to collect data from and this is often referred to as unit of analysis. According to Statistics from (RCS September, 2018) at Muhanga Prison, there is an estimated number of two hundred and twenty-two recidivists (222) and this serves as the target population of this study. However, due to the location of Muhanga prison which is far from Musanze-National Police College and the short time of which was allocated for data

collection as well as financial constraints to deploy data collection clerks, it was not possible to reach all the targeted two hundred and twenty-two recidivists (222).

Therefore, I sampled twenty (20) recidivists for data collection who included fourteen (14) who are back to prison and six (6) who are out of prison but were once imprisoned for recidivism. This helped in having an in-depth understanding of the factors prompting the ex-inmates to be involved in crimes related activities leading to recidivism as well as their attitudes, perceptions, impressions and insights. Correctional officers were also involved such as the Director of Prison, the Social Affairs Officer and the Registrar at Muhanga Prison and The staff in charge of social affairs at the cell level from (3-nearby cells neighbouring Muhanga Prison).

In the selection of the respondents, sampling technique was used and this refers to the procedure a researcher uses to gather people, places or things to study (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

According to (Kombo and Tramp 2006), (in purposive sampling the researcher decides who to include in the sample and purposely targets a group of people believed to be reliable for the study. Purposive sampling represents a group of different non-probability sampling techniques. The main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest, which will best enable you to answer your research questions. This method in this study was appropriate while selecting participants (Cochran 1953:53).

During the study, inmates were selected on the basis of being sentenced for recidivism and their willingness to respond. Hence, the technique of purposive sampling was used to select and confirm the twenty inmate respondents. It was also used to select three correctional officers working at Muhanga Prison and three staff in charge of social affairs at the cell level from (3-nearby cells neighbouring Muhanga Prison). The Correctional Officers were selected based on their responsibilities which included the inmates' database management, records of

inmate cases and periodic reports regarding required statistics from Muhanga Prison. The cell's social affairs officials from (3-nearby cells neighbouring Muhanga Prison) were selected based on their responsibilities which involve cell administration, and the record of different categories of the population including ex-inmates who have settled in their communities of responsibility.

### **3.4. Methods for data collection and procedures**

This process was initiated by obtaining a recommendation letter from the Commandant of the National Police College. The letter was presented to the Commissioner General of Rwanda Correctional Service who later permitted me to officially carryout the study at Muhanga Prison by contacting the concerned people. The recommendation letter was also presented to Shyogwe, Gitarama and Gahogo Cells Executive officials in Muhanga district to justify my formal reason and presence during the study.

In the view of data collection for my study, data collection methods are important for accurate and systematic scientific research. They include questionnaires, interview, observation and documentation or a combination of different methods. For the purpose of my study, questionnaire, interview and documentation review were used. The interview was conducted in Kinyarwanda language as our interviewees were all Kinyarwanda speakers.

#### **3.4.1. Questionnaire**

In accordance to my Research questions above, questionnaires were both structured (close-ended) and unstructured (open-ended) questions. It is believed that written questionnaires become more cost effective as the number of research questions increases.

The choice for the use of the questionnaire was inspired by explanations of its merit provided by Harris and Brown (2010) as an instrument to be used in the research. According to them, questionnaires are often used together with interviews in research investigating assessment. They mentioned that, while questionnaires can provide evidence of patterns amongst large



populations, qualitative interview data often gather more in-depth insights on participant attitudes, thoughts, and actions (Harris, LR and Brown, GTL 2010:1-14).

Questionnaires can easily be used to analyse large amounts of data from the populations, familiar to most people and generally do not make people apprehensive. Questionnaires reduce bias. There is uniform question presentation and no middleman bias. The researcher's own opinions did not influence the respondent to answer questions in a certain manner (Harris, LR and Brown, GTL 2010:1-14).

For the purpose of my study, data collection by questionnaires focused on respondents answers which were analysed and expressed in percentages. It also focused on questions leading to the thematic definition of causes and impacts as far as respondents experience is concerned. Analysis of answers which were provided by respondents constituted a tool to know reasons behind recidivism. The use of questionnaires involved inmates, correctional officers and public social affairs administrators.

### **3.4.2. Interview**

Interviews were also used in addition to the questionnaires, and were semi-structured with a view to explore a grouping of questions under a theme to be explored. An interview guide or schedule was prepared before and questions were structured in an open ended manner.

Interviews provide in depth data which is not possible to be acquired using questionnaire (Mugenda and Mugenda 1999). The semi-structured interview will be chosen to help the researcher to examine deeply the theme and understand thoroughly the answers provided. Additionally, this kind of interview will allow the interviewer to clarify some questions or intervene when it seems necessary.

In this research, interview was conducted at Muhanga prison with twenty inmates who were selected using random sampling technique and convicted with recidivism. It was also conducted with three correctional officers and three cell social affairs officials to assess the

impact of vocational training program in relation to recidivism of once released inmates from Muhanga prison. Interview was also used to review all respondent's opinions as well as discovering crime prevention possibilities which can help to combat recidivism.

Inmates are well placed for providing their life experience about the reason they have been imprisoned before as well as the factors that pushed them to be involved in the related crimes after their first release. They are better positioned to express their standpoints regarding recidivism. Views from correctional officers who are in charge of treatment of inmates convicted for recidivism and from cell social affairs officials are also important. They are crucial to make one understand the prison system for inmates' treatment and the after care system in place, contribute for possible solutions where problems are found.

### **3.4.3. Documents Review**

Document review was also used as the main secondary source of data where existing documented information was examined to obtain information that is relevant. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

The documents reviewed in the prisons included the inmates register as well as the conviction register. This targeted mainly the records for the recidivists in terms of how many times they have been in prison, under which crimes and if they are involved in vocational training programs for rehabilitation purposes.

### **3.5. Ethical Considerations**

During the study, I clearly first explained to the respondents the purpose of the research, including the reason that the research was to be carried out to fulfill requirements of

academic award. The research was conducted according to the ethical values and rules leading the conduct of a research especially in areas of respondents' secrecy, confidentiality, and trusting other researchers when and where due.

The founded data was used for research purpose only. There was no maltreatment done to any person, organization, and sector in the process of conducting the research. And the interpretation was highly guided by choice of words to reflect objective opinion. Therefore, the ethical considerations were done in order to create a mutually respectful and win-win relationship in which participants were pleased to respond candidly leading to obtaining valid results with a view of having the conclusions constructive in relation to the study purpose of this research.

### **3.6. Data analysis**

The analysis of data was done on the basis of an examination and contextualizing the meaning of data, related with the objectives and research questions of the study. The qualitative analysis was used to understand the social reality, through categorizing, coding, editing and identifying the themes within the contents of information from respondents, the condition in which ex-inmates are living after their first release, their behaviors after being prosecuted and subjected to the rehabilitation programs, the accorded rehabilitation in the society and the aspects of being exposed to crimes that lead to recidivism at Muhanga prison.

### **3.7. Chapter summary**

Chapter three looks at the methods and procedures used to collect data during the study. Many tools were used in gathering and collecting more information as possible. Also different respondents were reached at in terms of inmates as individuals subjected to recidivism in relation to the vocational training program offered at Muhanga prison, the profession of correctional at the prison and social administration officials at the cell level concerned. This mixture in categories was used for the purpose of collecting mixed and

detailed information about the study topic. The next chapter will provide the presentation of data which will be analyzed and discussed simultaneously.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

This is a qualitative study which gathered individuals' views and perception about recidivism in relation to the vocational training program that is extended to inmates and factors that are associated with recidivism at Muhanga Prison. Interviews and questionnaires were used to collect data that helped in responding to research questions in order to achieve the objectives of the research. The collected data were written in Kinyarwanda during interview and translated into English during analysis, while grouping them in different themes. Represented data in this chapter are divided into two main categories namely characteristics of respondents, data related to the recidivist character of respondents and data related to the objectives of the study.

#### **4.1. Characteristics of respondents**

Respondents who participated in this study had different characteristics in terms of their category, gender, education, marital status and age. The characteristics of respondents were not only demographic characteristics that helped to identify different categories of inmate respondents, but also included basic information justifying the recidivist character of this study's inmate respondents including reasons for previous imprisonment, and the time period between the previous imprisonment and the current.

##### **4.1.1. Category of respondents**

In this study, respondents were categorized into different categories according to the purpose of the study where inmates, correctional officers and staffs in charge of social affairs at the Cell's level participated. Below is the table that shows the number of participants from each category.

**Table1: Category of respondents**

Categories	Inmates	Correctional officers	Staffs in charge of social affairs at the cell level	Total
Number	20	3	3	26

*Source: Primary data from December, 2018*

Inmate respondents helped in providing responses to the questionnaire while correctional officers and social affairs staff at the cell level contributed to this study through interview. The large number of inmate respondents is very significant and paramount in this study since they can personally know and tell more about what motivated them to be involved in recidivism related activities and provide their views and opinions regarding what can be done to help them become law abiding citizens.

**4.1.2. Gender of the respondents of inmates' respondents**

The second characteristic of respondents of this study is the gender of the respondents. The aim of this was to know the extent by which men and women are involved in recidivism related activities despite the rehabilitation programs with a focus on vocational training that is provided at Muhanga prison. It was also paramount to find out the gender of the correctional officers as well as the local administration officials in addressing the issue of Recidivism.

**Table2: Category of respondents disaggregated by gender**

	Gender		Sub. Total
	Male	Female	
Inmates	15	5	20
Correctional Officers	1	2	3
Local Administrators	0	3	3
Grand Total	16	10	26

*Source: Primary data from December, 2018*

According to the above table, majority of inmate respondents in this study were found to be male. This means that men are very vulnerable to get involved in recidivism related crimes

than women at Muhanga prison in Muhanga district. Additionally, the table indicates that male are the most to decide to get involved in vocational training programs as a way of acquiring skills for job opportunities which earns them income for the sustainability of themselves and their families. Male respondents revealed that they considered vocational training programs as ways of assisting them in doing business which could help them to generate income for their families. Furthermore, it was also indicated that females are more dominant in dealing with inmates both at the prison level as well as in the local administrative units.

#### **4.1.3. Educational level of inmate respondents**

The educational level of inmate respondents constitutes the third characteristics of respondents in this study. This was focused on with a view to explore the extent to which inmates that benefited from formal or informal educational programs are involved were involved in recidivism related crimes at Muhanga prison in Muhanga District.

**Table3: Inmates respondents disaggregated by education level**

Education level	Below primary school	Primary school	Secondary school	Total
Number	6	4	10	20

*Source: Primary data from December, 2018*

According to the above table, the level of education for inmate respondents is generally moderate where six of them did not complete primary education, four completed primary and ten completed secondary school education. It looks like people who went for formal education get more involved in vocational training programs and at same time they get involved in recidivism related crimes and due to that, they have the ability to balance the consequence after being arrested and sentenced. The educated people more especially through vocational training also have an opportunity to find alternative ways for income generation through jobs creation and employment.

#### 4.1.4. Marital status of inmate respondents

The marital status of inmate respondents was focused on with the aim to know if the marital status is an element clarifying the magnitude of recidivism despite the vocational training that is offered to the inmates at Muhanga prison in Muhanga district.

**Table4: Inmates respondents disaggregated by marital status**

Marital status	Married	Single	Total
Number	11	9	20

*Source: Primary data from December, 2018*

Table 4 shows the distribution of inmate respondents in accordance to their marital status. It was found that eleven inmates' respondents in this study were married and nine were still single. As most inmates who participated in this study declared to have been involved in recidivism related crimes. They further revealed that despite the vocational training skills obtained at Muhanga prison, they end up get involved in recidivism related crimes due to lack of jobs or initial capital to set up their businesses that can earn them a living with their families. Single inmates who also participated as respondents in this study revealed that they got involved due to un employment and poor living conditions in the society which they end up opting to go back to the prison for government support in terms of feeding, health care and other human needs facilitation and support.

#### 4.1.5. Age of inmate respondents

Age constitute is also one of the inmate respondent's characteristics in this study. The exploration of inmate respondents' age was to know the range of age in which people involved in recidivism related crimes in relation to the acquisition of vocational training skills at Muhanga prison in Muhanga district.

**Table5: Inmate respondents disaggregated by age**

Age	Between 20-30	Between 31-40	Total
Number	7	13	20

*Source: Primary data from December, 2018*



Table 5 shows the distribution of respondents by their age. Seven inmate respondents revealed that their age ranges from 20 to 30 years while respondents with the age ranging from 31 to 40 were found to be thirteen. Generally, it looks that most inmate respondents are in good age of production and are eager to find money to support their livelihood. And those people are likely to comply with bad conditions which eventually lead them to recidivism related crimes like drug dealing, human trafficking and money laundering

#### **4.2. The recidivist character of inmate respondents**

The exploration of reasons for previous imprisonment and the time that elapsed between the previous and the current imprisonments were found crucial and paramount, during this study, due to enclosed information regarding the recidivist character of inmate respondents.

##### **4.2.1. Reasons for previous imprisonment**

The total number of our inmate respondents who were accused and convicted of recidivism were asked to provide the reason of their previous imprisonment. The aim of this was to know if the previous sentence of imprisonment was related to ineffectiveness of vocational training skills gained at their previous imprisonment or not. The table below shows what was provided by inmate respondents. In this study, the reasons for previous imprisonment were considered as elements of basic information regarding inmate respondents. It was used to confirm the status of recidivism for inmate respondents in relation to the vocational training program that is extended to them at Muhanga prison in Muhanga district.

**Table 6: Previous imprisonment reasons**

Reasons for previous imprisonment	Frequency	Acquired Vocational Training skills
Had no job and ended up in Consumption of illegal narcotic drugs	4	yes
Family conflict(denial of property) and started Trafficking	5	yes

in illegal narcotic drugs		
Lacked startup capital and opted to go for robbery and theft	7	yes
Other reasons	4	Yes
Total	20	Yes

*Source: Primary data from December, 2018*

Drawing from the above table, most recidivisms claimed to have ended up in crimes that are related to illicit narcotic drugs (consumption, trafficking, or both trafficking and consumption) due to lack of jobs and family conflicts as the top reasons, followed by lack of start capital for business in vocational field and opted to go for robbery and theft and other reasons respectively like high competition and lack of market for their produce which as well pushed them to recidivism crimes. Due to such reasons the inmates' respondents revealed that they had no option other than falling into criminal behaviors at the time of their previous imprisonment. But again, one can also ask himself/herself on whether lack of jobs or having family conflict automatically guarantees an individual to fall into crimes? Perhaps it can be yes or no.

#### **4.2.2. Elapsed time between the previous imprisonment and the current one**

The time between recent two consecutive imprisonments, the previous and the current justifies recidivism. According to the Rwandan Penal code, recidivism means a re-offense that occurs when a person who was previously sentenced to imprisonment of at least six months, commits another felony or misdemeanour within a period of five years after completion of the penalty. The data on elapsed time between the previous imprisonment and the current make part of the characteristics of respondents, of which its aim was, as the previous point, to explore and confirm whether recidivism is the status of sentence as far as inmate respondents of this study are concerned.

**Table 7: Time separating the two last imprisonments**

<b>Length of time</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
From one week to one month	4
Between three and twelve months	3
Between one year and two years	3
Between three and five years	10
Total	20

*Source: Primary data, December 2018*

Figures in the table above show that the time in between the two last imprisonments ranges between three and twelve months while more than a half of the total respondents declared that the time separating their imprisonment is above one year, which, in reference made from the Rwandan Penal code, qualifies them as recidivists; while discussing with inmates' respondents we noticed that some of them have been in prison for more than three times in a period not exceeding five years, accused of various crimes like drug dealing and consumption, rape, robbery and theft and also forged documents.

### **4.3. Data related to the objectives of the study**

The third and main section in this chapter is about data related to the general objective of the study; which is the exploration of factors leading ex-inmates get involved in crime related activities leading to recidivism in Muhanga Prison. The collected data also concerned finding out the existing mechanisms and preemptive measures to avoid recidivism of ex-inmates in Muhanga Prison.

#### **4.3.1. Factors leading ex-inmates get involved in crime related activities leading to recidivism.**

During this study, findings revealed that factors leading ex-inmates to get involved in recidivism related crimes at Muhanga prison in Muhanga district were associated with different elements including the livelihood of inmates after their previous release, the

handling of dangerous drugs and drug abuse which has become a major issue in Muhanga district and also the expectation for higher profits and the addiction in drug dealing.

**Table 8: Inmates occupation after the previous release**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
I started my own business	0	20	20
Casual worker	9	11	20
Farmer	7	13	20
Other	17	3	20

*Source: Primary data, December 2018*

Figures in the table above have to be read horizontally and not vertically because one respondent could respond to more than one item. Figures show that the twenty inmate respondents declared they had no means for owning their own income generating activity at their previous release despite the vocational skills that had been imparted to them at Muhanga prison. Additionally, the occupations of the respondents changed noticeably after their previous release. This is evident in a way that seventeen of the respondents fall under the ‘other ‘category where they mostly specified carpentry and business as the main current activities. There were nine who were casual workers and seven who were farmers. Majority of these respondents were thus in the other category where mostly carpentry was outstanding. This implies that during their previous imprisonment, they had learnt some skills and had tried to practice them while outside the prison due to their level of education.

The study was not only interested in the inmate respondent’s occupation after the previous release, but also ensures the means used to recognize people convicted with recidivism, at Muhanga Prison. Regarding the recognition and identification of person incarcerated for recidivism at Muhanga Prison. Prison officials declared that they could recognize them from

the prison information management system in which all prisoners are registered. One correctional officer declared the following:

*“We keep information of all persons who have been brought to the prison for incarceration using prisoners’ management database software known as the Integrated Electronic Case Management System (IECMS) and Prison Watch. The information could also be found in prisoners’ registers, in judgments copies when judges have mentioned it, or by declaration of the coming inmates themselves. Recidivists can also be recognized by prison guards or other inmates who have known them during their previous imprisonment”.*

The above declaration from a correctional officer reveals that there are various ways of recognizing inmates who are brought back to the prison. The use of an electronic management system by the correctional officers at the prison ensures the proper information management and records of individual criminal cases when they are sentenced for imprisonment at Muhanga Prison, therefore recognizing inmates sentenced for recidivism related crimes despite the vocational skills acquired at their previous release. My take on this is that a shared inmates’ information management system across the judicial chain is paramount in recognizing individualized recidivists for their proper treatment while in the prison.

#### **4.3.2. Effectiveness of vocational training programs in relation to Recidivism**

The second objective is analysed by first looking at the types of rehabilitation programs including vocational training programs available at Muhanga prison were sought with the aim of establishing if the programs were really in tandem with the needs of the prisoners who go through these rehabilitation facilities. Rehabilitation programs especially vocational training programs should meet individual needs of prisoners by helping them outside prisons and recidivism in society. Effective programs should successfully have rehabilitated prisoners by changing behaviour or helping them find something meaningful to do after their release from prison. The types of vocational training programs at Muhanga prison include tailoring, knitting, metal work, carpentry, prison farm, masonry and construction among others.

**Table 9: Effectiveness of vocational training programs in relation to Recidivism**

Activity engaged	Frequency
Yes	13
No	7
Total	20

*Source: Primary data, December 2018*

The extent of effectiveness of vocational training programs offered at Muhanga prison was evaluated and the results were as tabulated above; thirteen were of the opinion that the vocational activity had a rehabilitative impact on them while seven who held that the activities they engaged in did not have any rehabilitative impact on them at all. A slight majority of respondents were thus affirmative that the rehabilitative programs had an effect on them. Indeed, a high percentage number of them felt that schools were less helpful and this calls for the need to reassess these programs and replace them with more programs supported by a high number of prisoners.

Success to programs in prisons can be linked to the theory of planned behavior which suggests that behavior is dependent on one's *intention* to perform the behavior. Intention is determined by an individual's *attitude* and *subjective norm*. Behavior is also determined by an individual's *perceived behavioral control*, defined as an individual's perceptions of their ability or feelings of self-efficacy to perform behavior. This relationship is typically dependent on the type of relationship and the nature of the situation (Godin and Kok, 1995).

The fact that there were respondents who went through what was considered rehabilitation programs and still remained the way they were implies that they did not make a decision to change or that programs in prisons are not working. This means that it was not their intention to join the programs that they went through but might just have been forced to go through them. Therefore, the attitude and intent could not help them for several reasons such as the

available programs not being able to cater for all their needs. Forced meaning that programs have less impact and therefore success. There is therefore need to generate programs that prisoners themselves felt will be more helpful to them. Analyzing from this, perhaps this gives more thoughts on how the rehabilitation programs especially the vocational training should be counter checked if they are to deliver the intended desired outcome. But then how can this be achieved?

#### **4.3.3. Existing mechanisms and preemptive measures to avoid recidivism of ex-inmates in Muhanga Prison.**

The third objective of this study was to explore the existing mechanisms and preemptive measures in place to avoid recidivism of ex inmates. The aim of this objective is to ensure if there are current efforts made either outside the prison or within of Muhanga designed to help inmates be fully reintegrated into the society upon release. In this way, this study was interested in education programs about recidivism and the social reinsertion within the community by local administration.

- ***Education and training about recidivism in Muhanga Prison***

Seeking to know whether there are mechanisms and preemptive measures in place meant to help ex inmates avoid being involved in recidivism related crimes at Muhanga prison, this study was interested in education programs provided to inmates to avoid recidivism. During the interview with correctional officers, it was revealed that there are programs of civic and vocational programs that are provided by Muhanga Prison meant to help inmates avoid recidivism at the end of their sentences. One correctional officer declared the following:

*“Muhanga Prison provides knowledge through a pre designed periodical informal education program. Prisoners are provided with practical and theoretical skills in tailoring, carpentry, welding, plumbing and masonry. These crafts are supplemented with civic education sessions. They help ex-inmates to create their own job and get their living by themselves. Those who have professional skills rarely fall in recidivism. Civic education helps inmates to change and become good citizens. At the end of their sentences, every inmate who attended*

*the sessions receives a certificate as a testimonial of having acquired knowledge from the prison”.*

The declaration above from a correctional officer reveals that education programs by which inmates are provided knowledge while doing their sentences at Muhanga Prison, constitute a correctional system and means helping inmates to create alternative ways to avoid falling into recidivism related crimes and activities. When inmate respondents of this study were asked whether, during their first imprisonment, they received certain education program to prepare them for life after prison and avoid recidivism, the following table illustrates their answers:

**Table 10: Education programs to avoid recidivism in Muhanga Prison**

<b>Have you attended sessions helping you to avoid recidivism during your previous imprisonment in Muhanga Prison?</b>	<b>Number</b>
No	4
Yes	16
Total	20

*Source: Primary data, December 2018*

Figures in the above table show that, 80% of inmates who responded to questions of this study declared to have attended sessions helping inmates to avoid recidivism while 20% declared the opposite. Trying to know how there could be 20% of inmates who did not follow any program aimed at helping them to avoid recidivism; we noticed that learning programs and other behavior change sessions in Muhanga Prison were not compulsory. We also discovered that most of those programs require some prerequisites which are not satisfied by all inmates. One of this study’s respondents declared the following:

*“Only volunteers follow a certain program of education or vocational training. There are even inmates who do not attend any. Crafts that are provided by the prison in vocational training require being literate and having sufficient knowledge of elementary arithmetic. All inmates are not participating in programs offered at the prison that are intended to help them after their release”.*

It is also clear that the number of 20% who declared having not attended sessions helping inmates to avoid recidivism almost corresponds with the number of inmates whose level of



education is very low and who did not even attend or complete primary school level and this stood at 30%. Taking from the above views, this perhaps tells us that the education and vocational training programs still lack a proper and coordinated approach that can probably benefit all. However, this can be subject to further analysis for true conclusions.

- ***The social reinsertion of ex inmates by the local administration***

Further to the education and other programs intended to fight against recidivism provided by Muhanga Prison, this study was interested in having information regarding the status of the social reinsertion of ex inmates to the community. When inmate respondents were asked about the kind of reception they have from local authorities when they are released from prison, they responded that they simply go to the village chief for registration as new comers or people who were absent in their Village/Umudugudu for a certain period. They openly mentioned that there is no special program for ex-inmates, but mentioned that there are other groups that benefit from a particular reinsertion to community system, during the interview, one of the inmates revealed the following:

*“There are programs for vulnerable people in our cells, and there are only ex-soldiers, ex-street children and ex-refugees who are given money and materials helping them to start a new life. However, problems for people who are released from prison do not constitute a reason of vulnerability or a consideration for social support. People from prison are only called for investigation when there is an incident that happens in the village”.*

Declarations from social affairs officials revealed that, social reinsertion of ex-inmates is not specifically currently defined as a priority for ex-inmates. Gitarama Cell social affairs official declared the following:

*“Ex inmates are vulnerable but do not constitute a predefined target vulnerable group as such, within the social assistance programs. When ex-inmates are released, they go back into their families and continue their life as ordinary citizens who get services from the local authorities indistinctively”.*

The above respondents' declaration revealed that there is a kind of stigmatization which is done to ex inmates. That social stigmatization is likely to constitute an impact to enable the reinsertion within the community for ex-inmates thus even conflicts and recidivism become inevitable. There is also a lack of effectiveness in the group target choice for social support by the local administration in Muhanga District, in spite the fact that social affairs official who are living with the population at the Cell level recognize the vulnerability of ex inmates. Drawing from the above views from the local authorities, the fact that, *Ex inmates are recognized as vulnerable, why then do not constitute a predefined vulnerable target group within the social assistance programs?*

- ***Needs in the correctional education at Muhanga Prison***

Muhanga Prison responsibilities include, among others, the implementation of effective strategies to enable detainees and prisoners to repent and change their mentality, the development of professional skills to inmates and plan sports and leisure activities for inmates.

There is a defined education program in Muhanga Prison; nevertheless, the teaching and learning activities do not involve all prisoners and therefore the program become a privilege which benefits only a small number of inmates that have had a chance of going to school prior to being imprisoned.

Information from inmates' respondents implies a long way to go through whereby inmates with no formal education will benefit from the education programs provided by Muhanga Prison. One inmate who was enrolled in the prison learning programs declared:

*"I wanted to get baptized when I was sentenced for imprisonment. I chose to begin by literacy because I could not read nor write. After six months I could read and write very well. Then I started catechism lessons and I became baptized after six months. I have to recall that I combined catechism with lessons and practice on tailoring. After one year, I started learning English. Now, I can pronounce greetings in a little English, giving and receiving the necessary information for daily routines."*

Considering the above extract, it seems that the better way to provide effective education programs for inmates in Muhanga Prison is to set in hierarchical levels whereby every inmate should be tested individually and be registered in a program according to his/her basic knowledge and the period of stay in the prison. Missing skills provided by the prison, which would help ex inmates after the completion of their sentences, constitutes a lack of opportunity during the social reinsertion when ex-inmates would have a knowledge package when back to the society thus, the open window through which the ex-inmate falls into recidivism. This was further revealed that, Muhanga Prison programs constitute deterrence and rehabilitation means that provide effective combined education and vocational training programs in a categorized manner, according to inmates' status.

Here again, we ask ourselves that, If the prison's responsibilities include strategies to enable detainees and prisoners to repent, change their mentality and the development of professional skills, why then have recidivists who come back to the prison under the same conditions?

### ***Strengthening the social reinsertion system***

In this point, this study reviewed opinions from local administration officer at the cell level, regarding the reinsertion of ex-inmates into the community. Gahogo Cell social affairs official said:

*“When people from the prison present themselves to us or to the village authority, we do not ask about what they acquired in prison. Because there is no special program designed for them. They are citizens like others and we let them go to their families, but there is time we receive information that some were arrested again and back to prison”.*

Furthermore, Gitarama Cell social affairs officer declared the following:

*“Some ex-inmates are involved in the existing support program. But being ex-inmates does not appear in the support conditional check list, there is no special mechanism reserved to ex-inmates. The problem is that we do not know when they will come to insert them in the list we send to the Sector authority for requesting social support and we prepare the lists in June”.*

The existing system for social support does not recognize vulnerability especially for ex inmates, who, according to the information provided in above points, are subject to poverty, stigmatization and finally get involved in recidivism related crimes and activities.

#### **4.4. Discussing and interpreting the study findings**

The discussion and interpretation of this study's findings were also concerned with connecting them to the theoretical framework. Findings were presented from views and opinions of respondents and were associated with the study's objectives. The purpose of this section is to draw a possible interrelation from studied cases with theories discussed in chapter two of this study.

##### **4.4.1. The Social Cognitive Theory**

The Social Cognitive theory proposes that people are driven not by inner forces, but by external factors. This model suggests that human functioning can be explained by a triadic interaction of behaviour, personal and environmental factors. This is often known as *reciprocal determinism*. Environmental factors represent situational influences and environment in which behaviour is preformed while personal factors include instincts, drives, traits, and other individual motivational forces. Several constructs underlie the process of human learning and behaviour change (Bandura, 1986:57).

Bandura (1986) continues to urge that even when individuals have a strong sense of efficacy they may not perform the behaviour if they have no incentive. This seems to suggest that if we are interested in getting others to enact behaviour change it may be important to provide incentives and rewards for the behaviours. Shaping the environment may encourage behaviour change. This may include providing opportunities for behavioural change, assisting with those changes, and offering social support. It is important to recognize environmental constraints that might deter behaviour change (Bandura, 1986:58).

In connecting the theory above to the findings, we take an example when inmate respondents were asked about the kind of reception they have from local authorities when they are released from prison, they responded that they simply go to the village chief for registration as new comers or people who were absent in their Village/Umudugudu for a certain period. They openly mentioned that there is no special program for ex-inmates, but mentioned that there are other groups that benefit from a particular reinsertion to community system, during the interview, one of the inmates revealed the following:

*“There are programs for vulnerable people in our cells, and there are only ex-soldiers, ex-street children and ex-refugees who are given money and materials helping them to start a new life. However, problems for people who are released from prison do not constitute a reason of vulnerability or a consideration for social support. People from prison are only called for investigation when there is an incident that happens in the village”.*

This therefore, holds that behaviour change is contributed to by several interrelated aspects of the environment in which an individual is in and since shaping the environment may encourage behaviour change and thus explains one of the reasons why inmates who were previously released from prison find themselves back on grounds of recidivism cases at Muhanga prison.

#### **4.4.2. Theory of Planned Behaviour**

Success to programs in prisons can be linked to the theory of planned behavior which suggests that behavior is dependent on one's *intention* to perform the behavior. Intention is determined by an individual's *attitude* and *subjective norm*. Behavior is also determined by an individual's *perceived behavioral control*, defined as an individual's perceptions of their ability or feelings of self-efficacy to perform behavior.

This relationship is typically dependent on the type of relationship and the nature of the situation (Godin and Kok, 1995 as cited in carol 2014: 87). The fact that there were respondents who went through what was considered rehabilitation programs and still remained the way they were implies that they did not make a decision to change or that

programs in prisons are not working. This means that it was not their intention to join the programs that they went through but might just have been forced to go through them.

Looking at the findings of the study and linking them to the above theory, the extent of effectiveness of vocational training programs offered to the ex-inmates (recidivists) at Muhanga prison was evaluated and the results showed that; thirteen were of the opinion that the vocational activity had a rehabilitative impact on them while seven indicated that the activities they engaged in did not have any rehabilitative impact on them at all. A slight majority of respondents were thus affirmative that the rehabilitative programs had an effect on them. Indeed, a high percentage number of them felt that schools were less helpful and this calls for the need to reassess these programs and replace them with more programs supported by a high numbers of prisoners. Therefore, the attitude and intent could not help them for several reasons such as the available programs not being able to cater for all their needs. Forced meaning that programs have less impact and therefore success. There is therefore need to generate programs that prisoners themselves felt will be more helpful to them.

#### **4.5. Chapter summary**

Chapter four looked into data presentation, analysis and discussion and being a qualitative study which gathered individuals' views and perception about recidivism in relation to the vocational training that is offered at Muhanga prison, Interview and questionnaire were used to collect data that helped in responding to research questions in order to achieve the objectives of the research. The Represented data in this chapter were divided into two main categories namely characteristics of respondents, data related to the recidivist character of respondents and data related to the objectives of the study. It also discussed on the connection of the theories that are discussed in chapter two of this study to the interpretation of the study's findings. Findings were presented from views and opinions of respondents and were

associated with the study's objectives. The next chapter presents the general conclusion and recommendations that clearly show the reasons behind the continuity of recidivism despite the deterrence and rehabilitation programs especially vocational training that is expected to have been achieved or gained by ex-inmate's stay in prison.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1. Conclusion

This study was conducted to explore factors prompting the ex-inmates to get involved in recidivism related crimes which lead ex inmates to become imprisoned again; their dynamics and other possible reasons which are defined from the information provided by our respondents. The general objective of this study was to find out existing mechanisms and preemptive measures to avoid recidivism of ex-inmates in Muhanga Prison.

To fully understand as to why people continue to re-offend despite the deterrence and rehabilitation expected to have been gained by ex-inmate's stay in prison, this study focused on analyzing the organization of prison rehabilitation system mainly in vocational training for inmates with a view to describing the partnership between the correctional service and the local administration social affairs organization as well as identifying gaps if any, that could be a source of recidivism at Muhanga Prison in Muhanga District.

For the achievement of this objective, this study was guided by the following specific objectives: To find out the most common factors associated with Recidivism at Muhanga Prison; to find out the effectiveness of vocational training programs in relation to Recidivism; to find out existing mechanisms and preemptive measures to combat recidivism at Muhanga Prison. The following section focuses on summary of findings. It also presents recommendations and conclusion from data collected and analyzed during this study.

#### 5.2. Summary of Findings

The study analyzed data from Muhanga Prison reports, and continued with an examination of the views from Muhanga Prison inmates convicted with recidivism related crimes. Correctional officers from Muhanga Prison and social affairs staff officials from Shyogwe, Gitarama and Gahogo cells, in Muhanga District.



According to Statistics from (RCS report of September,2018) at Muhanga Prison, we found out that there is an estimated number of two hundred and twenty-two recidivists (222) and this served as the target population of this study. Due to the location of Muhanga prison which is far from Musanze-National police college and the short time of which was allocated for data collection as well as financial constraints to deploy data collection clerks, I sampled twenty (20) recidivists for data collection who included fourteen (14) who are back to prison and six (6) who are out of prison but were once imprisoned for recidivism. Fifty percent (50%) of ex-inmates convicted with recidivism came back to prison in a period which is less than five years; and twenty percent (20%) came back within a period not exceeding one month. While discussing with inmates' respondents we noticed that some of them have been in prison for more than three times in a period not exceeding five years, accused of various crimes like drug dealing and consumption, rape, robbery and theft and also forged documents.

On factors prompting the ex-inmates to be involved in recidivism related crime activities; the findings revealed that these factors were associated with different elements including the livelihood of inmates after their previous release, the handling of dangerous drugs and drug abuse which has become a major issue in Muhanga district and also the expectation for higher profits and the addiction in drug dealing. Other reasons were also due to lack of jobs and family conflicts as the top reasons, followed by lack of start capital for business in vocational field and opted to go for robbery and theft and other reasons respectively like high competition and lack of market for their produce which as well pushed them to recidivism crimes. Due to such reasons the inmates' respondents revealed that they had no option other than falling into criminal behaviors at the time of their previous imprisonment.

On the exploration of the existing mechanisms and preemptive measures in place to avoid recidivism of ex- inmates in Muhanga Prison; this study found out that, as the prison is a

Correctional facility, education which includes vocational training and behavior change are the main focus. Inmates and correctional officers' respondents are aware of the existence of education programs provided to inmates in Muhanga Prison including informal education programs and vocational training like tailoring, carpentry, welding, and masonry in which inmates are involved in as a way of rehabilitation in enhancing knowledge acquisition. A vital element in the rehabilitation and reintegration of inmates is the role that is played by the correctional system in involving inmates in programs serving to fight against re-offending at Muhanga Prison.

It is very paramount to note that, inmates and Correctional officers are aware of the informal education programs including vocational trainings, civic and moral education provided to inmates in Muhanga Prison as a means to acquiring skills, knowledge and capacity for inmates in terms of behavior change. We also realized that, in the local administration authority, social affairs staff officials at the level of the cell are aware of the vulnerability of ex inmates who should be considered as a target group as far as reintegration support and follow up are concerned.

Additionally, there are designed programs including vocational training that are meant for equipping inmates with new capabilities and knowledge in as far as behavior change and rehabilitation is concerned. However, during the informal education program especially vocational training at Muhanga Prison, inmates are not subjected to a selection which targets individual weaknesses and individualized treatment and training. Again, reinsertion service is provided to vulnerable targeted groups by the local administrative structures. Therefore, this study discovered that there is no systematic policy for taking care of ex-inmates in all local administrative entities. It also found out that they are at risks of a societal stigma, when the people are rejected by their neighborhood and society in general simply for having been in prison, this challenges their reintegration.

On the preemptive measures in place to avoid recidivism of ex- inmates in Muhanga Prison, this study discovered that the categorization in the correctional programs especially vocational training provided by Muhanga Prison, the sensitization to fight against stigmatization of ex-inmates, the information sharing between Muhanga Prison and the local administration authority, as well as the provision of a financial package helping ex inmates to start small income generating projects in terms of finding alternative financial means to recidivism related crime activities are crucial to eradicate ex-inmates involvement in re-offending at Muhanga Prison.

In regard to the study's objective, we have deeply focused in exploiting existing reports and the information provided by the respondents ranging from quantifiable facts to views and insights. The livelihood of inmates after their previous release, the handling of dangerous drugs and drug abuse, expectation for higher profits and the addiction in drug dealing, lack of jobs and family conflicts, followed by lack of startup capital for business in vocational field, high competition and lack of market for their produce were found as factors prompting the ex-inmates to be involved in recidivism related crimes.

Settings in place to elude recidivism of ex-inmates in Muhanga Prison include education especially vocational training and sensitization about recidivism as well as the social reinsertion of ex inmates by the local administration. It was finally found out that the education and training about recidivism in Muhanga Prison and the social reinsertion of ex inmates by the local administration constitute elements of crime prevention possibilities which can help to combat recidivism related crimes. With reference made from the above points, it is confirmed that the objectives of this study were explored and verified.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

By viewing the content and scope of this study, there are various studies which related recidivism to different factors. This study relied on the factors of re-offending in Muhanga Prison of Muhanga district in terms of an empirical exploration of re-offense factors. Notably, in Muhanga where there is neither available specific study regarding the reasons of recidivism nor proposed remedy leading to 38% of recidivists as per September, 2018.

This is a policy oriented study. It has shown that there is need to review and restructure the practice of the individualization system of treatment offered to inmates. Again, there is need for a follow up system to ex- inmates that are released from the prison at the end of their sentence while going back to their communities. Therefore, this study's recommendations are towards Muhanga Prison, ex-inmates and the local administration in Muhanga District. Those recommendations will help in preventing recidivism related crime activities.

#### **5.3.1. Recommendation to the Ministry of local Government**

The government of Rwanda through the Ministry of local government should put in place a policy enabling adequate reintegration of the ex- inmate including a follow-up plan of recently released people to detect any hindrance to their reinsertion in society, sensitize people to avoid any stigmatization against former inmates at their release, put in place mechanisms for economic and social support of ex-inmates while they are being reintegrated into back to the society.

#### **5.3.2. Recommendation to Rwanda Correctional Service (RCS)**

RCS should introduce a rehabilitative system more especially in vocational training that focuses on the individualization approach towards inmates, so as to overcome the issue of generalization in providing a package to inmates based on different levels of understanding and needs. The management of prisons needs to provide education and training programs in order to increase inmates' skills and knowledge on economic opportunities and challenges

and therefore increase income after prison, which will eventually reduce crime and deviant behaviour.

When people are faced with stressful events and circumstances, especially those related to economic hardship, in particular, the associated with attainment of basic needs in the family, they may use drugs or steal in order to cope. However, this mode of behaviour predisposes them to crime and incarceration. Thus, Professional psychologists in prisons should counsel prisoners and help them learn the various ways of coping with extremely stressful circumstances both at home and in society.

The prison needs to seek for support through Rwanda Correctional Service in being more involved to supporting programs at Muhanga prison in terms of both finances and professional in order to increase skills and knowledge of ex-inmates in the prison and improve their behaviour change and consequently reduce crime, criminality and recidivism in the society.

RCS needs to develop a comprehensive vocational training program in all sections of the prisons industries and that long term prisoners should take at least six months in the vocational training section, at the end of which they should sit for certification exams.

RCS should also introduce a system of information sharing between the prison and the local administrative authorities on the inmates nearing release as well as during the final period of release after serving their sentences, with a view to channel individual follow up and reintegration support and facilitation of the ex- inmates back into their society. Other stake holders like the ministry of health should be informed on the mental and physiological support that might be needed by some inmates who are nearing or during their release from the prison.

### **5.3.3. Recommendation to ex inmates**

The Ex-inmates should demonstrate attitudes and behavioral change of people who have undergone rehabilitation and reformation processes during their stay in correctional facilities. For this, they should; avoid being part of criminal activities that lead them to re-offending once they are back into their societies upon release from prison; they should make effort to change life style to avoid any mistrust and live as law binding people within their societies.

### **5.3.4. Suggestions to other researchers**

Basing on the above recommendations and also given the fact, that research is a continuous process, the following areas are suggested for further research;

- i. Widening the research study to more rehabilitation institutions on the effectiveness of the corrections programs in the country.
- ii. An assessment on the challenges in the implementation of vocational training programs in prisons of Rwanda.
- iii. An investigation on the challenges that inmates face in Rwandan prisons and the;
- iii. Effectiveness of the criminal processes in the judicial system.

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# APPENDIXES


## Appendix 1: Introductory letter




## Appendix 2: Acceptance letter

Received by Secretary  
04/02/2019

RWANDA CORRECTIONAL SERVICE

  
OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER GENERAL



SP Alex MUGISHA  
Student  
Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation at UR  
Rwanda National Police College  
P.O. BOX: 23  
E-Mail: npc@police.gov.rw  
**MUSANZE**


Kigali, on 22/12/2018  
Ref. n° AC/16.G.RCS/118

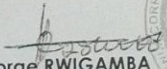
**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MUHANGA PRISON**

1. Reference is made to your letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> December 2018, requesting permission to conduct a research on topic **"Inmates Rehabilitation Programs and Trends in Recidivism: Case of Vocational Training Program at Muhanga Prison 2015-2018"** for your dissertation paper in master's degree in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation at the University of Rwanda, Rwanda National Police College, Musanze.

2. I am pleased to inform you, that the permission has been granted and the director of Muhanga prison is requested to facilitate you in your research and data collection.

3. Regards,



  
George RWIGAMBA  
CG  
Rwanda Correctional Service

**CC**

- DCG/RCS  
- DP MUHANGA

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Kicukiro District, Kicukiro Sector, Kicukiro Cell, Isoko Village in Plot No 436 | KK 8 Ave |  
Website: www.rcs.gov.rw | P.O. Box 6516 Kigali-Rwanda | E-mail: cgoffice@rcs.gov.rw

### **Appendix 3: Questionnaire for inmates**

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE BACKGROUND**

I am Alex Celestine MUGISHA a student at The University of Rwanda, Rwanda National Police College-Musanze Campus undertaking a Master's degree program in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation. I am undertaking a research study on the topic titled; "*INMATES REHABILITATION PROGRAMS AND TRENDS IN RECIDIVISM: CASE OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM ATMUHANGA PRISON IN MUHANGA DISTRICT*".

This questionnaire is for research purposes only and all answers provided in the questionnaire will be handled with utmost confidentiality. Please do not write your name.

Thank you for your kind response.

#### **Questionnaire for inmates**

Dear respondents,

This is an academic exercise aimed at gathering primary data towards the writing of a dissertation on the above topic. Your cooperation in providing honest and prompt responses to the questionnaire would be very much appreciated. You are also assured of the privacy and confidentiality of your responses.

Alex MUGISHA

Thank you very much!

**Tick at the front of your choice by using ' V' and for ..... Write your comments**

#### **SECTION A: CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS**

##### **1. Gender of the respondent**

- Male
- Female

##### **2. Education level of inmate respondents**

- No formal education
- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Higher education

##### **3. Marital status of inmate respondents**

- Married
- Single
- Divorced

**4. Please tick the series indicating the range of your age**

- Between 20-30
- Between 31- 40
- Between 41- 50
- Above 50

**5. How long was the period separating your two last imprisonments?**

- Less than a week
- From one week to one month
- Between three and twelve months
- Between one year and two years
- Between three and five years

**SECTION B: QUESTIONS FOR OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

**1. Which of the following was your preoccupation after your first release?**

- I started my own business
- I was integrated by my family
- I had no family to integrate me
- I had no means to invest in my own business
- I was involved in recidivism related crimes
- Other

**2. State your main motivation to get involved in recidivism despite the rehabilitation programs acquired at Muhanga Prison?**

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**3. Have you ever attended sessions helping you to avoid recidivism during your previous imprisonment in Muhanga Prison?**

- No
- Yes

**4. How do you find the effectiveness of Vocational Training programs in terms of helping inmates to avoid falling into recidivism after their release?**

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**5. Do you find it possible to eradicate recidivism for ex-inmates?**

- No
- Yes

**If yes, how could this be done? Provide your response below**

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.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Thank you for your participation**

## **Appendix 4: Interview guide for inmate respondents**

### **INTERVIEW BACKGROUND**

I am Alex Celestine MUGISHA a student at The University of Rwanda, Rwanda National Police College-Musanze Campus undertaking a Master's degree program in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation. I am undertaking a research study on the topic titled; "*INMATES REHABILITATION PROGRAMS AND TRENDS IN RECIDIVISM: CASE OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM ATMUHANGA PRISON IN MUHANGA DISTRICT*".

This interview guide is for research purposes only and all answers provided will be handled with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you for your kind response.

### **Interview guide for inmate respondents**

- 1) Describe your livelihood after your previous imprisonment?
- 2) Provide your reasons of getting involved in recidivism related crimes?
- 3) To what extent do you perceive the contribution of the vocational training programs at Muhanga Prison regarding the fight against recidivism?
- 4) Provide your perception on the ex-inmates' reintegration system by the local administration.
- 5) What are your opinions on the better way to fight against ex inmates' recidivism related crimes in Muhanga District?

**Thank you very much**



## **Appendix 5: Interview guide for correctional officers and cells' social affairs Staff**

### **INTERVIEW BACKGROUND**

I am Alex Celestine MUGISHA a student at The University of Rwanda, Rwanda National Police College-Musanze Campus undertaking a Master's degree program in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation. I am undertaking a research study on the topic titled; "*INMATES REHABILITATION PROGRAMS AND TRENDS IN RECIDIVISM: CASE OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM AT MUHANGA PRISON IN MUHANGA DISTRICT*".

This interview guide is for research purposes only and all answers provided will be handled with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you for your kind response.

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS AND CELLS' SOCIAL AFFAIRS STAFF**

1. How do you conceive the problem of recidivism in relation to the Rehabilitation of Ex-inmates in Muhanga District?
2. Describe your means to identify ex inmates who were sentenced on grounds of recidivism cases or crimes?
3. What do you think are the major reasons for recidivism in Muhanga District?
4. What are the crime prevention mechanisms do you have in place for fighting against recidivism?
5. Is there any program designed to help released inmates who undergone vocational training program to start a new life in Muhanga District?
6. What do you suggest as solutions to fight against recidivism in Muhanga District?

**Thank you very much**