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Nazni Noordinm, Muhammad Adib Mohamad, Khairul Izzat Abd Aziz, Zaherawati Zakaria, Mohd Zool Hilmie Mohamed Sawal

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARAFMS/v13-i2/16631> DOI:10.6007/IJARAFMS /v13-i2/16631

Received: 10 February 2023, **Revised:** 14 March 2023, **Accepted:** 30 March 2023

Published Online: 09 April 2023

In-Text Citation: (Noordinm et al., 2023)

To Cite this Article: Noordinm, N., Mohamad, M. A., Aziz, K. I. A., Zakaria, Z., & Sawal, M. Z. H. M. (2023). The Recovery Factors of Drug Addiction in Malaysia: A Case of Ex-Drug Addicts Registered with National Anti-Drug Agency. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 13(2), 60–70.

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Vol. 13, No. 2, 2023, Pg. 60 - 70

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The Recovery Factors of Drug Addiction in Malaysia: A Case of Ex-Drug Addicts Registered with National Anti-Drug Agency

Nazni Noordin

Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah,
Malaysia

Email: nazni@uitm.edu.my

Muhammad Adib Mohamad, Khairul Izzat Abd Aziz

Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah,
Malaysia

Email: nazni@uitm.edu.my, nazni@uitm.edu.my

Zaherawati Zakaria (Corresponding Author)

Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah,
Malaysia

Email: zaherawati @uitm.edu.my

Mohd Zool Hilmie Mohamed Sawal

Faculty of Information Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah, Malaysia

Email: zoolhilmie@uitm.edu.my

Abstract

Drug addictions have become a global issue due to malpractices of drug consume. In Malaysia, the National Anti-Drug Agency or Agensi Antidadah Kebangsaan (AADK) becomes an important agency in eradicating drugs addiction through treatment and rehabilitation, prevention, enforcement, and security. The objective of this study was to identify the factors that could influenced the recovery of drug addictions, focusing on the ex-drug addicts which registered with AADK Kerian, Perak, Malaysia. This study highlighted on three major factors for recovery, which include self-development effort, physical pain, and spiritual programs. Direct questionnaires were given to the respondent in AADK Kerian with both physical questionnaire and online questionnaire. The results demonstrated that the self-development effort is the most influenced factors for the drug recovery since most of the respondent agreed that their own awareness to have self-changes have a significant influence on the lifestyle, emotional, awareness and getting well without taking the drug.

Keywords: Drug, Drug Addict, Drug Addiction, Drug Agency, Drug Recovery.

Introduction

Drug addiction is not a new phenomenon and become one of the main issues around the globe. It becomes a disease which affects a person's brain and controls human behaviour when there is an over limit towards the use of the drug. The drug could be defined as an ingredient that is used for either traditional or modern medicine (Deeptanshu & Rahul et al., (2020). The idea of recovery is used towards the drug user who wants to stop the drug's consumption. This recovery is considered as an on-going process since it is a long-term process which takes continuous effort and diligence by many factors and influence. In Malaysia, the National Anti-Drug Agency or Agensi Antidadah Kebangsaan (AADK) becomes an important agency in eradicating drugs through the field treatment and rehabilitation, prevention, and enforcement and security.

Drug addiction has been a main issue that is faced by all countries, including Malaysia. The statistics from 1970 until now shows that the trend on the consumption of drugs is still at a higher level and the causes of the drug problem keep going and happening from time to time like there's no such action taken by any responsible parties or agencies. Statistics show that more than 70% of heroin users are injecting drug addicts and they are found whether involved in a positive HIV or AIDS (Nor et al., 2020).

Literature Review

Recovery can be defined as a transition process in which people enhance their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and seek to realize their full potential (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2012). The recovery among the drug addict seems to have a serious influence on the community. Thus, it is important for the people of drug addiction among the community, to have the improvement towards the recovery rate of the drug addiction. This is said that because as according to the Taran et al (2018), the improvements that made by such drug addicts through the drug treatment services that obtained by them enable the helping mechanism for the society to overcome these issues. The recovery of drug addicts in the field of drug addiction is not as simple as recovery of other diseases as it requires a long period of time as well as many types of contribution in transforming and changing such people into the desired outcome or much better than before. According to Anja and Nigel (1999), the successful recovery from addictive behaviours appears to be the outcome of a complex interaction of favourable conditions and situations. Self-development effort is the strong mechanism that could be able to influence drug addicts through fighting with their own bodies for recovery. It refers to the types of decision such as the rational decisions that made by the drug addict such in terms of thinking about their sake of their future life which in terms of their health and damaged that done by themselves (Olivier et al., 2008). Therefore, the key to change comes from self-development effort. Hence, without self-development, this led to the failure to recover from drug addiction. In addition, in Malaysia, there are many programs and activities made by the government that tend to help drug addicts but somehow it can be useless as there are no efforts derived from the people involved itself to treat themselves.

Physical pain could be referred to the suffering effect that is felt by the drug addicts. Frankl (1965) claimed that suffering has a meaning if it generates change for the sufferer. He believed that the sufferer would have a meaning of primary motivation for living when a person or addict is in a suffering situation. According to Rahul et al (2020) a survey that was done on Reddit, it shows that physical pain involves emotional distress and direct physical suffering which these two pains significantly influence the addiction recovery behaviour. Drug

addiction could be considered as a moral and character flaw in which it could change the behaviour of the addicts in terms of health deterioration, brain function and could lose control over substance use. As for emotional distress, addicts tend to feel sadness, restlessness, anxiety, nausea, vomiting, sweating, and cramping. In which of these two surveys and study done by Rahul et al., (2020) shows that physical pain can affected the drug addict physically and mentally. In which these symptoms and impact made the addicts expected to experience the withdrawal of drug consumption.

According to Cook (2004) spirituality is a key variable in the etiology and treatment of addictive disorders. Spirituality should be seen from a multidimensional perspective and not only on the meaning of life. It is because Diarmuid (1994) stated that spirituality has the connectivity to values, environment and to the Higher Power or lord. The combination of the various methods in spiritual psychotherapy program is expected to produce the best drug addiction therapy model. It has the expected outcome especially in the spiritual therapy, as there are efforts to integrate the spiritual therapy concept and religious belief. This includes the Quran recitation, which has identified as a cure of the physical or mental illness, including drug addiction issue. This is because the root cause of drug addiction is the lack of sufficient spiritual strength. Hence, the spiritual program and its therapy will be effective if it involves spiritual healing by counselling and therapy in its process since the spiritual and religious strength becomes an important asset in dealing with the problems and healing improvement (Amin & Sallaeh, 2014).

Research Methodology

The data used in this study was collected both from primary and secondary method. The primary data was collected directly from the respondent respond through physical questionnaire and online questionnaire that was distributed via google form. The physical questionnaire was distributed to the respondent during the session *Self Report* or "Lapor Diri" that conducted monthly in AADK Kerian, Perak. While the online questionnaire was distributed with the assist of AADK staff towards the respondent that could not join the "Lapor Diri" session. Secondary data also being used as to support the finding and results in this study. As mentioned by Hardani (2020), library research is kind of research that used for collecting data and information from many sources by learning and understanding its data and theories provided. The references were used in this study of article review related with the factors influenced the recovery of drug addict. Since this article review focuses on the factors influenced the recovery of drug addict. Thus, library research method was used for gaining facts and information of this topic. Therefore, to understand further on this topic, relevant materials such as journals, journal articles and electronic sources is being referred as to find materials to support the facts and evidence for this study. All information and references are being gathered and analysed for accomplish this article review. Some of the materials were referred and obtained from the reliable sources such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Springer, and Elsevier. Then, all the data collected were generated on IBM SPSS as to get the result.

Findings and Discussions

The first component in Table 1 is gender which involved male and female. The total male and female respondents are 169 and 12 respectively. The percentage of male is more than female which is 93.4% and 6.6% respectively. The next component is age, this element consists of 4 classifications of age group which are 19-30, 31-40, 41-50, and 51 years old and above. The

highest with 53% equivalent to 96 respondents is from the age group of 19-30 years old, followed by 27.6%, with 50 respondents at the age of 31-40 years old. Another 16.6% with number of 30 respondent are 41-50 years old and the remaining 2.8% that equal to 5 respondents are above than 51 years old. The third component for demographic data is occupation. The data shows 56.9% of the respondents are self-employed, followed by 34.8%, are in the private sector, 5.5% are unemployed, while 2.2% are public sector servants. The remaining 0.6% voted for others since the respondent is student. For the fourth component is level of education that consist of eight (8) classification group namely, UPSR, PMR/SRP, SPM, STPM, Diploma, Degree, no formal education, and skills certificate. The following are the results by respondent, SPM recorded 49.1%, SRP/PMR with 21%. UPSR with 14.9%, 7.7% of skills certificate, 2.8% with STPM, 3.3% with no formal education, and 0.6% for both diploma and degree holder.

Table 1
Demographic profile of respondents

| No. | Profile | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|---------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1 | Gender | | |
| | 1- Male | 169 | 93.4 |
| | 2- Female | 12 | 6.6 |
| | Total | 181 | 100 |
| 2 | Age | | |
| | 1- 19-30 years old | 96 | 53 |
| | 2- 31-40 years old | 50 | 27.6 |
| | 3- 41-50 years old | 30 | 16.6 |
| | 4- 51 years old and above | 5 | 2.8 |
| Total | 181 | 100 | |
| 3 | Occupation | | |
| | 1- Government sector | 4 | 2.2 |
| | 2- Private sector | 63 | 34.8 |
| | 3- Self-employed | 103 | 56.9 |
| | 4- Unemployed | 10 | 5.5 |
| | 5- Others | 1 | 0.6 |
| Total | 181 | 100 | |
| 4 | Level of education | | |
| | 1- UPSR | 27 | 14.9 |
| | 2- SRP/PMR | 38 | 21 |
| | 3- SPM | 89 | 49.1 |
| | 4- STPM | 5 | 2.8 |
| | 5- Diploma | 1 | 0.6 |
| | 6- Degree | 1 | 0.6 |
| | 7- No formal education | 6 | 3.3 |
| | 8- Skills certificate | 14 | 7.7 |
| Total | 181 | 100 | |

Table 2 shows the respondent relation with AADK. The first question is about the period of respondent registered with AADK Kerian. The result shows that 44.8% of respondents registered with AADK around 1-2 years. Following with 33.7% were less than 1 year, 9.4% were registered with the period of 3-4 years, another 8.8% were registered around 5-6 years and the remaining of 3.3% are above 6 years. The second question is about perception of respondent of programs done by AADK Kerian in recovery process. The highest with 98.3% of respondent believe that AADK programs could support them in recovery process, while another 1.7% were not. The last question is the frequency of the respondent in joining AADK programs in a month. The result showed that 68% of the respondents joined for 1-2 times, 20.4% joined more than 5 times and only 11.6% joined the programs 3-4 times respectively. Hence, most of the respondents, can be said, have a good relationship with AADK and often join the program conducted by AADK Kerian.

Table 2
Respondent relation with AADK Kerian

| No. | Profile | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-----|--|-----------|----------------|
| 1 | How long have you been registered with AADK Kerian? | | |
| | 1- Less than 1 year | 61 | 33.7 |
| | 2- 1-2 years | 81 | 44.8 |
| | 3- 3-4 years | 17 | 9.4 |
| | 4- 5-6 years | 16 | 8.8 |
| | 5- 6 years and above | 6 | 3.3 |
| | Total | 181 | 100 |
| 2 | Have you ever realized AADK programs could support you in recovery stage? | | |
| | 1- Yes | 178 | 98.3 |
| | 2- No | 3 | 1.7 |
| | Total | 181 | 100 |
| 3 | How frequently do you join the program conducted by AADK Kerian per month? | | |
| | 1- 1-2 times | 123 | 68 |
| | 2- 3-4 times | 21 | 11.6 |
| | 3- More than 5 times | 37 | 20.4 |
| | Total | 181 | 100 |

Based on Table 3, it shows the mean value result for dependent variable of questionnaire. The mean value is determined by the Likert scale which are 1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Agree, 4-Strongly agree. It shows that the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth mean are 3.64, 3.54, 3.54, 3.60, 3.58, and 3.69 respectively. Question 6 "I do regret because I took drugs in my life" shows the highest mean value compares to the others which is 3.69 and was closed to 4. The average mean score for the level of drug addict's awareness on impact of drug

addiction among the ex-drug addict’s registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak is 3.60 which at moderately high level. According to Taran, Sabrina, Trent, and Jessica (2018), drug recovery can be achieved through drug treatment services by focusing on demand reduction, social competency training, peer education networks, and increased community involvement. Awareness is needed among the drug addicts, in order to make sure the recovery process can be achieved smoothly. The result from this research shows that most of them are aware of the dangerous and consequences of drug abuse toward themselves. This includes, the drug consumption will lead them to waste of money, time and into troubles. These factors have realized them as to not considering the drug use into their routine life. According to Winick (1962), most drug addicts would stop consuming at the age of 40. This is because, at this age, most drug addicts appear to be a self-limiting process, as it seen as the being only one of several explanations of how addicts can recover easily because of the awareness on the increases of ages.

Table 3
Dependent variable of questionnaire

| No. | Dependent Variable | Mean |
|--------------------|---|------|
| 1. | I believe that if I stop taking drug, it could save my life | 3.64 |
| 2. | I realized that I have to use my money wisely instead of buy a drug | 3.54 |
| 3. | I released that taking drug make me feel empty and wastes my time | 3.54 |
| 4. | Taking a drug led to problem in my life | 3.60 |
| 5. | I feel like to stop taking drug because it wastes my money as I have to spend much money to satisfy myself with it. | 3.58 |
| 6. | I do regret because I took drugs in my life | 3.69 |
| Average Mean Score | | 3.60 |

Table 4 indicates the relationship between self-development efforts and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict’s registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak has a moderate positive correlation which based on Guilford of Thumb (Guilford, 1956). Thus, from the result, it can be concluded that there is relationship between self-development efforts and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict’s registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak since $r = 0.542$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$. Hence, the following of H1: There is a significant relationship between self-development efforts and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict’s registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak is accepted. The self-development efforts among the drug addicts themselves influenced the recovery of drug addiction. This can be supported by Deeptanshu and Rahul (2020), they said that one and the most important factors that influence the recovery of drug addiction is through self-development efforts. This can be seen through self-development effort is the strong mechanism that could be able to influence drug addicts through fighting with their own bodies for recovery.

Table 4

Result of Pearson Correlation between self-development efforts and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak.

| Relationship between variables | R-value | P-value | Decision |
|---|---------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Self-development efforts and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak, Malaysia | .542 | .000 p-value < .05 | H1 is accepted |

Table 5 illustrates the relationship between physical pain and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak has a moderate positive correlation which is based on Guilford of Thumb (Guilford, 1956). Thereby, from the result, it can be concluded that there is relationship between physical pain and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak since $r = 0.485$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$. Thus, the following of H2: There is a significant relationship between physical pain and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak is accepted. Drug addiction could affect individuals as to change their behaviour of the addicts in terms of health deterioration, brain function and loss of control. As for emotional distress, addicts tend to feel sadness, restlessness, anxiety, nausea, vomiting, sweating, and cramping. Following with the health issue of physical pain. That study concluded that these symptoms and impact made the addicts expected to experience the withdrawal of drug consumption. This study was also supported by (DuPont and McGovern, 1992).

Table 5

Result of Pearson Correlation between physical pain and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak.

| Relationship between variables | R-value | P-value | Decision |
|--|---------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Physical pain and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak | .485 | .000 p-value < .05 | H2 is accepted |

Table 6 describes the relationship between spiritual programs and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak. It has a weak positive correlation which is based on Guilford of Thumb (Guilford, 1956). Therefore, from the result, it can be concluded that there is relationship between spiritual programs and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak since $r = 0.395$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$. Hence, the following of H3: There is a significant relationship between spiritual programs and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak is accepted. Spiritual programs correlate with recovery of drug addicts. This can be shown based on the research conducted by Amin and Sallaeh (2014), they mentioned that the spiritual program is an effort for a therapy for healing improvement. They also mentioned that the spiritual program relates with Zikrullah that consist of four elements of faith, Shariah, Fiqh and morals. A case study was done related to the spiritual program is on the Inabah Program. According to Asyraf and Ezri (2004), the

Inabah Program is one of the examples related to spiritual program that focuses on the drug addicts who want to stop to consume on it. In which most of the participants in Inabah Program shows that this spiritual program approach through is one of the best treatment and rehabilitation for drug addicts, since it provides a strategic program implemented and mostly its treatment based on Quran and Sunnah.

Table 6

Result of Pearson Correlation between spiritual programs and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak.

| Relationship between variables | R-value | P-value | Decision |
|---|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Spiritual programs and the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak | .395 | .000 p-value < .05 | H3 is accepted |

Table 7 presents a summary of regression analysis. Based on the result, it shows that self-development effort is the most contributed factor towards recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak. This is because, it shows that the standardized coefficients beta value of self-development effort (0.389) has greater contribution as compared to the values of standardized coefficients beta value of physical pain (0.240), spiritual program (0.007). Moreover, p-value of self-development effort ($p=.000 < 0.05$) and physical pain ($p=0.006 < 0.05$) have a significant in the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak. Meanwhile, p-value of spiritual program ($p=0.931 > 0.05$) has no significant in the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak as the p-value is greater than 0.05. Based on the result, it shows that all independent variables (self-development effort, physical pain, and spiritual program) have been explained 33% in the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak. Meanwhile, only 67% are not explained in the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak. According to Singh et al (2020), it has been proved that the result has showed that the impact of self-development effort activities that are carried out by ex-drug addicts had their influence in which it was found to enable recovery of drug addiction. Besides, for the ex-drug addict to handle these symptoms associated with mental and physical well-being, it is often suggested that they focus on self-development with the assistance of their relatives and friends (Pasareanu et al., 2015). Thus, according to Garner et al (2014) they recommend that the ex-drug addicts must be focused by the element of self-development effort that must be prioritized to ensure the better outcome towards recovering themselves from the drug addiction.

Table 7

Summary of regression analysis

| Variable | Unstd. BETA value | Std. BETA value | T-value | P-value | Decision |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------|---------|---|
| Self-development effort | .362 | .389 | 4.677 | .000 | Based on the table, self-development effort is the most contributed towards recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak. |
| Physical pain | .211 | .240 | 2.778 | .006 | |
| Spiritual program | .006 | .007 | .086 | .931 | |
| R ² | .330 | | | | |
| F-value | 29.054 | | | | |
| P-value | .000 | | | | |

Conclusion

As a conclusion, from the discussion of the findings and outcome of the research, it shows that there are three independent variables that have been carried out in this study, which are self-development effort, physical pain, and spiritual program. Based on the findings, it reveals that the most significant factor that influenced the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak is the factor of self-development effort. Meanwhile, the least factor that influenced the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addict's registered under AADK in Kerian, Perak is a spiritual program factor. The data from this research hopefully can be used by related parties and agencies to enhance the recovery of drug addiction among the ex-drug addicts by stimulating more efforts towards self-development among drug addict while at the same time improving the enhancement effort such as through emphasizing the moral support with providing more effective spiritual program towards the drug addicts.

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